

The reactions of people around the survivor and the support she receives soon after the assault have a big influence on her recovery.

You can make a major impact in the life of a survivor just by believing in her, being there, valuing her, and knowing where to get help.

No one deserves to be sexually assaulted. Everyone deserves help in recovering from the trauma of an assault.

For more information contact:
Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault
www.wcasa.org
UWW Sexual Assault Response Team
www.uww.edu/stdrcscs/SART

"The University of Wisconsin-Whitewater is committed to equal opportunity for all persons regardless of race, color, gender, creed, religion, age, ancestry, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, political affiliation, marital status, Vietnam-era veteran status, parental status and pregnancy in its educational programs, activities and employment policies, or arrest or conviction record."

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UNIVERSITY HEALTH AND COUNSELING SERVICES

www.uww.edu/stdrcscs/uhrs
Corner of Prairie and Starin
Division of Student Affairs, UW-Whitewater
www.uww.edu/staffair

Hours

Monday-Friday 8:00 - 4:30; summer & evening hours may vary.

Health Services 472-1300

- * Examinations and treatment for illnesses and minor injuries
- * Laboratory tests and medications
- * Allergy injections and immunizations
- * Pelvic exam and Pap test
- * Contraceptives
- * STD and HIV antibody testing
- * Cold self care
- * Referrals to specialists
- * Phone consultations with RN
- * Rehabilitation for students with disabilities

Counseling Services 472-1305

- * Individual counseling for many concerns, including...
 - * Relationships
 - * Depression
 - * Self-esteem
 - * Values clarification
 - * Alcohol and other drugs use
 - * Sexual assault and abuse
 - * Decision-making
 - * Anxiety
 - * Sexual orientation
 - * Stress
- * Group counseling options
- * Consultations with staff
- * Referrals to community agencies
- * Crisis intervention
- * Practicum training site

Wellness Services 472-1300 ext. 2244

- * Lobby Resource Center
- * Royal Purple articles
- * Bulletin board kits
- * Healthy U newsletter
- * Web site
- * Posters
- * Wellness fairs
- * Educational presentations

Employee Assistance Program 472-1305

- * Confidential assistance and referral for employees with concerns such as:
 - * Stress
 - * Depression
 - * Finances
 - * Alcohol and other drug use
 - * Troubled coworkers
 - * Marriage/family
 - * Health

24-Hour Emergency help:

911 Whitewater Rescue Squad

472-1060 Sexual Assault Response Team
262-741-3200 or 1-800-365-1587 Crisis Line

HELPING SEXUAL ASSAULT SURVIVORS

Specializing in the Unique Needs of College Students

Helping a sexual assault survivor

1. **Believe Her***
Survivors need to be believed. Don't deny or minimize her experience; refrain from skeptical looks or remarks. Not believing will propel her into a maddening nightmare making her feel punished for being assaulted. No matter what the circumstances the perpetrator is at fault, not the victim. Even if you feel that she exercised poor judgment, sexual assault is not punishment—it's a crime. Reinforce again and again that the assault was not her fault. The survivor needs to hear "It's not your fault."
2. **Listen**
Be attentive and tell her that you are eager to help. Let her tell her story in her own words. Follow her emotions. If the survivor needs to cry, let her. You do not need to try to calm her down. It's crucial to her recovery that she feel free to talk it out in a way that feels appropriate to her. As well as you can, put aside your own feelings and deal with them at another time and place.
3. **Support Survivor's Decision Making**
Reporting the assault is a choice only she can make. Please don't try to force choices on a survivor, she may no longer confide in you or anyone else. Don't take charge; ask what she would like to do. A survivor of sexual assault has had every bit of control stripped from her. A key to her emotional recovery is to give her back some control as soon as possible. **Note:** The only time to break this rule is if the survivor is too seriously injured to make her own decisions.
4. **Provide Comfort**
Sexual assault is an act of violence; the survivor has been treated badly and now she needs nurturing. Provide protection by insuring that she has a safe place to sleep, food, clothing and possibly a nighttime companion. If she lives alone, strongly recommend that someone stay with her.
5. **Preserve Evidence**
Encourage the survivor to preserve evidence. It will be essential should she wish to press criminal and/or civil charges now or in the future. Get the examination before she showers, washes her hands, face or brushes her teeth, or hair. During a forensic sexual assault exam in a hospital, specimens will be taken from the survivor to find traces of blood, hair, saliva and semen from the rapist. There is no charge for this type of exam. If she has already changed her clothes, she should put all the clothing she was wearing during the assault, including shoes, in separate paper bags. Otherwise, she should bring a change of clothes, including underwear and shoes, to the hospital. The Sexual Assault Response Team has provided bags of clothing and toiletries for student survivors at Fort Atkinson ER, Lakeland ER and the University and Whitewater police stations.
6. **Treat Her Medical Needs**
The survivor may have bruises, cuts or other injuries. Even if she appears unhurt, encourage her to get medical attention because of the possibilities of STD's or pregnancy. In order to avoid pregnancy she must seek treatment within 72 hours at UHCS or a hospital emergency department.
7. **Sexual Assault Response Team (SART)**
If she is a student, suggest calling the UWW Sexual Assault Response Team at 472-1060. This does not mean the survivor must report the assault to police. The calls are confidential. Their trained advocates can support and guide her. There are also sexual assault service providers in most counties and all metropolitan areas.
8. **Be Available**
In the weeks and months following the assault reassure her that she can turn to you when she needs to. Survivors need varying time to heal. For some it may take months and for others it can take years or a lifetime.
9. **Psychological Help**
For long-term recovery after the acute crisis intervention phase, continuing mental health services will more than likely be needed. You may even need to do some of the leg work for her and line up counseling resources. She may need transportation, baby sitting and other services that will enable her to receive help. UW-W students can receive free counseling at UHCS by calling 472-1305.
10. **Take Care of Yourself**
Friends and lovers of survivors also need a good listener. If you are one of the secondary victims you are going to need to find someone with whom you can share your feelings. That might be family members, friends, clergy or the professional staff of UHCS. Please don't expect your needed support to come from the survivor. When talking with others, please try as much as possible to respect the confidentiality of the survivor.
11. **Don't Assume the Burden**
If you are not comfortable being a support person, tell the survivor in a thoughtful way and help her find someone who can act as a support person. This does not make you a failure because the survivor will pick-up on your discomfort and may think that it is a reflection on her.
12. **Support Surviving**
For many victims their main fear during the attack is that they will be seriously injured or even killed. So, however she reacted during the assault, it must have been the right thing to do because she survived. She may be second-guessing herself, questioning how she reacted and wishing that she had responded differently. Don't join her in this self-abuse; rather reinforce that she responded in a way that enabled her to survive a paralyzing, terrifying and possibly life threatening situation.

*The feminine pronoun is used but, survivors may be women or men.