

## What is Sexual Assault?

Sexual assault is defined as any sexual contact which occurs against a person's will or without consent. This includes situations which involve weapons, force, or the threat of force, or in which the victim is incapable of consent due to intoxicants, drugs or some other form of incapacitation.

**Anyone can become a victim of sexual assault, including men.**

It is estimated that 5% to 10% of all sexual assaults involve male victims, but mistaken beliefs and stereotypes often lead to shame, isolation and silence.

**1 in 6** adult men will be sexually assaulted in his lifetime.

**25–35%** of child sexual abuse victims are male.

**Call us.**

Someone is waiting to listen and to help.

**For more information contact the center in your area.**

**CONTACT Huntington Rape Crisis Counseling**  
Huntington  
304-399-1111

**Family Refuge Center**  
Lewisburg  
304-645-6334

**Family Service REACH Program**  
Charleston  
304-340-3676

**Hope, Inc.**  
Fairmont  
304-367-1100

**Rape and Domestic Violence Information Center**  
Morgantown  
304-292-5100

**Sexual Assault Help Center**  
Wheeling  
304-234-8519

**Shenandoah Women's Center**  
Martinsburg  
304-263-8292

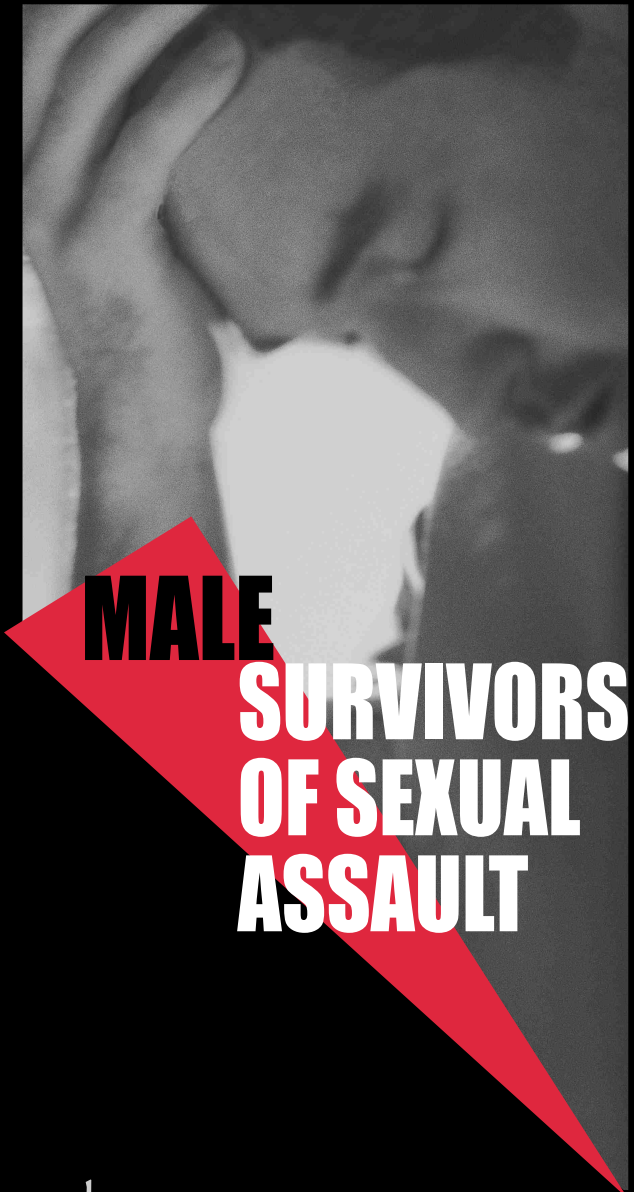
**Women's Aid In Crisis**  
Elkins  
1-800-339-1185

**Women's Resource Center**  
Beckley  
1-888-825-7836

Or  
**The National Sexual Assault Hotline**  
**1-800-656-HOPE**



West Virginia Foundation for  
Rape Information and Services, Inc.  
112 Braddock Street, Fairmont, WV 26554  
304-366-9500 FAX 304-366-9501



**MALE  
SURVIVORS  
OF SEXUAL  
ASSAULT**



**The West Virginia Foundation  
For Rape Information and Services**

112 Braddock Street  
Fairmont, WV 26554  
304-366-9500  
[www.fris.org](http://www.fris.org)

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# MALE SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT

## Facts About Male Victimization

### — Men can be sexually assaulted.

Any man can be sexually assaulted by a friend, a stranger or group of strangers, or a significant other, regardless of his size, strength or appearance. Rape is not about sex or desire, but about power and control. Sexual assaults of men are often violent and frequently involve weapons or physical force. Alcohol or drugs may be used to prevent the victim from fighting back. Submission may also be forced through entrapment, intimidation, threats or coercion.

### — Men can be sexually assaulted by women.

Although the majority of perpetrators are male, men can be sexually assaulted by women. This can include boys under sixteen who have their first sexual experience or 'initiation' with an older woman.

### —Sexual orientation does not affect the risk of victimization.

Sexual orientation is not a factor in sexual assault. Heterosexual, gay and bisexual men are equally at risk. Sexual assault is about anger and control, not sexual attraction. Rape is not the result of a man's sexual orientation nor will it change his orientation afterwards.

### — Most male victims do not become rapists.

Although many perpetrators have a history of being sexually abused, the vast majority of male victims do not become perpetrators.

### — Sexual arousal or orgasm during a sexual assault does not indicate a "willing" participant.

Erection and ejaculation are physiological responses that can occur even in traumatic or stressful situations. These responses do not mean the victim wanted or enjoyed the assault. Perpetrators often use the victim's feelings of confusion and shame to maintain control and discourage reporting of the crime.

## Common Reactions to Sexual Assault

- | Flashbacks
- | Disbelief/denial
- | Rage/Anger
- | Humiliation
- | Depression
- | Guilt
- | Concern about sexuality and orientation

In addition, many men experience doubts about their masculinity and feelings of inadequacy, believing they failed to defend themselves or stop the attack. Some men develop self-destructive behaviors such as increased alcohol or drug use. Others may engage in aggressive, high-risk behaviors leading to fights or physical injury. Many survivors find it difficult to resume sexual relationships or to begin new ones. Gay men may experience feelings of self-blame (i.e. "paying the price" for their sexual orientation). These feelings are normal, but remember, rape is **never** the victim's fault. Only the rapist is to blame.

## Drug-Facilitated Sexual Assault

Drugs such as Ecstasy, GHB, Ketamine and Rohypnol, are most often associated with sexual assaults of females. They are, however, increasingly being used in assaults on males. Some dissolve quickly in drinks and are colorless or odorless. The victim may appear to be drunk while experiencing dizziness, lack of coordination, impaired judgment and reduced levels of consciousness. After the drug wears off, the victim may have only hazy memories of the assault.

### Remember... It Is Not Your Fault

- Even if your attacker was a friend, acquaintance, date, or partner.
- Even if you had previously been sexually intimate with that person.
- Even if you were drinking or using drugs.
- Even if you were unable to stop the attack.

## If You Have Been Assaulted

- **Go to a place where you will be safe.** Call someone you trust to help you—a friend, the police or local rape crisis center.
- **Don't shower, eat, drink, brush your teeth or change your clothes.** Valuable physical evidence may be collected from your body and your clothing.
- **Get medical attention.** Even if you don't seem to be seriously hurt, it is important to receive a medical exam. You may have internal injuries that could require medical attention. Medical staff can also provide treatment for STDs.
- **Report the attack to the police.** Report the attack to the police. Rapists usually assault more than one person and your report can help prevent another assault. This can be a difficult decision, but it can help you regain feelings of control and empowerment.
- **Get counseling.** Sexual assault is a violent, traumatic experience. Dealing with your feelings will help you heal and regain control over your life.

## Supporting a Survivor of Sexual Assault

**BELIEVE HIM.** Try to understand what he is experiencing.

**LISTEN TO HIM.** Let him know he can talk to you when he is ready. When he does talk, be supportive. Don't judge or blame, regardless of where he was or what he was doing. Clearly tell him, "It wasn't your fault".

**ACCEPT HIS DECISIONS.** Help him explore options, but don't offer your opinions on what he should do. Be patient and allow him to choose his own path to recovery. Respect his choices.

**SEEK SUPPORT FOR YOURSELF.** The impact of rape extends beyond the survivor. Feelings of anger or blame or helplessness can be overwhelming, and suppression of those feelings can interfere with your support for the victim. Most rape crisis centers offer counseling for family members and significant others.