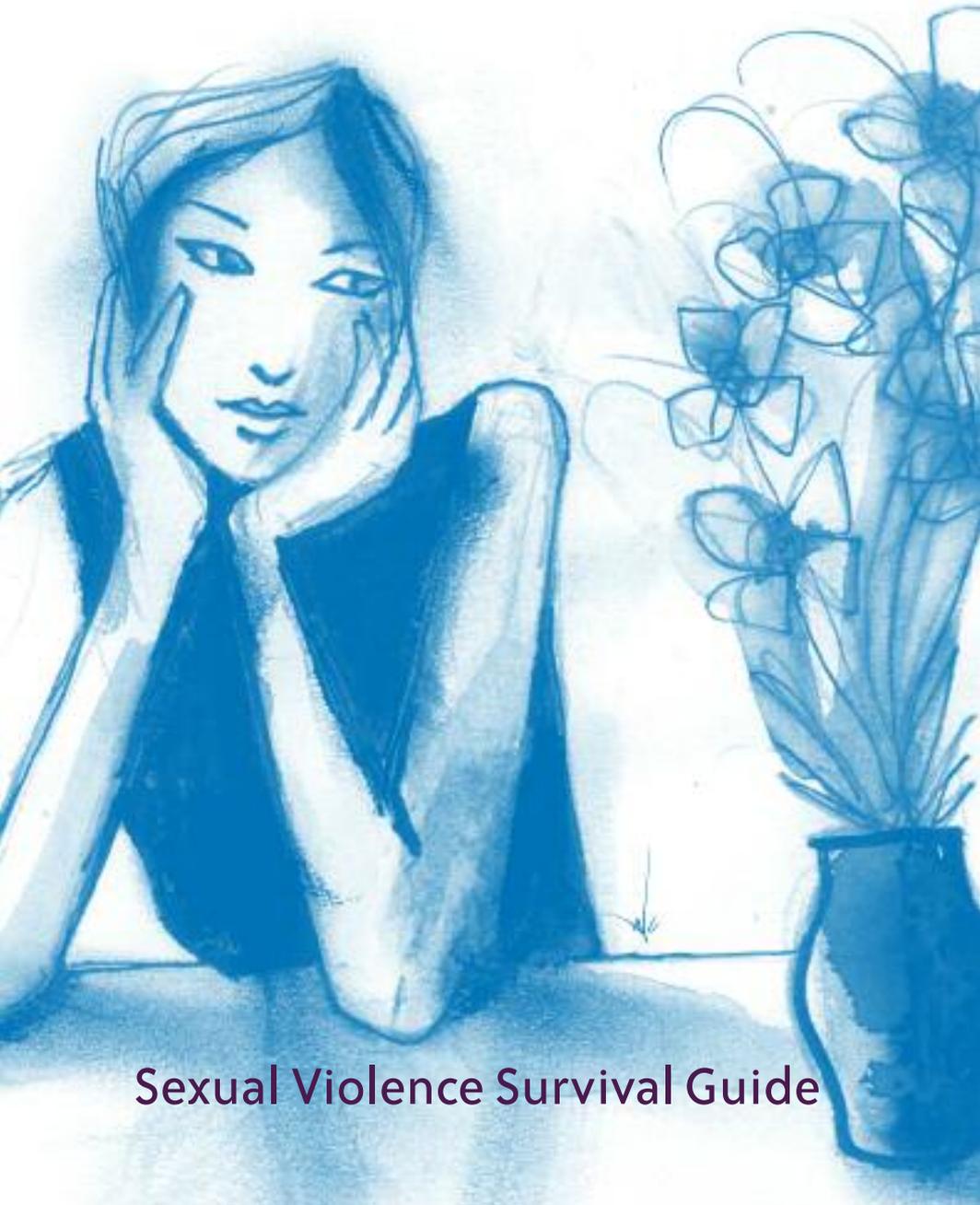


There is help. Take action.



Sexual Violence Survival Guide

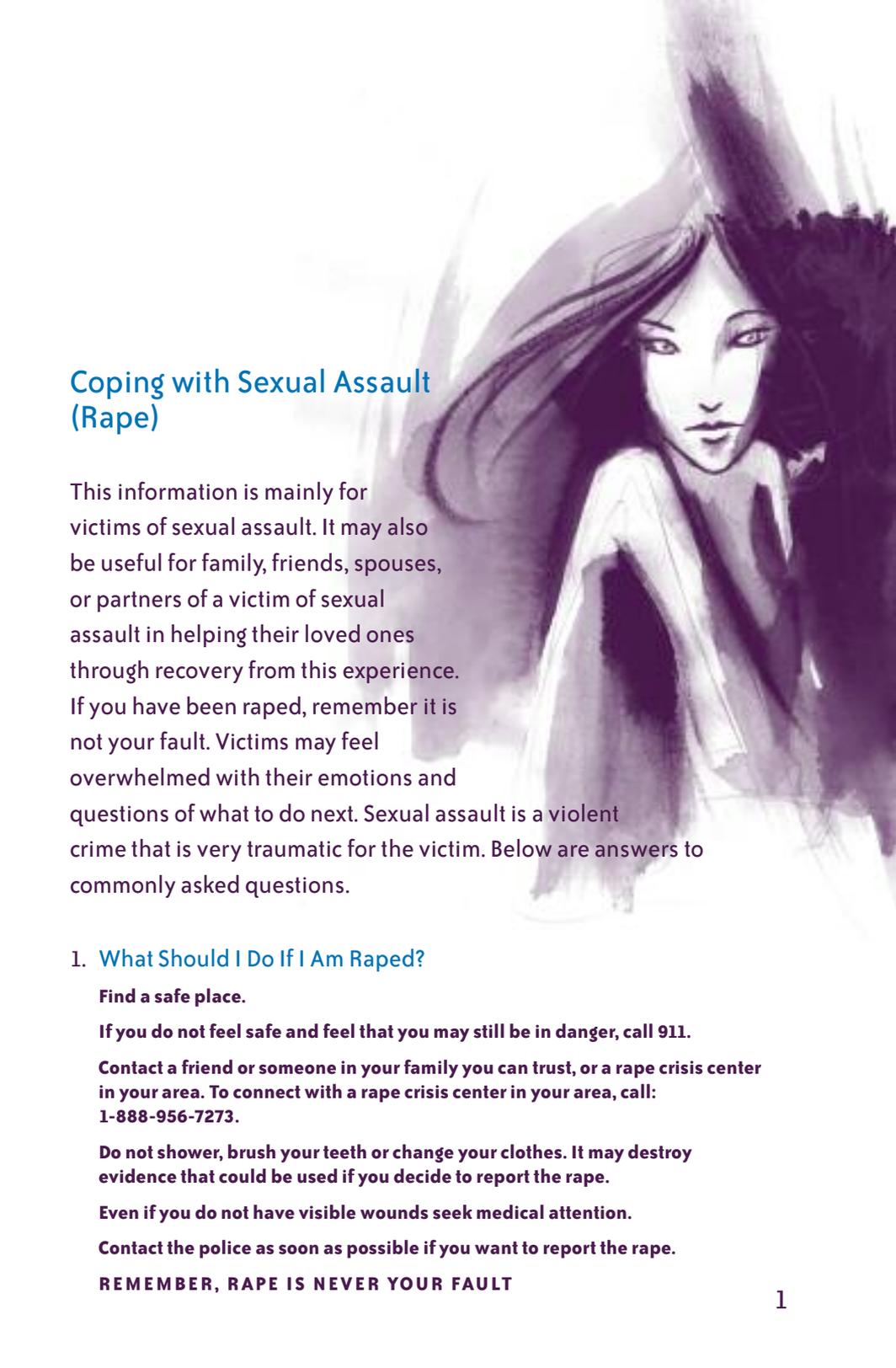
Options available to victims of sexual assault crimes.

RAPE

talk about it
PREVENT IT

You are not alone. [Help is available.](#)

Call 1-888-956-7273 (RAPE) or go to www.fcasv.org to find the rape crisis program nearest you.



Coping with Sexual Assault (Rape)

This information is mainly for victims of sexual assault. It may also be useful for family, friends, spouses, or partners of a victim of sexual assault in helping their loved ones through recovery from this experience. If you have been raped, remember it is not your fault. Victims may feel overwhelmed with their emotions and questions of what to do next. Sexual assault is a violent crime that is very traumatic for the victim. Below are answers to commonly asked questions.

1. What Should I Do If I Am Raped?

Find a safe place.

If you do not feel safe and feel that you may still be in danger, call 911.

Contact a friend or someone in your family you can trust, or a rape crisis center in your area. To connect with a rape crisis center in your area, call: 1-888-956-7273.

Do not shower, brush your teeth or change your clothes. It may destroy evidence that could be used if you decide to report the rape.

Even if you do not have visible wounds seek medical attention.

Contact the police as soon as possible if you want to report the rape.

REMEMBER, RAPE IS NEVER YOUR FAULT

2. What Are My Choices After Being Raped?

It is your decision to report the rape or not to law enforcement. This is a decision only you can make, as only you know what is best for you.

Whether you decide to report or not, you can speak to a victim advocate in your community about your options.

A victim advocate is specially trained to offer help in getting crisis services, and acting on behalf of, and in support of sexual assault victims. The advocate will work to ensure that your interests are represented and your rights upheld.

If you decide to report you will speak to a police officer who will ask you several questions.

After a report is given to the police officer a detective will be informed about your case.

You have the right to have a victim advocate, friend or family member present with you when talking to the police officer or the detective.

You may decide to have an evidence exam.

REMEMBER, RAPE IS NEVER YOUR FAULT

3. What Happens At An Evidence Exam?

The purpose of this exam is to gather evidence(such as semen, sperm and hair) of the crime that has been committed.

You have the right to have someone present during the exam such as a family member, friend or a victim advocate. Evidence is collected using a "Rape Kit."

The exam includes looking for signs of physical injuries; a pelvic exam; testing for sexually transmitted diseases and testing for pregnancy if necessary. Pictures may also be taken for evidence or medical records.

Evidence will also be collected from any area of your body that might have been in contact with the perpetrator.

The clothes that you were wearing will be collected and examined by a forensic lab. If possible, take another set of clothes to change into after the exam. The doctor or nurse will make sure that you are treated for any injuries, and will discuss emergency contraception and disease prevention.

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4. If I Don't Want An Evidence Exam Do I Still Need To Go A Doctor?

Yes, it is important that you get medical attention after you have been raped. You want to protect your health. There may be physical injuries that you are not aware of that need to be treated. You can also be treated for sexually transmitted diseases and discuss your options in case of pregnancy. You could go to your private doctor or a health clinic if you choose to for this examination.

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5. What Kind Of Help Can I Get?

A victim advocate will provide you with information and resources that will help you through this difficult time including:

Crisis counseling for you or for family members.

Assistance with the legal process if you choose to report.

Assistance with law enforcement agencies, such as your local sheriff's office, state attorney's office and also with the rape crisis center in your community.

Rape crisis counselors provide many types of help, including individual and group counseling, crisis hotline support, and assistance finding social services to help you.

Call the Florida Council Against Sexual Violence Hotline at 1-888-956-7273 to be forwarded to a crisis center near you.

REMEMBER, RAPE IS NEVER YOUR FAULT

6. How Does The State Prosecute The Case?

The state attorney's office prosecutes sexual battery (rape) cases.

As the victim of a crime, you do not need to hire a lawyer.

Once an arrest takes place, you will be asked to meet with the assistant state attorney who will be handling your case. Later, you may be asked to return to court to give a sworn statement, called a deposition.

You are entitled to have a victim advocate present when you give your statement.

The victim advocate will also help you during this process and let you know what to expect.

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7. How Can I Get Financial Help?

The Florida Attorney General's Division of Victim Services has a program that may provide financial help to victims of crime.

Victims of crime may be eligible for financial help with medical care or prescriptions that are needed because of the crime, lost income, and mental health services.

Victims who want to apply for help can contact the Division of Victim Services at 1-800-226-6667 or can ask for help from a victim advocate.

REMEMBER, RAPE IS NEVER YOUR FAULT

8. What Are Civil Charges?

A civil action is primarily filed to recover financial losses.

You will have to hire your own attorney because the state does not assist in this type of case.

Discuss your case with an attorney to learn about your options.

You could contact the National Crime Victim Bar Association at 1-800-394-2255 for legal referrals.

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9. What Types Of Emotions Can I Expect?

You may feel many different emotions. There is no one typical response to rape.

You may feel ashamed, overwhelmed, angry at what was taken from you, or guilty that you were not able to stop what happened.

You may feel that you are not in control of your emotions as a result of feeling very angry one day and depressed the next.

Victims may feel distress and anxious.

There may be a disbelief of what has happened, and a need to try to "get back to their normal lives" as quickly as possible.

Whatever you may feel is normal. Talk to a victim advocate about options to seek counseling to help you through this time.

REMEMBER, RAPE IS NEVER YOUR FAULT



10. What Are My Rights As A Victim?

Florida Statute 960.001 outlines victim's rights, which includes:

To be treated with compassion and dignity.

To have protection from intimidation.

To receive advance notification of court proceedings.

To be present at court hearings.

To be accompanied by a victim advocate to court proceedings.

To have emotional and physical support.

To be informed of services available within the community.

To request and collect compensation/restitution for damages.

To submit a victim impact statement to the court about how the crime affected them, their friends, and their family.

To have property returned as soon as possible.

To be informed of defendant's release from incarceration (applies to specific offenses)

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