

Rape Survivor Options

Rape survivors are faced with many immediate decisions. Some decisions must be made within a few days after an assault. Because rape survivors are in a very difficult situation it is incredibly important to give them information about their options and leave decisions up to them.

Medical Options

Because of the nature of rape, there can be physical injuries or problems associated with the attack. Most rape survivors do not experience many physical injuries (bruises, broken bones, internal bleeding), but a doctor's visit would be the best option to rule out physical problems. Rape survivors also may have to immediately think about sexually transmitted infections (STIs), the contraction of HIV/AIDS and unwanted pregnancy.

Victims of rape are entitled to certain medical help under the Illinois Law SASETA (Sexual Assault Survivors Emergency Treatment Act). SASETA guarantees that rape survivors will receive the following care:

- A private exam room
- A medical examination and a rape kit if requested – evidence can be collected **10-14 days** after assault
- Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) to prevent HIV/AIDS – must be taken in **72 hours** to be effective
- Antibiotics to prevent infection and STIs – must be taken in **72 hours** to be effective
- Plan B contraception to prevent pregnancy – must be taken in **72 hours** to be effective
- Priority second only to extreme trauma cases (car accidents, weapons injuries... etc)
- All of the above for free covered by SASETA

Counseling Options

Most survivors do not seek out counseling services right after a rape occurs. They frequently do not tell anyone about the sexual assault until 5 years or more after the attack. If and when a survivor decides that counseling is appropriate for them they are taking a great step in their recovery. Listed below are some common referrals:

- **Porchlight Counseling Services: (773) 750-7077**
- **Rape Victim Advocates: (312) 443-9603**
- **Chicago Rape Crisis Hotline: (888) 293-2080**

Legal Options

A rape survivor may or may not want to talk to the police. Upon arriving at the emergency room, (if that is the course of action the survivor has decided on) the police will be called because hospitals have a responsibility to report crimes. The following is the chain of events:

