

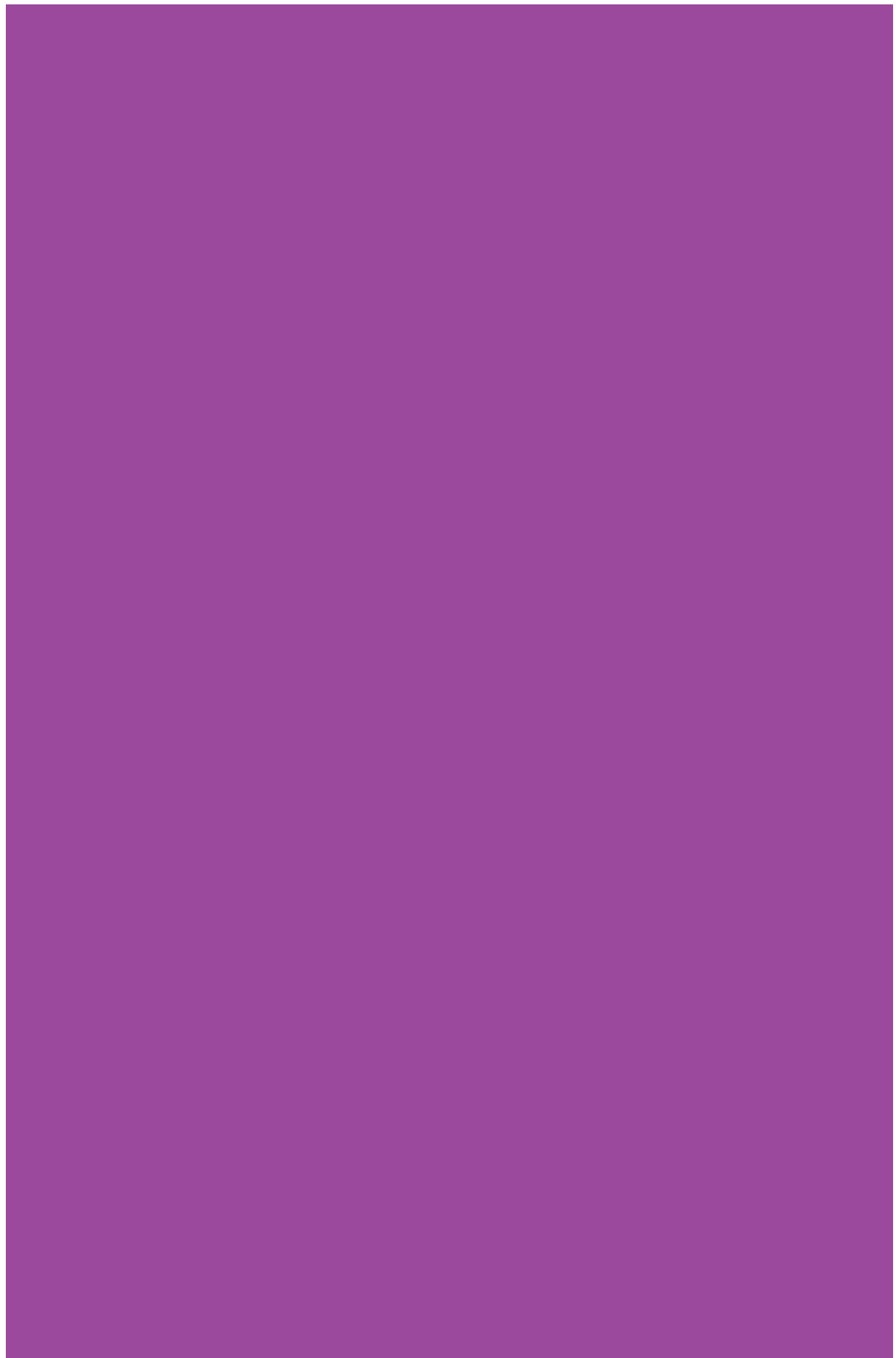
KNOW YOUR RIGHTS



Rape Crisis
Cape Town Trust



Easy-to-read





Know your Rights



Easy-to-read version

Sexual violence happens when someone forces you to take part in sexual activities

If you have experienced sexual violence

This document tells us about things that are important to know;

It is important to know:

1. **Your health risks:** What might happen to your health?
2. **Your rights:** Things you are allowed to do and have.
3. **Services for you:** Help that you can get



If someone has sexually abused or violated you;

It is important to know:

- 1. The risks to your health**
- 2. What your health rights are**
- 3. How to access free health services**

You can access these services even if you do not open a case.

You have a right to be assisted even if you choose to open a case later on, or not at all.

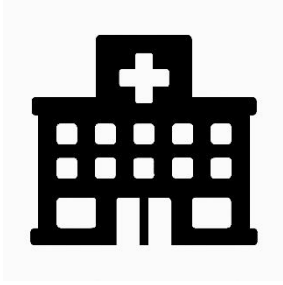
Doctors advise that it is best to get medical treatment as soon as possible.

This is to prevent diseases that can be passed on by having sex with someone, especially if the sex was forced on you.



Get to a health service within a few hours of the assault. If you fail to do so, it is important for you to get there within 72 hours, which is three days.

This is to make sure that you receive medical assistance in time.



Get help as soon as possible.

Visit a health facility or a **Thuthuzela Care Centre**

Thuthuzela Care Centres help people who have been hurt by sexual violence

They help you in one place without needing to go to different places

Reporting to the police is optional

If you do not report, you might want to keep the medical evidence from your clothes.



Wrap your clothes in a newspaper, not a plastic bag, if you bring them with you.

Preserve physical evidence.

Do not wash or change clothes before a medical examination.

If clothes are changed, keep the clothes from the incident in a paper bag or wrap them in newspaper.

If you can, go directly to the health facility or Thuthuzela Care Centre.



The police will come there to talk to you and open a case.

If you cannot go by yourself, visit a local police station. They will arrange transport for you.

When you go to a health facility or Thuthuzela Care Centre, you will get:

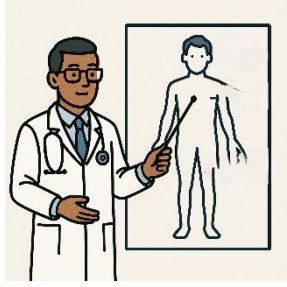


- Help with your feelings and shock.
- Medical help.
- Help with the law.



Do not stay quiet if you feel sad. You can talk to someone.

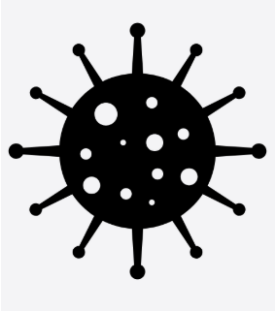
If you need a safe place to stay, they will help you find one.



Health Risks

Injuries may occur.

Injuries may become infected if left untreated.



There is a risk of getting Human Immunodeficiency Virus also known as HIV

If the person who hurt you had HIV, you are likely to get it too

HIV is a virus that can make you very sick.



Preventive medicine works best if started within seventy-two hours.

There is a risk that it will not work if you delay

The medicine is very strong and can make you feel sick

The preventive medicine must be taken for a full 28 days;

if not, it may not work.



Follow-up tests are needed to check health.

There is a risk of getting other infections from the person who raped you.



These are called sexually transmitted infections, STIs

Contraception is a way to prevent pregnancy

Pregnancy may occur if contraception is not used.

Some women might get pregnant after rape, especially if they are not using any contraception



Strong emotions may occur.

Your family may also be in shock just like you.

Counselling can help you feel better

If the person who raped you threatened you, you might still be in danger of more harm.

When you go to the hospital after being hurt in a rape, doctors can collect important proof.

This proof can help in court against the person who hurt you.

If you go to the hospital, and also want to report to the police, you should be aware that;

You can only get a rape kit done within 72 Hours after the rape



This is done to collect Deoxyribonucleic Acid also called DNA evidence

DNA is like a unique code in our bodies that can tell who we are.

Doctors can use DNA to find out who the rapist is if they left things like saliva, semen, or blood.



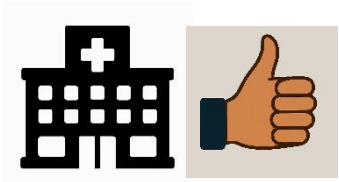
Do not wash or change your clothes after the rape.

If you take off your clothes, do not put them in a plastic bag. This can destroy the proof.

It is best to go to the hospital in the same clothes.

If you have taken your clothes off, bring them in a cloth or paper bag.

Health Rights



After someone rapes you, you have the right to ;

Free medical treatment. Treatment is available for any injuries and infections.



Receive Post Exposure Prophylaxis also known as PEP
PEP is medicine that helps prevent HIV.

To get PEP, you should go to a hospital within 3 days after rape, the sooner the better

Follow-up tests which are offered for free.



Free treatment for sexually transmitted infections

Emergency contraception like the Morning After Pill



Safe and legal abortion. Abortion is available up to twelve weeks at a district hospital public health facilities.

Some Regional hospitals and private clinics offer abortion up to twenty weeks.



Free counselling and mental health support

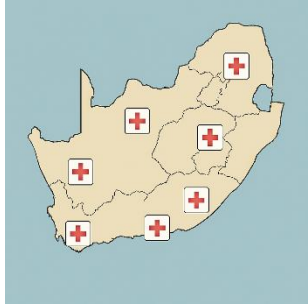
Counselling for family members.



Ask the investigating officer for protection measures if there is a threat of further harm from the rapist.

A safe place to stay at a shelter if needed.

Social work services for further assistance.



Free Health Services

Thuthuzela Care Centres or selected government health facilities offer all the services above in one place.

If you go to any other general place, you will be referred to a selected government health facility or Thuthuzela Centre

All services above are provided for free at selected centres



You might need counselling to help you feel better as you get justice. Non-Governmental Organisations can give you counselling for free



You can ask a referral to get help from a Non-Governmental Organisation. They will help you follow the court processes.

You can get HIV medication within the 72 hours after rape. You can also get the full 28 day course treatment and follow up testing.

You get these from your local clinic without going back to a Thuthuzela center.



You can go to a private doctor. However, they will make you pay.

If you go there, make sure they are able to do a forensic examination. This is important because you need to know if they will be able to appear in court if your case goes to court.

Some Doctors do not want to do that so you should be careful



Victim Service Charter Rights

The victim service charter tells you your rights as a victim.

Rights are the rules that protect you.

It tells you the help you can get if you are a victim in South Africa.

It explains what to expect from the police, hospitals, and other services.

Your rights from the Victim Service Charter include;

The right to be treated with fairness & with respect for dignity & privacy

This means you must get help quickly at the police station and hospital.

You must not be made to wait for a long time.

Criminal justice system means the police, courts, and other people who deal with crime.

Everyone in the criminal justice system must treat you with respect.

They must speak to you in your own language.

They must try to stop things that make you feel upset again. This is called secondary trauma.





The right to offer information

Investigation means the police are trying to find out what happened.

Prosecutors are people who help take the case to court.

The police and prosecutors must write down your information.

They must keep it safe so it can be used later.

You have the right to give information during the investigation.

You have the right to speak in court about the crime.

This is called testifying. It means telling the court what happened to you.



The right to receive information

You should be given information about your rights and the services that you can get.

Services are the support you can get, like help from the police or hospital.

If you do not understand something, you can ask for it in your own language.

The police, hospital workers, and court workers must explain things clearly.

They must tell you what they need from you.

They must also tell you what they will do for you.

You can ask for information about the investigation and the case at any time



The right to protection

You have the right to feel safe.

No one is allowed to scare you, hurt you, or offer you money to change your story.

This is called intimidation, harassment, bribery, and abuse.

If you see or feel any of these things, tell the police straight away.

If you are a witness, the court may help keep you safe.

You might speak in a different room, away from the courtroom.

The court might also keep your name and face secret.

You might get witness protection.

This means extra help to keep you safe if needed.



The right to assistance

You can ask for help after the crime.

You can ask for health services, like seeing a doctor.

You can ask for counselling, which means talking to someone about your feelings.

You can ask for legal help, which means getting support with the law.

You can ask for any other help you need.

If you have special needs, people providing these services must try to meet your needs.

They must treat you with care and kindness.



List of Thuthuzela Care Centres

The following numbers may be used:

Karl Bremer Hospital: 021 918 1321

Heideveld Day Hospital: 021 699 3246

Victoria Hospital (Forensic Unit): 021 799 1111 or 021 799 1235

Khayelitsha District Hospital: 021 360 4570

The Rape Crisis 24- hour helpline is 021 447 9762.

More information is available on www.rapecrisis.org.za.



This document was written by Rape Crisis South Africa Cape Town Trust



National Council of & for
Persons with Disabilities

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and for Persons with Disabilities



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