

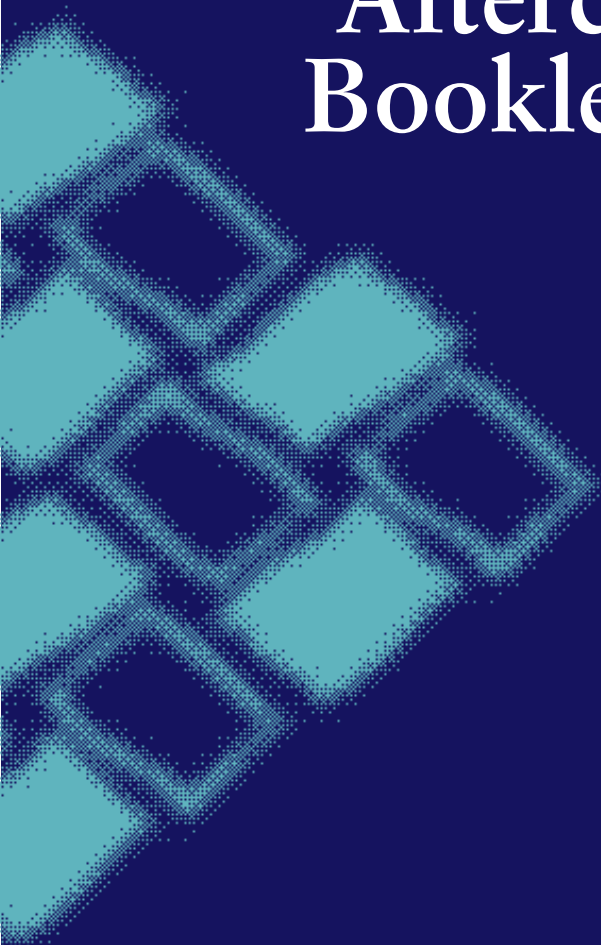


Beth Israel Deaconess
Medical Center



A teaching hospital of
Harvard Medical School

Your Aftercare Booklet



Your Medical Care

The physician/nurse who treated you in the Emergency Department performed a general physical examination to check for internal and external injuries and to test for sexually transmitted diseases. The Emergency Department will call if any of your test results are positive. If you have any questions about your medical care, call the Emergency Department Resource Nurse at 617.754.2400.

You may have been treated with antibiotics to prevent

sexually transmitted diseases. If your physician/nurse prescribed medication for you, it is important to complete the full course as directed, and call the physician/nurse if you experience side effects. We recommend that you abstain from sexual intercourse for 72 hours after you begin the antibiotics to ensure against infection.

Since HIV/AIDS is a sexually transmitted disease with a long incubation period, you may have concerns about follow-up testing for this infection. There are no statistics on HIV transmission following sexual assault, although it is believed that the likelihood of

FOLLOW-UP for PEP

The Infectious Disease Clinic at BIDMC will provide medical follow-up (testing, medication prescriptions, management of side effects, etc.) if you started PEP in the BIDMC Emergency Department. The Infectious Disease Clinic can be reached at 617.632.7706. You should call to make your first follow-up appointment as soon as possible after leaving the Emergency Department. Your first appointment needs to occur within 3 days following your evaluation in the Emergency Department. The Center for Violence Prevention and Recovery (CVPR) can help to coordinate your follow-up, if you prefer. The CVPR can be reached at 617.667.8141. It is your responsibility to keep your appointments with the Infectious Disease Clinic. In most cases, you will be seen at 3 days, 2 weeks, 6 weeks, 3 months, and 6 months following the sexual assault. Even if you have not been started on PEP, you may still wish to meet with the Infectious Disease physician to discuss risks of transmission of sexually transmitted diseases and to coordinate follow-up testing. The service is available to you to provide you with counseling and care, whether or not you were treated with PEP. Please call the Infectious Disease Clinic at 617.632.7706 to arrange an appointment.

this occurring is very low. HIV antiretroviral infection, when provided within 72 hours of a sexual assault, can prevent transmission of infection. You may have been offered this medication in the Emergency Department, if the nurse and physician who saw you felt that the risk presented in your situation warranted intervention. In many cases, however, no treatment is needed, because of the low risk of transmission. If you were provided antiretroviral medication, you may have been given two medications (in one combination pill) or three medications (addition of another medication to the combination pill). These combinations of medications are referred to as PEP (post exposure prophylaxis).

The possibility of pregnancy was discussed with you during your examination. If you were given estrogen pills (the “morning after” pill) for pregnancy prevention, you received two at the hospital and two to take 12 hours later. This medication may cause nausea. Call the Emergency Department Resource Nurse at 617.754.2400 if you vomit the medication, or if your period does not arrive at the expected time.

Follow-up Care

We recommend that you see a physician for a follow-up visit in four weeks. You can:

- ◆ use your own PCP or OB/GYN
- ◆ call OB/GYN at BIDMC at 617.667.3736 or
- ◆ call HCA Women’s Health at 617.667.6400.

The last page of this booklet lists the names and phone numbers of the physician, nurse, and counselor who treated you in the Emergency Department. Review the Treatment and Discharge Instructions for specific medical follow-up recommendations. Please feel free to call at any time if you have any questions or concerns.

Your Emotional Care

Sexual assault is a trauma that can cause a wide range of feelings and reactions. Although each person reacts differently to this crisis, it is *normal* to experience some or all of the following emotions and side effects:

- ◆ *Shock and numbness:* You may be unsure of what to do, whom to tell, or how you feel. You may feel confused, irritable, tearful, and easily overwhelmed.
- ◆ *Fear:* You may be worried about your safety and afraid to be alone. You may experience

nightmares and flashbacks.

- ◆ *Shame and humiliation:* You may feel violated, degraded, and experience self-doubt.
- ◆ *Guilt:* You may feel that the assault was in some way your fault and that you could have done something to prevent it.
- ◆ *Physical distress and feelings of physical violation:* You may experience headaches, stomach aches, and sleep and eating problems. You may want to take extra showers or baths.
- ◆ *Anger:* You may feel anger at the person who raped you and at the world in general.
- ◆ *Powerlessness and helplessness:* You may feel that you have lost control over your body and your life.
- ◆ *Distrust:* You may be suspicious of everyone and feel unsafe even in familiar situations or with familiar people.

- ◆ *Sexual fear:* Physical contact may remind you of the assault, and resuming sexual relations may be difficult.
- ◆ *Concern about family and friends' reactions:* Loved ones may not know what to say or do for you. You may worry that you are burdening them and find yourself withdrawing socially.

All of these feelings are *normal* and will subside. Remember, no one asks to be raped. Rape by definition entails a lack of consent. It is not your fault. You have lived through a traumatic experience and it will take time to recover. It helps to talk with family, friends, and counselors about what has happened to you and how you are feeling.

Personal Decisions

Reporting a sexual assault to the police is *your* decision - and we will support what you feel is the best choice for you. If you need

A counselor from **CVPR** will call you within 72 hours after your Emergency Department visit to see how you are and to answer your questions about medical, emotional, or legal issues, and arrange for follow-up services.

CVPR offers follow-up counseling (individual and groups). Counseling can assist you in recovery and prevent long term effects. You may decide to participate in counseling immediately following the assault, or you may decide at some point in the future that counseling would be beneficial for you. You, your family members, or friends may participate in counseling services at CVPR to gain support, information, and to recover.

Please feel free to contact us at any time for assistance at **617.667.8141**.

more information before making a decision, our staff can refer you to victim/witness advocates who work in the court system, or legal attorney advocates who specialize in sexual assault. Talking to these people does not obligate you to report the assault to the police.

Your Medical Record

During your physical examination, evidence was collected and placed in an evidence collection kit and an account of the assault was recorded in your medical record. This information and evidence is strictly confidential and can only be used if you decide to report the assault to the police.

Prior to the examination you signed a form giving the hospital permission to release the physical evidence to the police, who transport it to the crime laboratory.

If you are undecided about reporting the assault, the evidence collection kit will be sent to the crime laboratory and stored for six months. The kit will be identified by a number. It will be matched with your name only if you report the assault to the police.

Reporting

If you decide to report the assault, call the police in the district

where the assault occurred.

- ◆ Tell the police that you had evidence collected at the Emergency Department of the Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center. Give them your name and the number of the evidence collection kit.
- ◆ Sexual assault is a criminal offense. If you press criminal charges, you will be assigned an assistant district attorney who will help you prepare to testify in court.

Medical Expenses

Many of your medical expenses may be covered by your medical insurance. If you do not have medical insurance, fees can be adjusted according to a sliding fee scale. You can call the Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center Outpatient Accounts Office at 617.667.3484.

You may be eligible to apply to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for reimbursement of treatment costs under the Victims of Violent Crimes Compensation Act. Ask your counselor, or call the Department of the Attorney General, Victim Compensation and Assistance Division, 617.727.2200, for further information.

For Family and Friends*

When someone close to you has been sexually assaulted it can be an upsetting time for everyone. Experience has shown that sensitive and supportive responses from family and friends can be very helpful in a sexual assault survivor's recovery. The following are some suggestions of ways you can help:

*This section refers to the victim of rape as "her"; however, it is important to note that more than seven percent of all adult rape victims are male. These recommendations apply to all survivors of sexual assault.

- ◆ *Be supportive.*
- ◆ *Let her know that you care, that you believe her, and that she is not alone.*
- ◆ *Be empathetic and interested without prying.*
- ◆ *Let her tell you as much or as little about the sexual assault as she wishes. Do not be judgmental.*
- ◆ *Avoid criticism of the survivor's behavior. For example, "If you weren't drinking, you wouldn't be in this mess." (implying fault)*

- ◆ *Let her make as many decisions as she can about what she wants to happen (for example - whom to tell, reporting to the police, or what will make her feel safe).*
- ◆ *Do not be overly protective. Help her regain a sense of control over her life.*
- ◆ *Encourage her to express her feelings and concerns about what has happened to her.*
- ◆ *Help her recognize that recovery is a process that will take time (months - not days or weeks).*
- ◆ *Try not to express your feelings of anger or helplessness to her. It may be helpful for you to talk to a rape crisis counselor about your own feelings.*

Please call the Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center's Center for Violence Prevention and Recovery at 617.667.8141 for additional information.

Please Call Us

If you have any questions or concerns, please call us. We care about your well-being and are interested in helping you in any way we can.

- ◆ **Center for Violence Prevention and Recovery at BIDMC**
Rape Crisis Intervention Program - Individual and Group Counseling services are free
617.667.8141
- ◆ **Boston Area Rape Crisis Center**
24 hr. telephone hotline and hospital accompaniment / Legal advocacy and counseling
617.492.7273 or
800.841.8371
- ◆ **Infectious Disease at BIDMC**
617.632.7706
- ◆ **Victim Rights Law Center**
Civil legal assistance to sexual assault survivors, including such issues as housing, privacy, safety, employment, education, and immigration
617.399.6720
- ◆ **Women's Health Associates**
617.667.6400
- ◆ **BIDMC Emergency Department**
617.754.2400
- ◆ **Mass Office of Victim Assistance (MOVA)**
617.727.5200
- ◆ **Emergency Department Resource Nurse**
617.754.2400

Your social worker / resident's name: _____

Phone: _____

Your physician's name: _____

Phone: _____

Your nurse's name/s: _____

Phone: _____

Your evidence collection kit number: _____



Center for
Violence Prevention
and Recovery



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