

THERE ARE MANY FORMS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

In most cases of rape or sexual assault, there is no witness. To make it possible to take legal action against the perpetrator, it is therefore important to collect and preserve evidence that can be used in court proceedings, also perhaps at a later date.

After an assault, many women suffer from extreme emotional distress and they are often in a state of shock. Rather often, the perpetrator is a man who is already known to the victim.

For many reasons, it can be very difficult to decide in such a situation whether to take legal action or not.

But irrespective of the victim's immediate decision whether to report to the police or not, collecting and preserving evidence as quickly as possible is highly advisable.

It is possible that you go to a health clinic for a confidential forensic check and that evidence is preserved and stored anonymously. This allows you more time after the assault to decide if you want to report to the police or not. You may want to consider more carefully and also seek professional support before you decide.

HOSPITALS / CLINICS YOU CAN CONTACT:

Marienhospital Gelsenkirchen,
Gynäkologie (Women's Clinic)
Virchowstr. 122 · 45886 Gelsenkirchen

St. Marien-Hospital Buer,
Gynäkologie (Women's Clinic)
Mühlenstr. 5-9 · 45894 Gelsenkirchen-Buer

FURTHER ADVICE AND SUPPORT:



Frauenberatungs- und Kontaktstelle e.V.
Notruf für vergewaltigte und sexuell
missbrauchte Mädchen und Frauen e.V.
(Women's Advice Centre and Emergency
number for Victims of Sexual Violence -
Girls and Women)

Robert-Koch-Str. 18 · 45879 Gelsenkirchen
Phone: 0209 | 207713
Email: frauenberatung-ge@arcor.de
Website: www.frauenberatung-ge.de

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Anonymous Preservation of Evidence after Sexual Assault

INFORMATION FOR VICTIMS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Anonymous Preservation of Evidence after Sexual Assault

IF YOU WANT TO REPORT TO THE POLICE STRAIGHT AWAY

If you have been a victim of sexual assault and you want to report straight away, you should call the police. They will file your complaint and then take you to a hospital or health clinic where you will receive initial medical care. A doctor will also take and preserve the swabs and samples which are necessary as evidence to take legal action.

IF YOU DO NOT WANT TO REPORT TO THE POLICE STRAIGHT AWAY

In case you have been a victim of sexual violence and you do not wish to report to the police (or you have not decided yet), you can also contact one of the hospitals listed in this leaflet as quickly as possible.

The assault will not be reported to the police without your consent. Clinics have to respect strict patient confidentiality! As well as receiving the initial medical care, you will be given the opportunity to have the swabs and samples taken to be preserved and stored for evidence anonymously. The evidence will be stored, along with the medical report, at the Institute of Legal Medicine in Essen for a maximum period of 10 years. You can still decide, at any time during these years, to file a police report and take legal action. The stored evidence can be used in a later court trial.

WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO DO?

HOW EVIDENCE IS PRESERVED ANONYMOUSLY

After the sexual assault, you go to the outpatient women's clinic at one of the listed hospitals as soon as possible.

Although this may be difficult for you:
Please do not change your clothes or wash before you go. But if possible, take a spare change of clothes with you.

In the women's clinic, you ask for strict patient confidentiality and for the evidence to be stored anonymously.

The hospital has a sexual assault evidence kit to collect samples for evidence which will be preserved and given a code which only you will have access to.

The evidence will be stored under this code at the Institute of Legal Medicine in Essen for up to ten years before it will be disposed of.

If you want to report and take legal action any time during this period, please inform the police about the evidence that has been stored there anonymously. The police will initiate the necessary steps then.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

IF THERE IS A RISK OF PREGNANCY

If you have been raped and you are worried about a possible pregnancy, you may want to take the morning-after pill. You can buy it at pharmacies without a prescription. We advise you to ask your doctor or a pharmacist you can confide in for advice about suitable forms of birth control.

FURTHER MEDICAL SUPPORT

After the emergency treatment at a hospital it is advisable to continue seeking medical help. There may be injuries, infections and other health risks that should be dealt with and cared for confidentially. In this case, it is best to go to your gynaecologist or your general practitioner.

ADVICE AND PSYCHO-SOCIAL SUPPORT

Immediately after a sexual assault or any time later, you may contact the Frauenberatungs- und Kontaktstelle e.V. (Women's Advice Center). You can get advice free of charge there and you can also contact the centre anonymously.

If you do not understand German or just very little, they will provide female interpreters.