

Recovering After a Sexual Assault

Sexual assault is a violation of a person's physical and psychological boundaries. Beyond the immediate pain and shock of the assault, common **after effects can include any or all of the following:**

- Anger and Rage (*I'm going to strangle that creep if I ever see him again!*)
- Anxiety and Panic (*I can't breathe. I can't go into that classroom.*)
- Self-Blame, Guilt, and Shame (*I was so stupid to let this happen. I feel so dirty.*)
- Powerlessness (*Will I always feel like a victim?*)
- Denial (*Maybe it wasn't really rape. Did I just make it up?*)
- Disorientation, Difficulty Concentrating (*What day is it? What did I do with my keys? I can't remember what the professor lectured on today.*)
- Flashbacks (*Reliving the assault in your mind*) and Nightmares
- Sleep Difficulties (*Trouble falling or staying asleep*)
- Hyper-Vigilance (*Heightened awareness and scanning the environment for threats, even in places previously considered to be safe*)
- Physical Problems (*Ongoing headaches or stomachaches, feeling fidgety and frazzled, loss of appetite*)
- Emotional Numbing, Substance Abuse
- Depression, Self-harm, Suicidal Thoughts
- **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder**
- STDs, Pregnancy

These effects can be experienced long after the assault has ended, and if left unaddressed many of them can reoccur throughout a lifetime. It's important to seek help as soon as you are able. If you do not feel able, consider asking a friend to help you find and access the assistance you need.

PACT5 - <http://pact5.org/how-to-get-help/what-to-do-if-ive-been-sexually-assaulted/>

Please contact **NU Wellness Center** for help

425-889-5282

<http://eagle.northwestu.edu/departments/wellness-center/>