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.


Please contact NU Wellness Center for help
425-889-5282
http://eagle.northwestu.edu/departments/wellness-center/