

If you have been the victim of a rape or sexual assault, you may not know how to feel normal again. You may feel that the emotional pain of a rape or sexual assault will never go away. You may feel shame, depression, anxiety, and fear after the attack. No matter how you feel, it's important to remember that **things will get better**. You will learn how to heal. Life will go on in your new normal and you can be happy again.



TIPS TO TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

First and foremost, remember that the assault was not your fault. Sexual assault is always a crime and you are not responsible for the actions of another person.

PHYSICALLY

Seek medical attention immediately. Even if you do not want to take the assault to the police, it is important to see a doctor. Remember that going to the hospital does not mean you have to notify the police—it is for your health. An OBGYN is a great option. Check out the WSR fact sheet “Women’s Health Resources” for places to find a doctor. Balance your life. Make sure you are sleeping, eating, and exercising as regularly as possible. This will help your life regain some normalcy.

EMOTIONALLY

Remind yourself that every person responds differently to a rape or sexual assault. Feelings can range from depression, to humiliation, to fear, to confusion, to anger, to numbness, to guilt, to shame. All of these feelings, however unpleasant, are normal under the circumstances. Be patient with yourself - It can take a long time to recover. It may happen in small steps, incrementally, or there may be setbacks. Be mindful of your progress and your setbacks.

SPIRITUALLY

In the For the Strength of Youth booklet, it says: “Victims of sexual abuse are not guilty of sin and do not need to repent. If you have been a victim of abuse, know that you are innocent and that God loves you.” Turning to your Heavenly Father through prayer can be a priceless resource as you are adjusting to life after the assault. Priesthood blessings, temple attendance, and scripture study in moderation can be helpful.

MENTALLY

Recovering from a rape or sexual assault is a long, complicated journey. Do not feel guilty if you cannot simply “get over it.” Do not hesitate to ask for help. If you need help from a counselor or therapist, if you need help finding a support group, if you need help going to the grocery store and getting chores done, ask someone for help. It may be helpful to talk with a therapist who specializes in working with sexual assault victims. They will be able to listen, dispel misconceptions, and offer appropriate suggestions for healing. BYU’s Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) has trained therapists and is free for BYU students. Center for Women and Children in Crisis (CWCIC) also has therapists and therapy groups for sexual assault victims.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The Refuge (formerly the Center
for Women and Children in Crisis)

801-356-2511

Rape Recovery Center
24-hour Crisis Line

801-467-7273

National Sexual Assault
Telephone Hotline

800-656-HOPE (4673)

BYU Counseling and
Psychological Services

801-422-3035

BYU Sexual Assault
Survivor Advocacy
Services

801-422-9071

1500 WSC

advocate@byu.edu

BYU Title IX

801-422-8692

1085 WSC

t9coordinator@byu.edu

BYU Women's Services &
Resources Confidential
Reporting Area

801-422-4877

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