Sexual Assault and Rape

Definition

The definition of “sexual assault” includes rape, child sexual abuse, incest and other sexual acts that are physical and nonconsensual, forced, manipulated, and/or coerced. Special acts of sexual assault can take such forms as unwanted touching of one's intimate parts, such as a sexual organ, buttocks or breast; forced kissing; or bodily penetration. Such acts are illegal.

People under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs are absolutely incapable of giving sexual consent. Even if the person says “yes,” it is still rape if sexual activity continues while that person is under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs. Do not have sex with someone who is unable to give consent.

Acquaintance rape or “date” rape, in which the victim know her/his assailant, constitutes approximately 85% of reported rapes. Nationally, about 90% of campus rape victims know their attackers and 57% of them are attacked by dates.

What to do if you believe you have been sexually assaulted?

It is very frightening, complicated and confusing when an individual experiences sexual assault of any type. Here are some immediate steps to take:

1. Get to a safe place and call for help. Call 911, a friend, campus security, or an area rape crisis center.
2. Get support. Call a friend to stay with you while you go through your next steps.
3. Resist the urge to shower or change clothes. Even if you have not decided whether or not to go to the police, you should take steps to preserve evidence in case you do need it. Do not shower or change clothes; in the case of oral sex, do not eat or drink or rinse your mouth. If you must change clothes, put what you were wearing into a paper bag, not plastic.
4. Consider medical attention. Go to an emergency room where you can be examined for injury and disease and medical evidence can be collected.
5. Do not let fear, shame or questions about “blame” for what happened prevent you from taking any of the above actions.