



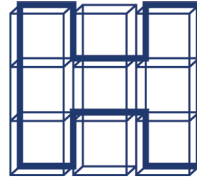
**It
takes
courage to
reach out, but
you don't have to
face this journey alone.**

What to Expect After a Sexual Assault

Survivors of sexual assault may experience a range of emotional and physical reactions in the days, weeks, or even months or years following the assault. Some common symptoms include:

- Fear, anxiety, and panic
- Disbelief and denial
- Numbness or feeling like you're just going through the motions
- Isolation or withdrawal
- Flashbacks of the assault
- Trouble sleeping or nightmares
- Headaches, dizziness, nausea, or abdominal pain
- Mood swings and/or depression
- Physical pain
- Anger and resentment

Your reactions may be different or similar to these, and they are all normal responses to a traumatic experience. If these symptoms are affecting your ability to live your life, please reach out to a crisis line or community agency for counseling. Unresolved trauma can impact your physical and emotional health, both now and in the future. You don't have to face this alone.



Lake of the Woods District Hospital

Sexual Assault / Domestic Violence Program

21 Sylvan Street West, Kenora ON P9N 3W7
807-468-9861 ext. 2511
www.lwdh.on.ca

Emergency Resources

Saakaate House, Women's Shelter

807-468-5491
1-800-465-1117 (24 Hour)

Naotkamegwaning Women's Shelter

807-226-2605
807-226-2603 (24 Hour)

Kenora Emergency Shelter

807-468-1838

Kenora Sexual Assault Center (KSAC) (24 Hour)

807-468-SAFE (7233)
1-800-565-6161

Crisis Response Services (24 Hour)

1-866-888-8988

Assaulted Women's Help Line (24 Hour)

1-866-863-0511

Victim Support Line

1-888-579-2888
877-467-2815

LWDH Counselling Services

807-467-3555



SEXUAL ASSAULT/ DOMESTIC VIOLENCE TREATMENT PROGRAM SEXUAL ASSAULT INFORMATION

Healing Starts Here

We believe you and we support you

To access care, go to the Emergency Department at Lake of the Woods District Hospital and ask for the SA/DV team



**Lake of the Woods
District Hospital**

if you are in immediate danger, call 911

Remember

You did not choose to be assaulted but you CAN choose what health care you wish to receive.

Care Options

Sexual Assault Evidence Kit (SAEK)

You may request a Sexual Assault Evidence Kit (SAEK) to gather evidence from your body that could be key in a police investigation to help identify and/or prosecute the perpetrator of the assault. A (SAEK) can be collected up to 12 days after an assault.

It's best to collect evidence as soon as possible. The process may include:

- Skin swabs from areas with physical contact
- Fingernail scrapings
- Blood and urine samples
- Collecting clothing worn during or after the assault
- Injury documentation and photographs

A SAEK is not required in order to access medical care. If you are unsure about involving the police, the evidence can be securely stored at the hospital for up to 12 months.

It is helpful if you do not shower, bathe, brush your teeth, change or destroy clothing, or straighten up the location of where the assault occurred.

Pregnancy Prevention

The Emergency Contraceptive Pill (ECP) helps prevent pregnancy by stopping or delaying the release of an egg from the ovary after unprotected sex or a contraceptive failure. This means, there is no egg for the sperm to fertilize. It may also stop sperm from reaching the egg or prevent a fertilized egg from attaching to the uterus.

The ECP may be offered within 5 days of the assault. The treatment is most effective the sooner it is taken.

- ECP is not effective if you're already pregnant
- ECP does not protect against HIV or other STIs
- If your period is more than 1 week late, take a pregnancy test and contact your healthcare provider

Sexually Transmitted Infections

Survivors of sexual assault are at risk for HIV and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) including chlamydia, gonorrhea, syphilis, herpes and trichomoniasis. A risk assessment will be conducted to discuss testing options and possible treatment.

Why STI testing is important:

- **Prevention:** STIs can cause long-term health issues, so early detection and prevention are important. Testing may include swabs, urine tests and blood tests.
- **Not always from the assault:** If an infection is detected, it doesn't mean it was acquired during the assault. It could have been contracted before.
- **Repeat testing:** STIs may not show up right away due to an incubation period.
- Follow-up testing is recommended at **4-6 weeks** and again at **4-6 months** to ensure early detection. A **test of cure** may be needed sooner after treatment.

Treatment Options: To help prevent an infection, antibiotics may be offered if you are at risk for gonorrhea or chlamydia.

Watch for Symptoms: Not everyone with an STI will develop symptoms. If you notice symptoms like discharge, itching, odour, rash or skin changes after your hospital visit, you can request testing through the SA/DV program or Health Unit.

Hepatitis

Hepatitis is inflammation of the liver, which can be caused by Hepatitis A, B, and C. The liver is an important organ that helps processes nutrients, filters blood, and fights infections. When the liver is inflamed or damaged, it can affect its function. Hepatitis can be spread through sexual contact.

You may be offered a **blood test** to check for a Hepatitis infection and see if you are immune to Hepatitis A or B (both of which have vaccines).

Hepatitis (Continued)

- If you are not immune to **Hepatitis B**, you may be offered a vaccine. If you've been vaccinated before, you might need a booster. If you haven't been vaccinated, you might need a series of 3 vaccines over the next 6 months.
- There is no vaccine for Hepatitis C, but treatment is available for acute infections.

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)

HIV weakens the immune system, making it harder for the body to fight infections. The risk of getting HIV from sexual assault is low. HIV testing is often done because little may be known about the person(s) who hurt you.

HIV may not show up in blood tests for up to 6 months, so tests are usually repeated at **4-6 weeks**, and **4-6 months** post-assault.

HIV PEP (Post-Exposure Prophylaxis): Medication may be recommended based on what is known about the person(s) who hurt you and the exposure. Treatment must be started **within 72 hours** after the assault and **taken for 28 days**.

Side effects: These medications may cause flu-like symptoms, headaches, fatigue, upset stomach, and in some cases liver or kidney problems.

Follow-up Care: The SA/DV Program offers support, lab testing and monitoring of side effects.

This is a program of the Lake of the Woods District Hospital, Affiliated with the Ontario Network for Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Treatment Centres.



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