

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON HEALTH CENTER

-HEALTHBERRY-

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When is it Rape?

This question is posed repeatedly throughout our society. The definition of rape according to dictionary.com is a "crime of forcing another person to submit to sex acts, especially sexual intercourse". You don't have to be a woman (or girl) to be raped; men (or boys) are raped also, but are less likely to report it. The rapist may be a stranger or may be an acquaintance as in "date rape" defined as "a rape in which the rapist is known to the victim (as when they are on a date together)".

When a person says "NO" and they are forced to have sexual relations, it's rape. If a person is underage (defined in most states as under the age of 18 years), under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or mentally impaired, it's rape.

In the event of a rape, the first thing to remember is that **THIS IS NOT THE VICTIM'S FAULT!!!** The victim should not shower or change clothes until they have been examined. We encourage you to come to the Health Center or call 713-743-5151 during our open hours and we will assist you. After hours, go to a hospital emergency room (in the Houston area, Memorial Hermann Hospital has an excellent rape crisis center in their emergency room) for an examination; tests for sexually transmitted diseases, and a pregnancy test (and medication to prevent pregnancy) for female patients. The victim will also receive crisis intervention counseling at that time. It's okay to take a trusted friend or relative with you. This examination does not mean you have to press charges against the violator; this is for your protection and to make sure you are all right. The examination also collects important information that will be needed in the event that you do later decide to press charges.

Follow-up care and counseling can be arranged for the victim through community resources. University of Houston students can make an appointment with our Women's Clinic at 713-743-5131 or our Men's Clinic at 713-743-5156 for information and follow-up care. We are here to help and we will assist with the hospital visit, follow-up care, and with counseling services.

Let us help you.



Healthfully yours,

Dr. Healthberry

For questions or comments you can;

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