

My Friend Has Been Assaulted

1. Ensure your friend is at a safe location away from the perpetrator. If not, take him or her to a safe place.
2. If there is an immediate threat to the victim's safety, contact military law enforcement or local police immediately. Work with law enforcement to protect the victim from the perpetrator and others acting on the perpetrator's behalf.
3. Ask if your friend would like to seek medical care. If the victim requires emergency medical care, call 911 or your installation's emergency medical care services. If the victim requires less than emergency care, help him or her get to a medical provider as soon as possible.
4. Encourage your friend to report the incident to a Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC) or Victim Advocate (VA). You may also contact the SARC for information.
 - SARCs and/or VAs are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week at every military installation. You may contact the military police or the base operator for their number.
 - Military OneSource can also help you locate your installation Sexual Assault Response Coordinator. (CONUS: 1-800-464-8107 or OCONUS collect: 484-530-5889, 24 hours a day, and 7 days a week.)
 - SARCs and VAs can inform the victim of the medical, legal and spiritual resources available, both on and off base. They can also help arrange for these services and a sexual assault forensic examination, if the victim so desires.
5. Other than safety and health-related questions, try to refrain from asking your friend for details about the incident. Show interest in what the victim says and ask what you can do to help him or her.
6. Military members usually have an option about how to report the crime.
 - Unrestricted Reports [LINK: Reporting Options: Unrestricted Reporting] allow the victim to participate in the military criminal justice process.
 - Restricted Reports [LINK: Reporting Options: Restricted Reporting] are kept confidential, and command and law enforcement are not notified.

Note: However, when the victim reports the crime to someone in the chain of command, a Restricted Report may no longer be an option. If you are in the individual's chain of command, you may have to report the matter. Please see your SARC or VA for more guidance.

7. Assist your friend with getting to the SARC, VA and/or medical care, if your friend so desires.
8. Offer to stay with your friend. Victims are often reluctant to be alone after such a frightening ordeal. Accompany your friend to the hospital or other places if he or she so desires.

9. Be a good listener. Avoid being judgmental, keep from second-guessing and resist placing any blame on him or her. Simply listen and accept what he or she says.
10. There is no "right" or "wrong" way to recover from a sexual assault. However, there are unhelpful or self-destructive ways of coping. Alcohol abuse, drug use, suicidal statements or increased behaviour's with unhealthy outcomes (unprotected and/or anonymous sex, gambling, smoking, overeating, etc.) are sometimes warning signs that your friend needs to get professional assistance. Don't be afraid to suggest that your friend might need advice from someone skilled to help him or her with more productive coping strategies.