

Medical & Legal Options after Sexual Assault

After sexual assault, a person may wish to receive medical care right away, report to police, or have evidence collected. These are some of the questions people regularly ask about their options:

-  **What is a SAFE exam?**
A SAFE exam is a Sexual Assault Forensic Evidence Exam (sometimes called a "rape kit"). In a SAFE exam, a specially-trained Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) provides medical care and may collect evidence from the survivor and the survivor's body. A SAFE exam only collects evidence – it does not prove that a person was assaulted. The exam is processed by law enforcement, but results can take time. Neither SASS nor the hospital will have access to the results.
-  **Is there a time limit?**
In Oregon, a person has up to 5 days (or 120 hours) after an assault to access a SAFE exam. For up to a week (7 days or 168 hours), a person can also access a medical exam, medication to help prevent pregnancy or sexually transmitted infections, and a pregnancy test. Though the SAFE exam has a time limit, a police report can be made at any time.
-  **How much can it cost?**
Sexual Assault Victims' Emergency Medical Response (SAVE) Fund covers the cost of the SAFE exam, medical exam, medication, and up to 5 counseling sessions, as long as the survivor seeks that care within the time limit. Hospital staff should initiate the process of accessing the SAVE fund. Additional medical tests or treatments may not be covered by the SAVE fund, but there may be other programs to help cover additional costs.
-  **Is a police report required?**
In most cases, a person 18-65 years old can choose to report to law enforcement or not and, in Oregon, can choose to have an *anonymous* SAFE exam, where evidence is stored (not processed) for 60 years or until the survivor chooses to make a police report. In most cases, information shared with clinicians is confidential; however, for people who are under 18, over 65, or considered vulnerable (such as people with some cognitive disabilities), medical providers must report what happened.
-  **What is the exam like?**
There are three stages: a questionnaire, a narrative interview, and a physical exam with evidence collection. The survivor can consent to some or all of the SAFE exam, they can pause and take a break, they can end the exam at any time, and they can set limits if they are uncomfortable.

1

QUESTIONNAIRE

The survivor will be asked a series of specific questions, including questions about the perpetrator(s), parts of their body that were harmed, etc.

2

NARRATIVE INTERVIEW

The survivor will be asked to share whatever they recall about what happened; the SANE will write down what the survivor shares.

3

PHYSICAL EXAM & EVIDENCE COLLECTION

The SANE will examine the survivor's body for injuries or evidence. They will use swabs to collect physical evidence from on and in the body. They may ask to collect clothing or belongings or ask to take images of the survivor's body, which may be used in court.