

Overview of Rape Treatment Center Services at San Francisco General Hospital

If you have experienced a recent sexual assault, help is available. The San Francisco Rape Treatment Center (RTC) team are trained, experienced providers who work at the San Francisco General Hospital Emergency Department, located at 1001 Potrero Avenue in San Francisco, 24 hours/day. The following is an overview of RTC services.

The mission of the Rape Treatment Center at San Francisco General Hospital is to provide you with sensitive, respectful, and comprehensive medical care; to collect forensic evidence for prosecution *if* you would like to do so; and to provide you with medical and psychological aftercare to assist in your recovery. We are so glad that you have decided to seek care and we want to do everything possible to assist you in your recovery.

Medical care is strongly recommended following a sexual assault or suspected sexual assault, even if some time has elapsed since the event. It takes courage and strength to come into the hospital following a sexual assault and we want to acknowledge you for coming into the hospital today. It can be very difficult to disclose what has happened to you to a team of strangers. Our goal is to support you in this process and make your hospital visit as simple and easy as possible. While we make every effort to meet with all survivors of a sexual assault as quickly as possible, occasionally there may be a wait before you are able to meet with a specialized healthcare provider from the Rape Treatment Center. While you are waiting, we want to provide you with as much information as possible.

If a specialized healthcare provider from the Rape Treatment Center is not able to meet with you right away, the following steps are recommended:

- 1. Remain at the hospital.** If you decide to leave the hospital, find a safe environment away from the assailant. You may return to the hospital at a later time. We encourage you to return as soon as you are able.
- 2. While you are waiting to meet with a specialized healthcare provider from the Rape Treatment Center, a medical evaluation may be offered to you by the SFGH Emergency Medicine team.** If this happens, a specialized healthcare provider from the Rape Treatment Center will still meet with you as soon as possible to offer you a forensic medical examination, and/or counseling. **You do not have to do any part of this evaluation that you do not want to do.** All of these services

are free and will be explained to you in more detail when you meet with the healthcare provider from the Rape Treatment Center.

- 3. You may ask the hospital staff to provide you with a support person/advocate to sit with you while you wait, if you would like one.** You may also elect to call a trusted friend or relative to wait with you. The hospital staff at SFGH will help you with this if you would like.
- 4. Try to maintain as much evidence as possible in its intact state while you are waiting.**
 - Resist the urge to clean up.
 - If possible, avoid washing, showering, bathing, changing clothes, brushing your teeth or douching until you have the opportunity to meet with a healthcare provider from the Rape Treatment Center. This will help preserve perishable evidence if you decide you would like to undergo a forensic examination.
 - You may use the bathroom if you need to. It is best to let hospital staff know when you need to use the bathroom so that a urine specimen may be collected and preserved as evidence. It is best to avoid wiping with tissue if possible.
 - It is best to avoid drinking or eating while you are waiting, but you may drink water and/or eat a snack if you need to.
 - If you have already changed clothes or have bedding, furniture, or any fabric that may have secretions on them, we recommend that you put these items into dry paper bags and close the bags. You may keep these items at home, but we do recommend that you release these to law enforcement as soon as possible if you decide to file a police report.
- 5. You may decide to file a police report even before meeting with a healthcare provider from the Rape Treatment Center. The hospital staff at SFGH will help you with this if you would like or you may call the San Francisco Police Department at a later time, whenever you are ready @ 415-553-0123.**

If you have any questions about what your options are, you may call the Trauma Recovery/Rape Treatment Center M-F 8a-5p and Tuesday until 7p at 415-437-3000. Again, we are so glad that you have decided to seek care and our goal is to support you in your recovery as much as possible.