

WHAT IS A SAFE PROGRAM?

A **SAFE Center** is the first safe space for a survivor of rape or sexual assault. The team of experts provide ongoing, comprehensive resources, treatment, education, and support making for a smoother recovery. They conduct forensic exams and can provide survivors with an advocate who helps them understand their rights and the system.

The **Victim Advocate** will help the survivor through the process of documenting, evidencing, reporting, and prosecuting their crime, and accompany you to post-exam intake. He/she will share information and resources on reporting, counseling, legal, and other medical services available to you.

A **SAFE Exam** collects evidence (samples and DNA) from a rape or sexual assault. We recommend you visit a SAFE center within the first 96 hours of being assaulted. Until after the exam, it is best to not:

- shower or bathe
- change clothes
- brush teeth
- comb hair
- use the bathroom
- eat or drink

SAFE providers are specially trained in sexual assault and crisis intervention; they will treat you with compassion and dignity to empower you and support your recovery.

The four-step SAFE process is outlined below:

- Injuries are treated.
- You may be asked to provide your medical history including a list of medications, sexual partners, and details of the assault.
- The physical exam is conducted.
 - Swabbing or combing of your mouth, nose, vagina, or may occur.
 - Photos of your injuries may be taken.
 - Your clothes may be collected for DNA.
- Medications will be prescribed to prevent pregnancy or sexually transmitted infections/disease.
- A follow-up appointment may be scheduled.
- You will be provided information on reporting your assault.

CONTACT US

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For more information on our SAFE Program please visit our website at <https://www.sthcs.org/safe.html>.

If you or someone you know has been the victim of a rape or sexual assault, we encourage you to go to one of our following emergency room SAFE Centers to receive a comprehensive exam and treatment:

UMPC Chautauqua Hospital
207 Foote Ave., Jamestown, NY 14701

Olean General Hospital
515 Main Street, Olean, NY 14760

Jones Memorial Hospital
191 N. Main Street, Wellsville, NY 14895



SOUTHERN TIER HEALTH CARE SYSTEM



ME OR SOMONE I KNOW WAS RAPED. WHAT DO WE DO?

The first and most important step is to go to the nearest SAFE Center, a center specializing in the aftermath of sexual assault. Within Chautauqua, Alleghany, and Cattaraugus counties, the SAFE Centers are located within the following ERs:

Olean General Hospital
Jones Memorial Hospital
UPMC Chautauqua Hospital

They provide the following confidential services:

- Counseling
- Support Groups
- SAFE Providers
- Advocacy Services

MYTH VS. FACT

MYTH: I will have to pay for my own exam.

FACT: A SAFE Exam and subsequent, relevant medical care is FREE to victims of sexual assault and paid for by the Office of Victim Services if you don't want your insurance to be billed or if you don't have insurance.

MYTH: I am a male; I cannot get a SAFE Exam or help for being assaulted.

FACT: Male victims have the same rights and *CANNOT* be denied services.

MYTH: If I have a SAFE Exam, my assault is immediately reported to the police.

FACT: You can decide to report at any date within the statute of limitations.

MYTH: My perpetrator will get away with his/her crime.

FACT: DNA increases the likelihood of prosecution and may even connect your perpetrator to other crimes.

MYTH: I showered so no DNA or other evidence can be collected.

FACT: You are still eligible for an exam and important evidence can still be collected. The tiniest amount of DNA has convicted perpetrators throughout history, even decades after the crime.

MYTH: I will have to have a full body exam.

FACT: The exam may be full body or focus on a particular area depending on your assault details. *At any time, if you feel uncomfortable, you may stop/skip any part of the exam.*

BENEFITS OF UTILIZING SAFE PROGRAM

1 person is assaulted every 68 seconds

25 of every 1,000 perpetrators is jailed

Ages 12-34 are at highest risk
Females ages 16-19 are at 4x higher risk
College females ages 18-24 are a 3x higher risk

WOMEN:	90%
MEN:	21%
LGBTQIA:	70%

Sexual assault is a trauma that takes years to work through; it cannot be dealt with alone. The effects negatively impact relationships and include:

- anxiety
- depression
- withdrawal
- substance abuse
- suicidal thoughts
- PTSD - Not to be taken lightly; it can:
 - Affect 94% of victims
 - Present within 2 weeks and last up to 9 months
 - Present during times of extreme distress

The likelihood of preventing pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections including HIV are significantly increased.

SAFE providers are your allies, providing:

- Expert testimony
- Patient-centered and private care
- Emotional support
- Quality collection, documentation, preservation, and custody of evidence

VICTIM'S BILL OF RIGHTS

The full list of rights can be found at <https://www.sthcs.org/safe.html>.

YOUR BASIC RIGHTS

1. You cannot be treated differently because of race, origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, age, source of payment, sex, or gender identity or expression.
2. Your immigration status or national origin cannot affect your emergency care or services, and you can ask for an interpreter.
3. Minors under the age of 17 have certain rights to make their own decisions without a parent or legal guardian.

YOUR RIGHTS IN THE HOSPITAL

1. You can have a rape crisis advocate stay with you during the exam.
2. You can have an exam to collect evidence and provide certain medical care related to the sexual assault at no cost to you.

REPORTING WHAT HAPPENED

1. You can choose whether to report.
2. You can choose whether to have an advocate from the local rape crisis program stay with you during your interview with the police or prosecutor.
3. You can contact the police or prosecutor for information on the investigation or legal proceedings.
4. If you choose to report, your evidence will be tested within 100 days.
5. If you choose not to report, your evidence will be stored for 20 years, or until you decide to release it.