



Information and Resources

For Survivors of Sexual Assault



Phone: 250 383-3232

www.vsac.ca

**This document was
developed according to
Print Accessible Design**

For readers with:

**Low vision
Limited English literacy
Aphasia**

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The Victoria Sexual Assault Centre Accessibility Information

Wheelchair and mobility device accessible

TTY/TTD accessible

Text and email accessible

Single stall all gender restrooms



This booklet is for recent survivors of sexual assault and contains important information:

- Medical options
- Reporting options
- What to expect
- Available supports

These services are available to:

- Survivors of all genders
- 13 years and older
- services are free

You have choices, you are in control

It is okay to stop at any time
It is okay to change your mind



**SART
worker**



**Medical
Care**



Police





Do you want to talk with someone?

- You will be supported to make your own decisions regarding medical care or reporting to the police.
- You will receive full information about your options and the care and supports available.
- You can have a support worker or a friend or family member with you for support if you request it.

Crisis and Information Line



250 383-3232



SART Worker

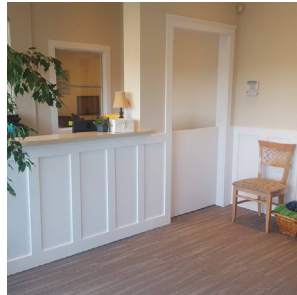
- A SART worker works on the Sexual Assault Response Team at the Victoria Sexual Assault Centre.
- They provide you with emotional support
- They provide you with information about your options
- They help coordinate services

Medical Care Choices



Victoria Sexual Assault Clinic

The nurse can provide treatment and care for survivors at the clinic



OR

Victoria General Hospital Emergency Department

The hospital may be necessary for severe medical injuries that require the attention of a doctor



With either option a support worker from the Victoria Sexual Assault Centre can attend with you



**Remember you can stop or
change your mind at any
point in this process**



Forensic Nurse Examiners

- Forensic Nurse Examiners are **pecially trained** to provide care to survivors of sexual assault, and trained to find and **collect evidence** if you choose to have them do so.
- The nurse will ask you to sign a **consent form** for the exam.
- The nurse will ask you some detailed questions about your **medical history** such as past illness or allergies to ensure the best medical care.
- The nurse will ask you some **questions** about the sexual assault to make sure you receive the most appropriate and best medical care.
- You can have medical care with the Forensic Nurse Examiner for up to 7 days after the assault. If the sexual assault happened more than 7 days ago, you may be referred to Island Sexual Health or your own doctor for medical treatment.

Your Choices

Medication Only

Medication for some common sexually transmitted infections and pregnancy prevention.

Blood and urine samples will be taken with your consent.



Medical Exam

Checking you medically, writing down any injuries, may include both **external** and **internal** and examination.

It is **your choice** which parts of exam you consent to.





Forensic Exam without Police

- A forensic exam is available up to **72 hours after** the sexual assault.
- Forensic exam includes the collection of **physical evidence**, such as hairs, fibers or fluids from your body.
- Evidence will be stored at the hospital for **one year**
- If you **don't want to talk with police** right now or are unsure about reporting you can still have evidence collected by a nurse.
- If you are considering reporting to the police, it is helpful to not shower, change or destroy clothing. If you have done any of these things it is **completely normal** and doesn't mean that there isn't evidence that can still be collected.

**Even when evidence is not collected
or
if it has been a long time since the sexual assault happened,
you can still report to police if you want to.**

Call 250 383-3232 for more information

Police Involvement



Only you know what the right decision is for you.

You are in control

- You can choose to have **no police** involved and not make a police report.
- You can choose to have evidence collected in case you want to **report at a later date.**
- You can choose to make a **police report** while at the clinic or hospital or sometime later.



Forensic Exam with Police

- If you would like to report the sexual assault to police immediately the SART worker will call the police.
- Police will speak with you about the sexual assault.
- Police will take the evidence from the Forensic Nurse Examiner and Police may ask to take your clothing.
- The clinic and the hospital can give you some clothing if yours have been taken for evidence.

Making a Police Report



- It is common to have **mixed feelings** or feelings of anxiety, uncertainty, or fear about making a police report. These feelings are valid
- In most cases it is **your choice** if you want to report the sexual assault to the police.
- There is **no time limit**- you can make a report at any time.



- If you have not made a report, but think you might like to now or in the future it is helpful to **write down everything** you can remember.
- A forensic exam is not required to make a police report



- A Victim Service Worker from the Victoria Sexual Assault Centre can **support you** throughout this process; provide more information about reporting to police and answer any questions you may have.
- If you have made a police report you will be given a **file number** and the names of an officer or detective responsible for your case.
- This file number allows you to **get information** or updates which you can do at any time.



- Police will **investigate** your case
- You will give a statement that is taped or recorded
- Police may talk with **other people** who might know something about the sexual assault



- The police will ask what happened and ask very **detailed questions**
- Some questions may or may not feel embarrassing or judgmental
- This **doesn't mean** that they don't believe you
- You can ask questions at any time. It's your right
- The police need to gather as much information as possible for the investigation



- The Victoria Sexual Assault Centre has people that can **go with you** to the police if you need support
- The Victim Service Worker can **explain things** to you
- You can talk about a **safety plan** with the SART Worker or by calling the Crisis Line at 250 383-3232

Common Reactions After a Sexual Assault



- It is normal to have many emotions and feelings after a sexual assault.
- You may feel many different emotions and your feelings and reactions may change over time.
- You may experience some or none or all

Fear

Anger

Denial

Alone

Self-Blame

Shame

Grief

Depression

Confusion

Numbness

A sense of loss

Sadness

You Might Experience

You may experience:

Trouble sleeping

Lack of confidence

Fear of being alone

Isolation

Nightmares

Difficulty eating

Headaches

Inability to trust

Difficulty with intimacy

Not wanting to see friends or family

Mood swings

Not wanting to be touched

You are not Alone - Support is available



At the Victoria Sexual Assault Centre, we believe that there is no right or wrong way to feel or behave after a sexual assault.

We believe that **healing is possible.**

It is important to try and be aware of your own needs and look after yourself.

Be patient and gentle with yourself- dealing with a sexual assault can be a long process for some people.

You are not alone. The Victoria Sexual Assault Centre offers support, caring and hope.

Receiving support can be an important part of healing.

The Victoria Sexual Assault Centre offers **free and confidential** counseling and support if you have experienced any form of sexualized violence.

It is not uncommon to reach out for support in a few days, a few weeks, or even years after the sexual assault.

Services at the Victoria Sexual Assault Centre

Crisis and Information Line

250 383-3232

Counselling

Short Term Crisis Support

Trauma Counselling groups and individual

Victim Services

Information and support on the criminal justice system

Accompaniment and support in making police report, preparation for court, case status information

Assistance with application for Crime Victim Assistance Program

Referrals

To other community supports and services

Important Phone Numbers

Victoria Sexual Assault Centre.....	250 383-3232
Vancouver Island Crisis Line.....	1-888-494-3888
Victoria General Hospital (ER).....	250 727-4212
Island Sexual Health.....	250 592-3479
Child Abuse Prevention & Counseling Society (children and families).....	250 385-6111
Youthspace.ca.....(text only)	778 783-0177
Men's Trauma Centre.....	250 381-6367
VictimLink (multilingual).....	1 800 563-0808
1-800 Suicide.....	1 800 784-2433
Trans Lifeline.....	1 877 330-6366
Victoria Women's Transition House.....	250 385-6611
Cridge Transition House (Hill House)..	250 479-3963
Victoria & Esquimalt Police.....	250 995-7654
Saanich Police.....	250 475-4321
North Saanich RCMP.....	250 656-3921

Important Phone Numbers

continued

Oak Bay Police.....	250 592-2424
Central Saanich Police.....	250 652-4441
Westshore RCMP.....	250 474-2264
Sooke RCMP.....	250 642-5241

Victoria Sexual Assault Centre Contact Information

Crisis and Information Line.....	250 383-3232
Text only Crisis Line.....	250 507-5280
Business Line.....	250 383-5545
Fax.....	250 383-6112
Email.....	info@vsac.ca
Website.....	www.vsan.ca

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