

# Taking care

## after a sexual assault

There is no right or wrong way to feel after someone has touched your private parts or had sex with you without your permission.

### Short Term Effects of Sexual Assault

You might...

- feel alone, unsafe or afraid
- feel confused and can't think
- have sleeping problems and feel tired
- have nightmares
- feel sick and can't eat
- feel guilty and shame
- feel angry or sad
- think lots about what happened
- get body pain and headaches
- feel no one can be trusted
- feel shaky and nervous
- feel bad and dirty

### Long Term Effects of Sexual Assault

You might...

- always feel sad
- always think about what happened
- feel really angry
- feel unsafe and always watching for danger
- think "Did that really happen to me?"
- stay away from people
- have really bad dreams
- feel alone and mixed up
- feel you want to hurt yourself
- want alcohol or drugs

### Some tips on taking care of yourself

#### Do

- Spend time with people who care
- Spend time with people you trust
- Talk when you feel READY
- Get some rest and relax
- A little bit of exercise if you can
- Things that you like

#### Don't

- Drink alcohol or take drugs
- Give up on the things you like
- Stay away from family / friends who care
- Keep things on your mind
- Let bad feelings get to you
- Take risks that will hurt you

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### How Counselling Can Help

Counselling can give you time to talk to a caring person who won't judge you. You can talk about what happened and how it is hurting you now. It can help you with your feelings.

### Things to Remember

- There are people you can talk to who can help.
- You are not alone.
- The way you are feeling is normal.
- The assault was NOT your fault.
- You are not 'crazy'.
- You can feel healthy and good again.

### Telephone Contacts

- Police Sex Assault Squad: To report a sexual assault  
Phone: 08 9428 1600  
After hours 131 444
- Lifeline: Telephone crisis counselling  
Phone: 13 11 14 (24-hour line)
- The Samaritans: 24 hour telephone support  
Phone: 08 9381 5125
- The Respect Line: 24 hour counselling for people experiencing sexual assault or domestic violence  
Phone: 1800 737 732

### Places to get help

