

I was a victim of acquaintance rape.

"I knew Matt from my statistics class. He was cute and we were both good at statistics, so we studied together a few times. On the weekends we would meet up at parties. There was definitely some chemistry between us and I liked him a lot. After a few weeks, Spring Break came around and we agreed to go away for a few days with a group of friends. We'd gotten close but hadn't slept together, although I'd spent the night in his room."

"One night we started doing shots of tequila. Later, we went back to the room, and started to fool around. I remember telling Matt that the room was spinning and that I was starting to feel really sick. I thought I was going to pass out from all the tequila, and asked him to get me to my bed. I remember Matt saying, 'Don't worry' as he started to take off my clothes. I tried to stop him, but I was too drunk and he forced me to have sex with him. I guess, looking back on it I shouldn't have drunk so much, but I trusted Matt and never thought he would hurt me. I couldn't believe that happened. I still can't believe Matt would do that to me."

What is acquaintance rape?

Acquaintance rape, also known as date rape, is when someone you know forces you to engage in sexual activities against your will; whether you are passed out, too drunk to refuse, too scared to argue, or for some other reason you do not give consent. The initiator could be a boss, date, classmate, co-worker or friend. It is an act of violence and power that affects both men and women. Whether someone uses physical force or verbal coercion to force sex, **SEX WITHOUT CONSENT IS CONSIDERED RAPE.**

Throughout this brochure, references will be made to male on female rape since over 90% of rapes occur in this manner. However, this in no way disregards the fact that other types of rape occur (i.e., male to male, group rape).

The typical image of a rapist is that of a crazed stranger attacking a woman and forcing her to have sex. Usually, this is not the case. The above is an acquaintance rape story. Matt ignored the victim's protest against having sex and that is acquaintance rape.

Why does rape happen?

There is no one direct cause for rape. With acquaintance rape, there tends to be a few elements that put people at risk:

1. Myths and Misconceptions

We are socialized by the environment and the media to take on certain gender roles and images. These myths may not directly reflect your feelings or experiences, but they do exist and they affect those assumptions made about each gender. Some of these myths and misconceptions that directly contribute to date rape are:

Men

Men are socialized to "go for it" and to be aggressive in sports, careers and in relationships where "scoring" is often the goal.

Men believe that women expect a little force when it comes to sex.

Some men may think that when a woman says "no" to sex, she really means "yes" and just wants him to try harder.

We see this in the media all of the time. This is not true, "no" always means "no".

Women

Women are socialized to be passive and to take care of others. They are not supposed to be assertive or to "make a scene". Women are encouraged to look and act sexy, but at the same time they are expected to be the gate-keepers of sexual situations, not "sexually active."

Some women expect sexual attention from men and may become upset if men do not make sexual advances. They may think that something is wrong with them if he does not "try something". This can send mixed messages and cause confusion.

2. Different Dating Expectations

Be aware that some men may expect sex to be a part of a date if he spent money on her, she had sex with him before, she was wearing sexy or provocative clothes or she is not a virgin. A woman may think that in order for him to like her, she needs to look and/or act a certain way on a date. These are often false expectations that can lead to date rape.

3. Poor Communication

Studies show that men tend to interpret messages in a sexual way more often than women do. When she says "Do you want to come to my house for a drink?" he might interpret it as an invitation to come over for sex. She may actually be thinking that she would like to spend more time with him and get to know him better. Assertive communication is key in dispelling miscommunication. Declare your feelings and desires directly, openly, and honestly.

4. Alcohol

Studies show that in over 90-95% of acquaintance rape cases, alcohol use or abuse was involved. Alcohol inhibits clear thinking, makes communication more difficult, makes it harder to assess risk and can increase aggression.

The above elements can increase the probability of miscommunication and incorrect and unhealthy assumptions, but these are NOT excuses for rape. Rape is an issue of power and an act of violence. It is **NEVER** the victim's fault and no one ever asks to be raped.

How to avoid date rape.

Realize that rape can happen to anyone: One in six college women will be raped, and 80% of women who are raped know their rapist.

You have the right to set sexual limits: You don't "owe" anyone sex. Communicate your limits.

Trust your feelings: If you feel that you are being pressured into unwanted sex, you're probably right.

Pay attention to behavior that doesn't seem right: For example, power stares, someone who grabs or pushes, someone who doesn't listen or disregards what you are saying, someone who blocks your way, someone sitting or standing too close who enjoys your discomfort.

Be assertive and speak up: Declare your feelings and desires directly, openly, and honestly. If necessary, get angry and act immediately with a negative response if things seem out of hand; stand up for yourself; it's okay to make a scene or be rude if someone is sexually pressuring you.

Exercise control over the environment: Decide whether you want to be in a particular place or not; don't be dependent on casual acquaintances for money, housing, transportation, etc.

If you choose to drink alcohol, drink responsibly: Approximately 90-95% of acquaintance rapes occur when one or both persons have been drinking.

What to do if you are raped.

1. Get to friends.

If you are alone, contact a friend to help you collect your thoughts and focus on your needs. Or, call the Center for Community Solutions Crisis Hotline at 888-385-5657.

2. Get medical attention immediately.

As soon as you can, get medical care from a hospital emergency room, Student Health Services or a private physician. Do not bathe, shower, douche or change clothes before the medical exam. Treatment may include testing for sexually transmitted diseases, medication to prevent pregnancy and documenting evidence of rape so you can decide later whether to prosecute.

Please note that when you present to a medical facility for rape your healthcare provider is mandated to call local police - whether you are pressing charges or not.

3. Report the rape.

It is your decision whether to report the rape to police and then to press charges, but you are strongly encouraged to do so as soon as possible. You should not be ashamed. A crime was perpetrated against you; you are not at fault. Acquaintance rape is a crime.

4. Seek counseling.

Whether or not you report the rape or prosecute, you should consult a trained counselor for help in dealing with the emotional aftermath of rape. Counselors will also be willing to help others who are close to you. Call SDSU Counseling & Psychological Services department to speak with someone who can help you.

For More Information:

Student Health Services	619-594-5281	Escort Service.	619-594-6659
Health Promotion.	619-594-4133	Public Safety (SDSU campus police).	619-594-1991
Visit Our Website at	http://shs.sdsu.edu	Women's Resource Center.	619-594-5430
SDSU Counseling & Psychological Services .	619-594-5281	After Hours Nurse Line.	858-225-3105
Rape Crisis line.	619-233-3088	Facebook/Twitter.	Facebook.com/aztechealth & @AZTEHealth
San Diego Police	619-531-2000		