

## Safety Awareness and Rape Prevention

There are two ways to resist an attack: **passively or aggressively**. Passively can work once and awhile depending on the situation. Examples of this are: crying, sobbing; begging; vomiting or urinating on yourself; talk to and distracting the attacker; and pretending to faint. You do what your instincts tell you but always be ready to act aggressively if needed.

There are generally three kinds of rapist motive categories: Anger, Power and Sadism.

In anger assaults, the rapist is getting even for "some wrong he feels has been done to him, by life, by his victim at the time. He's in a frame of rage and attacks someone sexually." The anger rape is usually unpremeditated and impulsive, but the impulse drives the rapist into excessive force: the victim is punched, choked, and kicked into submission. An anger rapist *could* be discouraged by a potential victim who yells at him or puts up a physical struggle, thanks to the unpremeditated nature of the attack. Because the aggressor may not yet have fully decided to pursue this course of action, resistance may well change his mind. Here, even a half-hearted attempt might prove to be all it takes to end the assault. On the other hand, the rage the attacker is feeling might well be further *fed* by active resistance – this could be taken as yet another instance of one more person trying to deny him something he wants.

Power rape, according to Forensic Mental Health Associates, is a form of compensation, committed usually by men who feel unsure of their competence. Rape gives them a sense of mastery and control. Power rapists usually hunt for victims or seize opportunities that present themselves unbidden. A power rapist is unlikely to be discouraged by resistance because his whole self image is wrapped up in his attempt to prove mastery but a woman who chooses to fight one of these had better do a darned good job of it, because she could well end up fighting for her life.

The third type is defined, a sadistic rape, as eroticized aggression perpetrated by those whom the very act of forcible sex excites in ways that consensual sex can't. "If the anger components of aggression are eroticized, then you see sadistic acts, such as deliberate sexual torture, using an instrument to rape the victim.<sup>1</sup>" A sadistic rapist is interested in inflicting pain and lasting harm. Any countering aggression on the part of the victim could well *add* to the attacker's enjoyment of the experience, prompting him to further acts of depravity in an effort to provoke further resistance.

The question of to fight back or not is age-old, and there's no one right answer. You do what your instincts tell you, passively or aggressively, but always be ready to act aggressively if needed.

Here are some things to think about to prevent yourself from being a victim.

- Most men rapists when looking for a potential victim is look for **an easy target**. He wants to take advantage of the window of opportunity. Physical traits like hair and clothing can attract a potential rapist but it all depends on the background of that particular potential attacker. Just be street smart and practice proper prevention and don't be an easy target. Walk with confidence and look like you know where you're going (even if you don't). Always be aware of your surroundings, take someone with you if you can and if you see any odd behavior, don't dismiss it; go with your instincts!!! You may feel a little silly at the time, but you'd feel much worse if the guy really was trouble.
- The thing about these men is that they are looking to grab a woman and quickly move her to another location where they don't have to worry about getting caught.
- They also look for women on their cell phone, searching through their purse or doing other activities while walking because they are off guard and can be easily overpowered.
- Men are most likely to attack & rape in the evening hours and into early morning, ending before dawn. Statistics also indicate that attacks are more prevalent during the warmer months and weekends.
- **Rapists look for victims that are isolated.** When in a parking lot, garage, public bathroom, etc, what matters most is your isolation. Areas heavily frequented by foot traffic are far less likely to be chosen by a rapist. Likewise, badly-lit, less-frequented places will be favored for this type of attack.
  - Women have a tendency to get into their cars after shopping, eating, working, etc., and just sit (doing their checkbook, or making a list, etc. (DON'T DO THIS!) The predator may be watching you, and this is the perfect opportunity for him to get in on the passenger side, put a gun to your head, and tell you where to go. **AS SOON AS YOU GET INTO YOUR CAR, LOCK THE DOORS AND LEAVE.**

A few notes about getting into your car in a parking lot, or parking garage:

- Be aware: look around you, look into your car, at the passenger side floor, and in the back seat.
  - If you are parked next to a big van, enter your car from the passenger door.
  - A vehicle of any size can be used to facilitate a sexual assault. Try to park close to the entrance & try not to park when you are obstructed from view.
  - Look at the car parked on the driver's side of your vehicle, and the passenger side. If a male is sitting alone in the seat nearest your car, you may want to walk back into the mall, or work, and get a guard/policeman to walk you back out.
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- Statistics show that 7% to 30% of rapists carry weapons<sup>2</sup>, meaning the chances that your rapist will be armed can be just a little less than one in three. Battling an armed attacker while unarmed yourself is rarely a wise course of action to take, so be wise and be prepared.
  - Many rapists do carry rape kits that “could” include scissors. Many other items included in rape kits are cords, duct tape, condoms and lubricant, among others.
  - Remember you can use anything in your hands or nearby as a weapon to defend yourself with or put in between yourself and the attacker, but so can the attacker. Be aware of your surroundings and what could be used as a weapon: i.e. – umbrella, keys, grocery bags, purse, shopping cart, tree, etc.
  - If you put up any kind of a fight at all, they get discouraged because it only takes a minute or two for them to realize that going after you isn't worth it because it will be time-consuming; but remember the third type of rapist, sadism, so if you choose to defend and fight, do it with all your might until you are safe.
  - Several defense mechanisms are: If someone is following behind you on a street or in a garage or with you in an elevator or stairwell, try to observe any unique qualities they have or anything they say without engaging them or looking directly at them. Now you've seen their face and anything unique you could identify them in a line-up; but if they are intent on attacking you he knows it, it's all the more important to get away from him, even if he has a knife and you are risking injury. Because unless he's quite inexperienced, he's likely to kill you to leave no witnesses.<sup>3</sup>
  - ALWAYS take the elevator instead of the stairs when you can. Stairwells are horrible places to be alone and the perfect crime spot. This is especially true at NIGHT!
  - Most rapists will leave a woman alone if she yelled or showed that she would not be afraid to fight back. Again, they are looking for an EASY target. You may feel a little silly at the time, but you'd feel much worse if the guy really was trouble. If someone is coming toward you, hold out your hands in front of you and yell STOP or STAY BACK!
  - If you are ever thrown into the trunk of a car, kick out the back tail lights and stick your arm out the hole and start waving like crazy. The driver won't see you, but everybody else will. This has saved lives. In addition, most new cars now have a trunk release inside the trunk.
  - If the predator has a gun and you are not under his control, ALWAYS RUN! The predator will only hit you (a running target) 4 in 100 times; and even then, it most likely WILL NOT be a vital organ. RUN, preferably in a zig-zag pattern! Do not allow yourself to be taken to a secondary crime scene. Chances are you're not going to come back alive.
  - Most women are always trying to be sympathetic: STOP. It may get you raped, or killed. Ted Bundy, the serial killer, was a good-looking, well educated man, who ALWAYS played on the sympathies of unsuspecting women. He walked with a cane, or a limp, and often asked "for help" into his vehicle or with his vehicle which is when he abducted his next victim.

<sup>1</sup> Forensic Mental Health Associates.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of Justice.

<sup>3</sup> John Douglas, legendary FBI profiler



For more information on Self Defense & Personal Safety visit: [www.selfdefensepsa.com](http://www.selfdefensepsa.com).

# Rape Prevention Strategies

“Crime prevention is a technique of eliminating opportunities for the commission of crime.”

While we are constantly made aware of the dangers of crime, drugs, rape, gangsters, etc, it is essential that we are pro-active in our efforts to avoid being affected by crime. By being aware, a woman reduces the likelihood of being raped. This does not mean all rapes can be prevented. Rapists commit rape; you can't take responsibility for the actions of a criminal.

## INTRODUCTION

- Avoid places, times and circumstances that create a risk situation.
- Should you be attacked, evaluate the situation and environment and look for a means of escape.
- Some women have avoided rape by merely talking their way out of the situation or by feigning insanity or idiocy or by resisting.
- A kick in the groin is not always successful as assailants instinctively protect this area and you may lose your balance.
- If you decided to retaliate physically, remember that your first priority is escape. Act quickly and decisively to throw your attacker off guard while you escape.
- Try to remember some definite mark of identification, colour of hair, eyes, any oddity such as scar or speech impediment. This information is valuable to the police.
- A rapist looks for someone who appears vulnerable.
- Be well armed when walking alone. This does not mean carrying a gun. An umbrella, cane, spray gun or pepper canister can be good weapons. Keep a whistle on you and make a lot of noise. Attackers do not want attention on them. Remember you just have to immobilise your attacker until help comes or you can get away.
- Always be aware of your surroundings.
- Stay in well lighted areas as much as possible.
- Walk confidently, directly at a steady pace.
- Walk on the side of the street facing traffic.
- Walk close to the curb. Avoid doorways, bushes and alleys where rapists can hide.
- If you think you are being followed, walk quickly to areas where there are people and lights. If a car appears to be following you, turn and walk in the opposite direction or walk on the other side of the street.
- Be careful when people stop you for directions or money. Always reply from a distance and never get too close to the car.
- If you are in trouble or feel you are in danger, don't be afraid to attract help in any way that you can. Scream, yell or run to safety.
- If you choose to carry any type of weapon for self protection, give careful consideration to your ability and willingness to use it. Remember there is always the chance that it could be taken away and used against you.
- Security gates act as obstacles for criminals. Ensure your security gates are quality products, providing you the level of security and peace of mind that you need.
- Always react on your sixth sense. If you feel that you are being followed, you probably are. Never drive home in a situation like this. Hoot or flash your lights to dissuade any would-be pursuer. Drive to a busy area or a police station.
- Never pick up hitchhikers and do not stop to help if you see a broken down vehicle or someone at the side of the road. Instead drive to a phone and report it to the police.
- Always be alert at robots and stop streets. Never drive right up to a car in front of you. Always leave space in case you need to manoeuvre out.
- At home, keep all doors and windows closed. This applies even if you live in a block of flats as criminals climb balconies.
- Never allow people you do not know into your home. If they say they are from a company, let them wait outside while you look up the name in a telephone book and phone and ask the reason for the person being in your home.
- Do not hitchhike or accept lifts from strangers.
- If you use public toilets, keep the cubicle locked.
- If you feel the attacker is dangerous and that you should cooperate, do so. If you feel you may be able to negotiate with the rapist, either talking him into using a condom or abandoning the rape altogether, do so.

- Self defence classes may help as they will make you more aware of what is going on around you, and make you more physically assertive and aware of a defensive stance.
- Do not consume refreshments prepared by strangers or not prepared in your presence as these may be laced with date rape drugs – even trace amounts of these drugs render you helpless.
- Don't leave a social event with someone you have just met or do not know well.

## HOW TO PREVENT RAPE...

### ...AT HOME

- Invest in good locks, and remember: the best lock cannot function if you fail to lock it. Keep your doors locked.
- A door viewer will allow you to observe without opening the door.
- Sliding doors should be secured with an auxiliary lock, or install security gates.
- All entrances and garages should be well lighted. Leave a light on in the house when you go out at night so that when you re-enter, you do not have to enter a dark house. Inside and outside lights give you a good deal of protection.
- Trim bushes and shrubbery so no one can hide in them, particularly when they are close to doors and windows.
- Never open the door after a knock. Ask the person to give their name. In the case of service persons ask for proper I.D. and refuse entrance if you feel uneasy. Use the door viewer to see who it is and keep the door on a latch.
- Never hide a key over a door frame or in a flower pot or in a post box.
- Don't advertise that you are home alone. Never reveal to a telephone caller or someone at the door that you're alone.
- Warn family members, especially children, not to give information by phone about who is at home, who is out, how long anyone is expected to be out.
- Never open the door automatically whenever the bell rings or someone knocks.
- A shrill blast from a whistle into the telephone will discourage most obscene calls. The best advice is to hang up immediately.
- Avoid using a Laundromat in an apartment complex by yourself, especially at night. Team up with a neighbour or friend.
- If a door or window has been forced or broken while you were absent, do not enter. Someone may still be inside. Use the neighbour's telephone to call the police and wait outside till they arrive.

### ...WHILE WALKING

- Do not dress skimpily before leaving home.
- Avoid walking alone as much as possible. Your best defence is having other people nearby or walking with a pet.
- If you walk alone, plan your route carefully. Notice stores or restaurants that are open should you need to ask for help.
- Have your keys ready when you approach your car / home and enter immediately.

### ...IN YOUR CAR

- Park in a well lighted area and always lock your car.
- If you work late, don't go to your car alone if you can avoid it. Ask somebody to escort you to your car.
- Before getting in, check front and back seats for intruders.
- Make sure that have enough fuel for your entire trip before you start.
- Keep your doors locked and windows raised so that a person cannot reach in and unlock a door when you stop your car.
- Keep your car in gear while halted at traffic lights and stop signs. If someone tries to get in, drive off. Don't worry about hurting the person.
- Never pick up hitchhikers of either sex.
- Keep windows and doors locked, always.
- Always check your rear-view mirror, and if you think you are being followed, drive to a police station.
- When approaching your home slow down, put lights on bright, and scan the street. Ensure you have a well lit drive way and entrance. If you see anyone or anything that makes you anxious, drive around the block or

phone the police or the armed response company to which you subscribe. Never stop or get out of your car if you have noticed something strange.

- When parking at night, select a place that will be well-lit when returning to the car.
- Always make sure the car is locked, and have the keys ready when returning to the car - do not have them openly displayed or dangling from your hands. Don't have the keys buried in your handbag and stand outside scrabbling for your keys in your handbag.

## IF ATTACKED...

What kind of resistance can and should a woman use against a rapist? The best resistance you can use against an attacker is your common sense; your brain is your most powerful weapon. The most important thing to remember is that you must not fight the attacker, but try to divert the person long enough to get away. Always look for a means to escape. If the attacker has a weapon, use your common sense. Fighting against it could be dangerous and will probably get you killed.

### THINK... DO NOT PANIC

- Evaluate the situation. Can you escape? Is anyone near?
- We recommend you evaluate first and if an opportunity arises to escape, by whatever means, then use it.
- It is not recommended that you physically resist your attacker unless the use of force at that moment would lead to your escape. Evaluate the situation.
- If instinct should force you to resist, don't hold back. You must try to hurt him. Press your thumbs into your attacker's eyes. A knee (not foot) in the groin is quite effective and the attacker won't be able to run to catch you afterwards. Your resistance should be disabling.
- Do not insult, threaten or provoke an assailant.
- Always be alert to where you are - if you are apprehensive about a situation, it is best to move to a more public (lighted) place.
- If you own a firearm, learn how to handle it proficiently.

### REMEMBER:

- Do not do anything that may upset the attacker, do not insult him / them, spit at them, curse at them, criticise
- Try to convince the person to put the weapon down.
- With your long fingernails, try to extract skin from the attacker to be used as DNA evidence if the rapist is apprehended after your attack or even repeat offences.
- Make the attacker see you as an individual, not as an object. If the attacker is unarmed, you may be able to scare, distract or injure the person enough to make your escape.
- Don't be stupid - no-one should tell people that are being hijacked to fight for possession of the gun or the car - a rape is more intimate and dangerous - please don't risk your life. If the rape attack takes place within his vehicle, notice the car interior, what kind of car it is, does it have a floor gear lever (clutch), an automatic, is it a two or four door, sedan or hatchback, bucket or bench seats, radio, etc.?
- Make noise – chances are that someone will notice and assist you to fight off the offender or notify the authorities. If possible, use a whistle, scream, shout and try to get away. If you're in a public place, scream "HELP", "RAPE", "POLICE", or create a disturbance that will attract attention.
- Fight back if you can do so safely - never try fighting indoors only in a public place where other people may hear your screams.
- Try to leave your fingerprints everywhere you can. Try to leave some small personal items such as a button, ear-ring, lipstick anything which can be traced to you.
- Break away if you can, and run toward areas with people.
- Be observant so that you will be able to remember and identify the assailant, but don't let him or them see you are studying them and remember their clothes are less important than noticing physical characteristics - a tattoo, a scar, skin tone, accent, limp, height, hair colour, speech impediment, the slant of their eyes... does the rapist smoke, what colour is the interior, any loose items on the seats and what are they?
- Report the incident to the police as soon as possible. If you don't want to report to the police at least phone Crime Stop where you can make an anonymous report - protect the next woman he will try to rape. If you are raped get to a hospital, doctor or clinic as fast as possible to get onto anti-retrovirals to stop HIV - you have to get onto these within 72 hours of the rape, the faster you get onto the drugs the better your chances of not contracting the virus or any other STD for that matter.

## CONTACTING THE POLICE

- Report the incident immediately to the police and to your nearest medical practitioner. Do not bathe after the attack – please wait for authorities to conduct a rape kit.
- Seek proper counselling immediately, the solution unfortunately is not immediate, and the hardest part is to rebuild your esteem.
- Even if you thwart off the attack or if you wish to remain anonymous after your attack, please report the incident to your police station or Crime Stop to prevent recurrence of an attack.

## EMERGENCY CONTACT DETAILS

- Flying Squad: 10111, Emergency Services:
- South African Police Services Honeydew
- Visit <http://www.rapecrisis.org.za> or <http://www.speakout.org.za> for rape prevention strategies and support forums for victims

<b>SA Police Service Honeydew</b>	
Ops Room:	<b>011 795-1960 / 1969</b>
Station Switchboard:	<b>011 801-8400</b>
Trauma Unit:	<b>082 448-9337</b>
CPF Office	<b>011 801-8406</b>

**SUPPORT YOUR POLICE FORUM IN FIGHTING CRIME AND RAPE IN OUR AREA**

