

Prevention

How can I reduce my risk of being sexually assaulted?

According to the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN), someone is sexually assaulted in the United States every two minutes (RAINN calculation based on USDOJ NCVS data). By being **prepared, alert and assertive**, you can reduce your risk of being sexually assaulted.



Be Prepared

- **Travel with a buddy.**
- Stay in groups, as there is safety in numbers.
- Plan your outings and avoid getting into a bad situation.
- Stay sober. Studies indicate that about half of all U.S. sexual assaults involve the use of alcohol by the offender, the victim, or both.
- Never leave a drink unattended. Educate yourself about date rape drugs.
- Walk only in lighted areas after dark.
- Keep the doors to homes, barracks, and cars locked.
- Know where the phone is located.
- Don't go anywhere alone with someone unless you know the person very well and trust him or her.

Be Alert

- **Trust your instincts;** if a place or person feels unsafe, it probably is.
- Watch for signs of trouble such as strangers in private areas or persons loitering in places where they shouldn't be.
- If you sense trouble, **get to a safe place** as soon as possible.
- If you feel you are in danger, **attract help any way you can.**
- Don't dress in view of a window.

- **According to The Acting Secretary of the Army's Task Force Report on Sexual Assault Policies**, from 1999 to 2004, 67% of the sexual assaults involving Army personnel occurred on post. **Report any unauthorized or suspicious males or females in the barracks.**

Be Assertive

- Being assertive means that you **state what you want**.
- Remember: **"No" means "No."** If you do not want to be intimate with another person, tell him or her clearly. Use a confident voice and body posture.
- Match your body language to your words - don't laugh and smile while saying "No."
- Do not just "go along" for the wrong reasons.
- Watch out for warning signs or **"red flags"** from your partner in intimate situations.

Reducing your risk in a deployed environment

Be especially prepared and alert in deployed environments. Deployed environments can present special risks for Army personnel:

- Sleeping areas (tents, bunkers, and other buildings) may be less secure in a deployed environment. Report any unauthorized males or females in sleeping areas
- Many non-Army personnel are present in deployed unit and working areas
- Be alert and aware of your surroundings. Deployed environments may have different lighting conditions and facilities than those in garrison.
- Different cultures may treat females differently than they are treated in the U.S. Be assertive and clearly state if you feel uncomfortable with how someone is treating you.

To reduce your risk in a deployed environment, **travel with a buddy**.

What is acquaintance or "date" rape?

"Acquaintance rape," which includes date rape, refers to those rapes that occur between people that know one another. "Date rape" refers to situations in which one person has consented to go on a date with another person and that person then rapes him or her.

According to RAINN, about two-thirds of sexual assault victims in the United States knew their assailants.

According to the Sexual Assault Risk Reduction Curriculum, produced by the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services and the City of San Diego, to reduce your risk of acquaintance or date rape:

- **Set sexual limits.** Stop or slow down before you get to your sexual limit. It is your body and no one has the right to force, harass, or coerce you into doing anything that you don't want to do.

- **Trust your instincts.** If you feel you are being forced into unwanted sex, you probably are.
- Decide before you are alone with someone what your sexual limits with the person are.
- Don't do anything that you don't want to do just to avoid disagreement, unpleasantness, or embarrassment.
- **Practice being assertive:** state what you want. Use a confident voice and body posture. Look directly at him or her and say "No" in a firm, serious voice. Match your body language to your words - don't laugh and smile while saying "No."
- Avoid alcohol and drugs. Your best defense is having a clear mind.
- Always have extra money to get home. Have a plan for someone you can call if you need help.
- If you feel uncomfortable, scared, or pressured, act quickly to end the situation. Say, "Stop it" and leave or call for help.
- Remember that **you have the right to say "No"** even if you:
 - Say yes, but change your mind
 - Have been kissing or "making out"
 - Have had sex with this partner before
 - Have been drinking alcohol
 - Are wearing provocative clothing

Remember: these tips can help reduce your risk of sexual assault, but they will never completely eliminate the risk. **If you say "No" and still feel threatened, leave immediately or call for help.**

If you are sexually assaulted, it's not your fault. **Sexual assault is a crime**, and nothing you do, or do not do, makes you responsible for the crime.

Look for "red flags"

The Sexual Assault Risk Reduction Curriculum emphasizes looking for "red flags" when you are in intimate situations.

Red flags are things that are said or done that may make you feel like the person you are with is not safe. Trusting your instincts can mean paying attention to these red flags.



You should be especially alert if the person you are with:

- Ignores, interrupts, or makes fun of you
- Sits or stands too close to you or stares at you
- Has a reputation for being a "player"
- Drinks too much or uses drugs; tries to get you to use drugs or alcohol
- Tries to touch or kiss you or gets into your "personal space" when you barely know him or her
- Wants to be alone with you before getting to know you, or pressures you to be alone together
- Does what he or she wants without asking what you want

- Gets angry or sulks if he or she doesn't get what he or she wants
- Pressures you to have sex, or tries to make you feel guilty for saying "no."

Be aware of "date rape drugs" and how they are used

The Department of Health and Human Services' National Women's Health Center offers the following information about date rape drugs:

- There are at least three date rape drugs:
 - GHB (gamma hydroxybutyric acid). GHB has a few forms: a liquid with no odor or color, a white powder, and a pill
 - Rohypnol (flunitrazepam). Rohypnol is a pill and dissolves in liquid.
 - Ketamine (ketamine hydrochloride). Ketamine is a white powder.
- Date rape drugs are meant to **leave the victim helpless** to stop a sexual assault. Victims may be physically helpless, unable to refuse sex, and unable to remember what happened.
- The drugs often have no color, smell, or taste and are easily added to flavored drinks without the victim's knowledge
- **Alcohol can worsen the drug's effects**
- How can I protect myself from being a victim of a date rape drug?
 - Don't accept drinks from other people, except trusted friends.
 - Open containers yourself.
 - Keep your drink with you at all times, even when you go to the bathroom.
 - Don't share drinks.
 - Don't drink from punch bowls or other large, common, open containers. They may already have drugs in them.
 - Don't drink anything that tastes or smells strange. Sometimes, GHB tastes salty.
 - Have a non-drinking friend with you to make sure nothing happens.

Remember that alcohol can also be used by offenders to incapacitate a potential victim. Alcohol is also relatively easy for an offender to obtain. Stay alert and aware of your surroundings.

How can I reduce my risk of becoming a sexual assault offender?

Sexual assault involves two or more people. To reduce your risk of being accused of sexual assault:

- Remember: **sexual assault is a crime**. You will be held responsible for your actions.
- Ensure that your partner consents to sexual activity. You must have consent from your partner before you can legally engage in sexual activity. If someone is passed out, unconscious, or asleep from alcohol, drugs, or fatigue, **they are legally unable to give their consent**.
- Ensure a potential partner is of legal age...ignorance is no excuse. The "age of consent", or the age at which someone can legally give consent for sexual activity, varies by state. It is as high as 18 years of age in some states.

- Communicate your expectations to a potential partner. Misunderstandings and lack of communication, especially between people who don't know each other very well, can lead to dangerous and career-threatening situations.
- Avoid using drugs or excessive alcohol. People under the influence of alcohol or drugs often have different memories of how an event occurs.
- Remember that **No means No** even if the other person:
 - Says yes, but changes his or her mind
 - Has been kissing you or "making out" with you
 - Has had sex with you before
 - Has been drinking alcohol
 - Wears provocative clothing.

If you're not sure how your partner feels about your actions, ask the question!

Remember: No means No

What can I do to help prevent others from being sexually assaulted?

Dr. David Lisak, a professor of psychology at the University of Massachusetts Boston and director of the Men's Sexual Trauma Research Project, has conducted extensive **research** on men who commit sexual assaults. His research has shown that most sexual assaults are committed by a small number of men who commit multiple offenses against victims with whom they have some degree of acquaintance.

As an Army soldier, you should report immediately any activity that indicates a sexual assault may take place or has taken place.

Report any of the following activities immediately to your commander, Military Police, or another authority:

- Someone planning to commit a sexual assault
- Conversations with others about getting another person drunk or stoned to make them less inhibited or easier to force into sexual relations
- Someone describing or bragging about a situation in which they physically forced another person into sex
- Conversations where someone brags that their partner didn't want to have sex but they did so anyway
- Evidence or conversation about the use of date rape drugs.

Remember: The safety of your fellow soldiers, your unit, and your community may depend on your reporting of these incidents. You should report any suspicious behavior immediately.