



## ***Empowering Survivors of Rape and Abuse***

### **ARTICLE 3**

### **IT HAPPENED, WHAT NOW?**

#### **WHAT TO DO DURING RAPE:**

As 85% of rapist in SA is armed with a knife or a gun it is best not to fight back – it is not always possible to defend yourself and your resistance may cause serious injury – submission is not consent! It is of utmost importance that you stay alive. If you think you can fight him off, you need to be 100% sure so as not to endanger yourself further. We highly recommend that everyone should receive training in self-defense techniques so that you are equipped with what you need.

At some point it is no longer about the rape, but about you staying alive. Some rapist act kindly, while others are violent. Remember the following points:

- Remain calm
- Memorize what he looks like (not what he is wearing) – take special note of scars, tattoos, anything which will make him stand out and easier for the police to identify.
- If there is more than one attacker do not try to memorize all of them, try to memorize only 1 – do not let them see you are doing this!
- If possible scratch him – for DNA evidence under your nails

#### **WHAT TO DO AFTER RAPE:**

### **Collecting Evidence – “DNA Evidence Convicts Rapists” It must be collected within 48 hours**

**Types of DNA which may contain evidence:** Blood, skin, saliva, tissue under nails, hair, and semen – these all carry DNA left on you by the rapist. To preserve DNA evidence it is important to remember the following:

- **DO NOT** change your clothing.
- Items of clothing containing DNA must be placed in a paper bag or wrapped in newspaper – **DO NOT** place items in a plastic bag as this will destroy DNA evidence. Be aware that the police will keep these items of clothing.

- As difficult as it might seem, **DO NOT** shower, bath, eat, drink, wash your hands or brush your teeth – you will destroy the DNA evidence of the rape
- **DO NOT** take any medication – if you were drugged you would need to be tested for the type of drug
- If possible, take pictures with your cell-phone of any bruises/injuries and also the place where the attack happened, etc.
- Go to a safe place asap
- This might also be difficult, but – tell someone you trust, to get help and support. This person can also be called to testify as your First Contact Witness.
- If the first person you see is a stranger make sure you get all their details to enable the police to contact them.
- If you do not want to go to a police station, remember you can also go to your closest hospital, Thutuzela Care Centers or Medico-Legal Units in your area. All Netcare hospitals have a Sexual Trauma units who will assist you at no cost if you are a survivor of a sexual assault. They will call the police to come to the hospital to take your statement.
- Should you report to a police station, they will take you to a hospital for an examination.
  - You will receive treatment for injuries and shock
  - You will be examined by a Clinical Forensic Practitioner and DNA evidence collected. You will be asked to sign a consent form for the examination.
  - The hospital should have a rape counsellor who will assist you and help you through the process.
- If you went to the police station first, they will take you to a Government hospital for the forensic examination and the collection of DNA.
- This gathering of evidence will form part of the police investigation

### **Medication**

Ensure you have been given the appropriate medication:

- ARV's – Anti-retroviral (or PEP – post exposure prophylaxis) to prevent HIV/Aids – you need these within 72 hours of the incident. It is best to get ARV's within 6 – 8 hours to better your chances of not getting HIV/Aids
  - Complete the 28 day course
  - Be aware of side effects
- Morning After Pill – to prevent pregnancy
- Antibiotics – to prevent sexually transmitted Infections

Testing

- 3 months later

### **Legal Advice**

Ensure you ask to be referred to someone for legal advice.

There are centers available who will assist you with court preparations

## **Counselling**

- Ensure you ask to be referred to someone who is qualified and registered for counseling
- Support from others enables the person to deal with the immediate impact.
- Talking about what happened to you is vital in your healing process and will support you to move on.

Reporting cases of sexual assault and preserving DNA evidence could help put the rapist behind bars and prevent further attacks.

## **Report the case**

You can report irrespective of whether you want to lay a charge or not (*laying a charge means you want the case to go to court*)

***It is your responsibility to report the case,  
to prevent the rapist from hurting someone else!***

The process of reporting is as follows:

A police official will take your statement. A friend or family member can be with you while you make the statement. You have the right to request a female officer to take your statement in a private room and in your preferred language. If you feel your statement was incomplete, you can make another statement. Insist on getting a copy of your statement as it is important that you remember what you said. You will be given a case number and you must use this number whenever you contact the police to make enquiries about your case. If you reported to the police station they will take you to the hospital for the forensic examination and collection of DNA.

The investigating officer should keep you informed of when the suspect is arrested, released on bail, if you need to attend an identification parade, the date of the trial, when you will have to give evidence and the outcome of the case.

A survivor must ensure they have the responsible investigating officers contact details so that follow up calls can be made about information of the case. The police will then hand over the case to a prosecutor. The police official, investigating officer and the prosecutor should be able to provide information about the case to you.

**LETS STAND TOGETHER AND REPORT AND  
GET THE RAPISTS CONVICTED**

# IT HAPPENED, WHAT NOW.....



**KNOW WHAT TO DO AND START THE HEALING PROCESS!**

**IT WAS NOT  
YOUR  
FAULT!!**

- Know the do's and don'ts
- Know where to go – if you don't your nearest Netcare hospital should be your first point of call!
- Prevent HIV/Aids, STD's and unwanted pregnancies – **GET MEDICAL TREATMENT ASAP**
- **Report!!** It is your responsibility - Know your rights
- **MOST IMPORTANT** – speak to someone, go for counselling
- **IT WAS NOT YOUR FAULT AND YOU ARE NOT ALONE!**

**LET THE HEALING BEGIN**

***IF YOU REQUIRE FURTHER INFORMATION, OR WOULD LIKE TO SUPPORT THE EPIC FOUNDATION, CONTACT:***

***Cell: 082 940 6230 Email: [info@epicfoundation.org.za](mailto:info@epicfoundation.org.za)***

***Also view our website for more information: [www.epicfoundation.org.za](http://www.epicfoundation.org.za)***