

# FACT SHEET

## SEXUAL ASSAULT EVIDENCE KIT

### Evidence Collection

The collection of medical evidence is usually done if you choose to have the police involved in investigating the sexual assault, or if you are considering police involvement.

It is important to seek medical attention as soon as possible. If the assault occurred within the past 72 hours (three days), there is a better chance of finding evidence. Some of the victim's clothes, saliva, blood, pubic hair and head hair samples may be taken into evidence. Swabs from the vagina or anal area are also taken depending on the nature of the assault. The nurse and physician at the Sexual Assault Care Centre can collect the evidence during the medical examination.

The specimens collected are placed in a sealed box called "The Sexual Assault Evidence Kit." The Kit can be given to the police directly, or you can have time to decide if you want the police involved. The Kit can be kept frozen for up to six months and is kept in the Sexual Assault Care Centre.

Scientists receiving The Kit will examine and analyze the contents. Although DNA cannot prove that a sexual assault occurred, analysis on DNA can establish that the accused was at the scene of the crime.



## The Sexual Assault Evidence Kit

The Sexual Assault Evidence Kit is a specially sealed box that contains envelopes, bottles and other containers used to collect evidence. The Kits were initially designed to obtain evidence from a female victim that was assaulted by a male. However, The Kit can also be used to collect the evidence from a male victim or a child.

Samples are collected from these three main areas:

- clothing
- evidence found on the body
- evidence found in the genital and anal region

Hospital emergency rooms or designated Sexual Assault Care Centres can collect evidence. The medical staff is very sensitive to the way you are feeling and encourages you to proceed at your own pace. You can have a friend or family member with you during the procedure.

If you choose to have a Sexual Assault Kit done:

- Clothing worn during the assault can be kept as evidence.
- If possible, try not to urinate before you reach the hospital.
- Do not bathe, shower or douche.

You do not have to have a Sexual Assault Evidence Kit in order to have police involvement. If police are involved and you do not wish to have The Kit done, that is your choice.

*<http://www.sacc.to/asap/medical/kit/kit.htm>*

