



Rape Trauma Syndrome (RTS)

Rape Trauma Syndrome or RTS is a devastating form of post-traumatic stress disorder (familiar to many military combat veterans) which has been recognized and described only within the last two decades. In some form of degree, it affects virtually all victims of sexual assault, including ones that have avoided a complete rape. For male survivors of an actual rape, the syndrome can be severe and even life threatening.

The common characteristics of Rape Trauma Syndrome are:

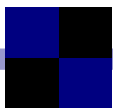
Physical

Sleep difficulties
Disturbing eating habits
Symptoms specific to the attack (oral/ Genital Infections Soreness)
Startle reactions
Extremely overly alert

Emotional

Shock & denial
Fear
Emotional expression (crying, shaking)
Withdrawn
Guilt, blame, humiliated
Uncontrolled thoughts

Remember these physical and emotional responses can certainly be related to most any tragic event. The mental health staff member is best qualified to diagnose rape trauma syndrome. Custody staff can play a key role simply by familiarizing themselves with the normal behavior of inmates under their supervision. Anyone demonstrating any of these characteristics should be evaluated immediately by a qualified health services professional.



As correctional professionals you must consider that what looks like – or seems like a consensual sexual encounter may, in fact, be an unwanted sexual assault. Do not be afraid to intervene by asking questions that may identify unwanted sexual activity.

- You should ask questions that indirectly identify a problem.
- Is there anything that you're being asked to do against your will?
- You're not yourself, is there anything you want to share?
- I've noticed you are a bit uneasy when you interact around certain inmates, do you want to discuss it?

Note:

Your intervention may require that you arrange an appropriate setting to ask these questions.

Remember the inmate will confide in those who will respond in the most ethical and responsible manner.

Prison rape often goes unreported, and inmate victims often receive inadequate treatment for the severe physical and psychological effects of sexual assault – if they receive treatment at all. The Anne Arundel County Department of Detention Facilities is committed to a “zero tolerance” policy toward sexual assault in our jail environment.

Zero Tolerance

The Anne Arundel County Department of Detention Facilities is committed to emphasizing a zero tolerance of the sexual abuse of inmates, either by staff or by other inmates. To emphasize this position of zero tolerance, training initiatives will be developed with related policies and procedures responding to Sexual Assault/Rape Prevention and Intervention.

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PRISON RAPE ELIMINATION ACT



Carnal Knowledge – The term “carnal knowledge” means contact between the penis and the vulva or the penis and the anus, including penetration of any sort, however slight.

HIV – The term “HIV” means the human immunodeficiency virus.

Oral Sodomy – The term “oral sodomy” means contact between the mouth and the penis, the mouth and the vulva, or the mouth and the anus.

Prison Rape – The term “prison rape” includes the rape of an inmate in the actual or constructive control of prison officials.

Rape – The term “rape” means – the carnal knowledge, oral sodomy, sexual assault with an object, or sexual fondling of a person, forcibly or against that person’s will; the carnal knowledge, oral sodomy, sexual assault with an object, or sexual fondling of a person not forcibly or against the person’s will, where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of his or her youth or his or her temporary or permanent mental or physical capacity; or the carnal knowledge, oral sodomy, sexual assault with an object, or sexual fondling of a person achieved through the exploitation of the fear or threat of physical violence or bodily injury.

Sexual Assault With An Object – The term “sexual assault with an object” means the use of hand, finger, object, or other instrument to penetrate, however slightly, the genital or anal opening of the body of another person.

Sexual Fondling – The term “sexual fondling” means the touching of the private body parts of another person (including the genitalia, anus, groin, breast, inner thigh, or buttocks) for the person of sexual gratification.

Common Characteristics of Victims

Once an inmate is raped, he is marked as a victim and will possibly be subjected to repeated sexual assaults throughout the remainder of his imprisonment. If he becomes a recidivist, the cycle will continue in most cases until he is no longer desired.

The typical victim will demonstrate one or more of these character traits:

Vulnerable, seems unsure of himself isolates, stays by himself.

Non-violent offender, no history of acting out in a violent matter, non fighter.

Young, in his late teens or early 20’s.

Small physical stature, under 5’7” approximately 150 pounds.

First time offender, not familiar with his environment.

Effeminate, portrays a passive image.

Beardless, smooth skinned, traits viewed as effeminate

Middle class, not street smart.

Inmates with mental illness and/or developmental disabilities.

Not gang related

Homosexual or bisexual

Previously sexually assaulted

Dislike by staff or other inmates

Those who “snitch”

Traits viewed as effeminate

Convicted of an offense against a minor

White, although inmates of any race can be victims

Characteristics of Perpetrators

Violent history – street smart and an experienced fighter.

Large physical stature – normally larger than his victim.

Under age 30 but older than the victim

Possesses power and authority – feared by most inmates and staff.

Recidivist – experienced in prison culture.

Usually has an antisocial personality.

Engages in other criminal activity such as hustling, gambling, using drugs, selling drugs, and 2 for 1 bartering.

Manipulative – manipulates people in general (inmates & staff) and always has a hidden agenda.

More likely to have spent time in juvenile facilities

More likely to be gang affiliated

More likely to break prison rules

Conditions Increasing Sexual Assaults

Higher numbers of violent criminals

Dorm or barracks housing

High racial conflict

Overcrowding

Understaffed

Poor supervision or insufficient security
Inadequate programming

Blind spots