

One out of eight Hollywood movies has a rape scene.

another person. You cannot know for sure if you have caught it until a long time after the attack. It often takes years before the AIDS virus shows up in a blood test.

AIDS is the most serious disease of the century. After being raped, a person must be tested as soon he or she arrives at the hospital. It is a matter of life and death. It is not something that can only happen to other people. If a person is casual or not careful about sex, he or she is playing with death. Until a person knows the test result, he or she must take care not to infect another person, just in case.

Some of the Feelings Rape Victims Have

Rape victims have many of the same feelings as other crime victims. They may feel frightened, depressed, or sad. They may even feel guilty and need help to know that the rape was not their fault.

Rape victims also need help to learn how to protect themselves. They need to learn how to feel safe again. They need to talk about what happened and need a lot of support from friends and family.

Where can the rape victim get help? He or she can go to a special place or center that helps rape victims with medical and emotional problems.

DID YOU KNOW? Years ago, most victims did not bring charges against a rapist. They did not want to have to go through the embarrassment of a trial.



Rape Victim Pressing Charges

Many rapes are committed by people who know their victims, even if not well. This means that the victim can often identify the attacker for the police. Yet, believe it or not, victims sometimes do not press charges because they are embarrassed or frightened. This is definitely wrong.

It is the right thing to go to the police. Rape is a terrible crime. The police and courts have a better understanding of how rape victims feel than in the past. However, rape trials are still very hard emotionally on the victims.

What happens at a rape trial? At a rape trial, the victim has to tell the story once again. The suspect's lawyer may turn things around and try to find anything the victim might have said or done to make the victim seem guilty.

For example, if the victim asks the rapist to wear a condom and even supplies one for safety, the defense lawyer might say that it is possible the victim was agreeing to have sex. To make sure things are not turned around, the victim must show honesty. This is the best way of answering uncomfortable questions.

Remember, too, that the law tries to treat everyone the same. This means that the suspect's past sex life cannot be brought up, even if he or she was tried for rape before. Also, be prepared to be asked: "Did you not know better than to go on that dangerous street alone?" or "Didn't you know better than to open the door to a stranger?" The court will need to ask these questions to make sure that you had nothing to do with causing the attack. And, of course, while it is a mistake to take such risks, it is not a reason to be raped. Rape is still a crime, and you, as a victim are still not guilty.

EYE OPENER Two out of three students in grades eight through eleven say they have been sexually harassed.

The Right Thing to Do

Did you resist? To resist means to try to stop something from happening to you. The law says rape is sex without the consent of the victim. Many people think, then, that this means the victim must fight and struggle. This is always smart. If you think however that struggling, kicking, or screaming might make the attacker hurt you even more, then it is not smarter to resist. Every person needs to do what is best to save his or her life. Every attack is different. Every attacker is different.

A person needs to decide what to do at the moment of the attack, and very quickly. The fear of being murdered can make a person not struggle. The person who does not struggle is still a victim 100 percent. Fear does not equal consent.

Is there a witness to the rape? If there are no witnesses and you have no cuts and bruises, it will be harder to prove there was a rape. This is why it is so important for you to tell someone right after it happens. Even though this person did not witness the rape, the person did witness how upset you were right after the crime happened.

Did you know the suspect? Rape victims often know their attacker. For example, there was a case of a woman who was raped by someone delivering food to her apartment. Another person was raped by the building's security guard. The rapist could even be a jealous friend. This does not mean you need to worry about every person you see. But it does mean that you must be careful always.

How careful should you be? There are some simple rules everyone should follow

- Never let a complete stranger into your house.
- Be careful about allowing even a friend of a friend to come into your home alone.

Date Rape

What about dates and parties? These kinds of situations are times when a kind of rape called **date rape** can happen. If, for example, you go out on a date with someone who wants to have sex, and you do not, you need to know how to protect yourself. A victim of date rape has a hard time proving the rape in court because the victim started out by agreeing to go on a date.

Remember that saying yes to a date or a dance is not the same as saying yes to sex.

Many times, victims are raped at parties because everyone is drinking. Sometimes, people even faint. Also, women usually are not physically able, because of their size, to drink as much as men without feeling drunk. When a person is feeling faint, he or she cannot really know what is happening. As a result, he or she may not even remember being raped.

What can you do to avoid date rape? The best thing to do is to keep physical control of yourself. This means to never drink too much at parties. Never drink if you are under age. Also, do not choose to attend

CRITICAL THINKING

People who have been the victims of rape often say that they will never be the same.

Why do you think this is so?

DID YOU KNOW? If a person does not say yes to sex, this is the same as saying no.

EYE OPENER Today, although only 3 to 10 percent of all rapes are reported each year, this more than in the past.

1. How long can it take for aids to show up in a test? _____
2. What is the most serious disease of the century? _____
3. When is a person playing with death? _____
4. How can rape victims feel? _____
5. What can support of friends and family help rape victims feel? _____
6. Why do rape victims not press charges many times? _____
7. How are rape trials on victims? _____
8. What do rape suspects lawyers try to find? _____

9. What is the best way of answering uncomfortable questions? _____
10. The court asks uncomfortable questions to make sure that you had nothing to do with what?

11. What does resist mean? _____
12. What does the law say rape is? _____
13. Why is it not smart to struggle or fight back sometimes? _____

14. Fear does not equal what? _____
15. A person that did not witness the rape can still tell about what? _____

16. Rape victims often know whom? _____
17. Who should you never let into your house? _____
18. Why is it hard to prove date rape in court? _____
19. Why are many victims raped at parties? _____
20. What is the best thing to do? _____

Critical Thinking

(pages 72 & 73)

1. Why do you think so many movies have rape scenes in them?
2. In the past most victims did not bring charges against rapists. Why?
3. Has that changed today? If so, why?
4. Why do you think so many young people get sexually harassed?

5. Victims that have been raped many times say that they will never be the same. Why do you think they say this?

6. In court, a person that does not say yes to sex is the same as saying no. Why?

7. Why do you think a man may think he can get away with rape at a party?