

This leaflet gives information for people who have very recently experienced a sexual assault and need to see a doctor and support worker quickly.



If you have reported what happened to the police, they will arrange this, or give you information about how to contact us yourself.

If you have not reported to the police, you just need to ring us and we will make an appointment for you to come in - this might be straight away, or a day or two later, depending on your circumstances.

Helpline: 01604 601713



Serenity is partnership between
NHS Northamptonshire and Northants Police

Serenity and its workers are managed by the Health Service; we work closely with the police but we don't pass on any information without the consent of the client.



Sexual Assault Referral Centre
Highfield Clinical Care Centre
Entrances C & D
(rear of building)
Cliftonville Road
Northampton
NN1 5BU
Tel: 01604 745005
serenity@nhft.nhs.uk
www.serenitynorthants.co.uk

Serenity premises are fully adapted for people with disabilities but please contact us in advance if you wish to discuss any particular requirements.

Serenity aims for its services to be available to everyone. Please contact us to discuss ways in which we can help you.

If you wish to comment about any aspect of our service you have received, please contact

Serenity Manager

Tel: 01604 745005



Sexual Assault
Referral Centre
Northamptonshire

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What happens when
I come to Serenity?
Examination, Interview,
Help & Support



24hr Helpline:

01604 601713

Serenity offers a confidential 24 hour helpline if you are in crisis or need someone to talk to. If we cannot speak to you straight away you can leave a message and we will call you back as soon as possible.

Clinical Director: Prof Ian Wall

Step 1 - Coming to Serenity:

If you have reported the incident to the police, they will bring you to Serenity - they will have rung us first so we are ready to receive you.

If you don't want to report to the police, or you are undecided, you can ring Serenity direct. You will be given advice and an explanation of the options, as well as an appointment if necessary.



Step 2 - When you arrive:

When you arrive for your appointment, you will see a Crisis Worker who will support you the entire time you are at Serenity.

She will explain your options and discuss what will happen next, including seeing a doctor. If you need replacement clothing this will be provided and sometimes the worker will ask you to provide a urine sample and mouth wash so that you can then use the toilet and be given refreshments.



Step 3 - Forensic and medical examination:

If you have consented to see a doctor the forensic medical examination will be explained to you. You only do this if you want to – it is totally voluntary. You can choose to do some parts of the examination but not others. You can stop it at any time.

Forensic examinations are best carried out as soon as possible after assaults. So, although it may be the last thing you may feel like doing, it's best to get it done straight away.

The examinations are used to collect evidence about what happened in the assault and about your assailant and to assess any risks to your ongoing health.

Step 3 - continued:

The doctor will take a history about your general health and then look at and record any marks or injuries such as bruises.

If appropriate, swabs can be taken from the skin and from intimate areas - this is done as sensitively and quickly as possible, but it is entirely your decision and you can stay stop at any time.

Afterwards you can have a shower and be provided with toiletries and any replacement clothing you may need.



Step 4 - Advice:

The doctor will talk to you about potential sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and pregnancy.

We provide emergency contraception and medication to reduce the risk of infections, followed up by a referral to a specialist sexual health clinic.

We don't check for STIs at the time of the forensic examination because it is too early for them to show up, but this will be done by the specialist clinic when they follow up.

Step 5 - Follow up and ongoing care:

Dealing with the emotional effects from a rape or sexual assault can be very difficult and you may want some help with this. The Crisis Worker and doctor will offer our follow up support service.

Our Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) can contact you within 1-2 working days to see how you are and discuss your ongoing needs.

This includes emotional support, referral for counselling or other services, help through the criminal justice process, information about your options and helping you to decide what to do.

If you have reported to the police -

providing a statement or recorded interview:

The police may interview you before or after an examination, or may defer it to another day. They may take a written statement, or visually record an interview on a DVD.



Serenity has two interview suites and we can help you through this process.

If you haven't reported to the police:

We will talk to you about storing any swabs, etc. that the doctor may have taken in case you change your mind later on. They can then be provided to the police as preserved evidence.

Alternatively, they can be destroyed at your request at any time.



We will ask if you want to provide anonymous Intelligence to the police - we write an account of what happened but without any of your personal details and submit this to the police to help them build up a picture about what is happening in their area but without knowing anything about you - again, it's completely up to you.

Should you later want to talk to the police we can arrange this for you - initially just an informal chat and they still don't need to know who you are. If you want to then formally report, this can be done. We will support you through this and arrange it all for you - but it is still your decision.

**We will help and support you -
whatever you decide to do.**