Sexual Assault, Teens

Sexual assault includes situations where there is sexual contact without consent. This includes contact with or without penetration of any kind (*vaginal, oral or anal*). Such contact is a result of force. The force can be either physical or mental. It also includes unwanted "touching of sexual, private or intimate parts". In some cases, the assaulted teen may be unable to consent. This means that the assaulted teen may not be able to understand the consequences of his/her actions. He/she may be intoxicated or incapacitated in some way.

RECOMMENDATIONS IF A SEXUAL ASSAULT HAS HAPPENED

- Go to a safe place. This may include a shelter. Or, it may be staying with a trusted family member or friend. Stay away from the area where you were attacked. Often, someone the teen knows causes the sexual assault. This could even be a friend or relative.
- Report the incident to the police. File appropriate papers with authorities. This is important for all assaults. Even if the assailant is a family member or a friend, make the report.
- Get medical care as soon as possible.
- If possible, do not change clothes or shower before a caregiver examines you.

TREATMENT

The following recommendations for IMMEDIATE treatment apply to both male and female teens.

Prevention of sexually transmitted disease:

- Both oral and injectable **antibiotics** are used to help prevent sexually transmitted infections.
- **Hepatitis B vaccine**. Immunization should be given, if not immunized previously or not up-to-date.
- **HPV (*Human papillomavirus*) vaccine *(Gardasil)***. Immunization should be given, if not immunized previously or not up-to-date.
- **HIV (*Human Immunodeficiency Virus*)**. Medicines used to help prevent HIV are not always recommended. Your caregiver considers many details about the assault before starting this treatment. If immediate testing of the assailant is possible, medicines may be started temporarily. If medicines to prevent HIV are recommended, they must be started within 72 hours of the assault. If follow-up testing is negative, the medicines can be stopped.
- **Tetanus Immunization**. This will be recommended if:
  - There were other injuries at the time of the assault.
  - The last tetanus shot was 10 years or more before the assault.
  - The date of the last tetanus shot is unknown.

Pregnancy Prevention or Emergency Contraception

Medication to help prevent pregnancy can be given up to 120 hours after an assault.

Counseling

A sexual assault is a traumatic event. Those caring for you will offer referrals for the following:

- Services that specialize in sexual assault counseling.
- Appropriate community and social services.
- Services provided to youth with disabilities (if applicable).
- Services specializing in medical exams used for legal purposes.

DIAGNOSTICS

Tests recommended immediately:

- Pregnancy test (if applicable).
- HIV testing (for both the victim and assailant, if possible).
- Tests for sexually transmitted infections.

Tests recommended during follow-up care:

- Re-test for sexually transmitted infections (if applicable) 1 week after the first tests.
- Pregnancy test (if applicable) 2 weeks after the first test.
- Repeat syphilis testing at 6 to 12 weeks and HIV testing 3 to 6 months after the assault if:
  - Initial test results found no infection (*were negative*).
  - Infection could not be ruled out in the attacker.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- Your caregiver may prescribe medications for you. Take them as directed for the full length of time prescribed.
- If it is not safe for you to be at home, consider staying with trusted family or friends. Return home when you feel that it is safe to do so.
- Follow up with your caregivers is important. See them for ongoing testing. They can also manage any possible infectious diseases.

SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You have new problems related to your injuries.
- You have problems that may be due to the medicine you are taking. Examples include:
  - A rash.
  - Itching.
  - Swelling.
  - Trouble breathing.
- You develop off and on belly (*abdominal*) pain.
- You are feeling sick to your stomach (*nausea*) or vomiting.
- You have an oral temperature above 102° F (38.9° C).

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You are afraid of being:
  - Threatened.
  - Beaten.
  - Abused.
- You receive new injuries related to abuse.
- You develop moderate or severe abdominal pain.
- You develop repeated vomiting.
- You have chest pain or difficulty breathing.
- You develop a severe headache.
- You have any other problems that cause serious concern.
- You have an oral temperature above 102° F (38.9° C), not controlled by medicine.

Recommendations are based upon the August, 2008 Guidelines published by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

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