

Surviving the aftermath of rape and sexual trauma

If you've been subject to sexual violence, there are services that can help. You may need time to think about what has happened to you and you don't have to report the assault to the Police, immediately, or at all, if you don't want to. However, consider getting medical help as soon as possible because you may be at risk of pregnancy or sexually transmitted infections (STIs). You can do this by going to your GP or sexual health clinic in Loughborough.

Recovering from rape or sexual trauma

Regardless of age or gender, the impact of sexual violence goes far beyond any physical injuries. The trauma of being raped or sexually assaulted can be shattering, leaving you feeling scared, ashamed, and alone or plagued by nightmares, flashbacks, and other unpleasant memories. The world may not feel like a safe place anymore. You may no longer trust others or even trust yourself. You may question your judgment, your self-worth, and even your sanity. You may blame yourself for what happened or believe that you're "dirty" or "damaged goods." Relationships may feel dangerous, intimacy impossible. On top of that, you may struggle with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, and depression.

It's important to remember that what you are experiencing is a normal reaction to trauma. Your feelings of helplessness, shame, defectiveness, and self-blame are symptoms, not reality. No matter how difficult it may seem, the following suggestions can help you to come to terms with what happened, regain your sense of safety and trust, and learn to heal and move on with your life.

Recovering from rape or sexual trauma

It can be very difficult to admit and process that you were raped or sexually assaulted. You may also be afraid of how others will react. Will they judge you? Look at you differently? It can seem easier to downplay what happened or keep it a secret.

Try to reach out to someone you trust. It's common to think that if you don't talk about your rape, it didn't really happen, but you can't heal when you're avoiding the truth. Hiding only adds to feelings of shame. As scary as it is to open up, it will support the process of recovery.

For more information or advise you can speak to a Duty Assessment and Inclusion (DAI) Adviser by completing a self-referral form found here:

[Duty, Assessment and Incident Referral Form.](#)