Sexual violence is one of the most severe crimes, which can have long-term psychological consequences. Regrettably, the cases of rape are the least reported ones, the majority of the victims being reluctant to inform the police due to various reasons: shame, fear or simply not believing to find understanding and compassion. These crimes do not have to be silently neglected. Be sure that the help will not come late to you. Annually about 3-4 million women in the world become victims of violence. Each 6 minutes, a woman in the world is being raped, and each 8 seconds - a woman is subject to physical abuse.

What kind of feelings does a person have after being subject to sexual violence? Initially it is a state of shock, changing into fear, bewilderment, numbness, anger, the desire to forget everything. Often this comes along with a total depression, a feeling of guilt and sorrow for oneself. The victim can feel remorse, asking herself one and the same question: why did this happen to me? What did I do wrong?

Do not scold yourself!

If you have been sexually aggressed, consult a psychologist, who can help you overcome this situation. You do not have any guilt for what has happened. Nothing (the way you were dressed, your being in the street during late hours, etc.) justifies the behavior of the offender.

The intercourse that you previously had with a person, does not give him the right to force you to sexual relationships afterwards.

In case of the rape, the law does not distinguish between single and married women. That is, even if your husband forced you to a sexual intercourse, his actions are qualified as rape.

As a rule, the rapes are committed at the place of the victim or at the place of the rapist.

During a sociological survey which analyzed the status of the reproductive health of the population, there have been interviewed 5412 women. It was established that over 200 interviewees have been forced to have a sexual intercourse against their will. More than half of these women have been raped by their husbands or ex-husbands; 11% - by their boyfriends or friends, 14% - by strangers.

RISKY SITUATIONS WHICH CAN LEAD TO RAPE:

• Being in a company of men with a bad reputation, as well as going to places of bad fame.
• Being alone in an environment where there is abuse of alcohol and drugs.
• Walking alone on the streets at night.
• Getting into a car with an unknown driver.
• Lack of prudence in cases of very tempting announcements (selling of apartments, matrimonial adds, employment opportunities, etc.)

Why is it important to tell the police about the cases of rape?

• Many of the rapists repeat the crime. By filing a complaint at the police office you could contribute to the protection of other potential victims.
• Announcing about the crime inspires confidence.
• The rapist will be forced to recognize his guilt at the police or in court. In any case, he will be punished, and this could lead to a change in his behavior.

FILING A COMPLAINT AND THE FORENSIC MEDICINE EXPERTISE

• Ask for the legal assistance from a legal counsel or an attorney.
• Contact the police immediately after the rape was committed. In case if, due to various reasons, you did not manage to do that immediately, it is never too late to do it after.
• Write a complaint. If the police representatives refuse to receive it, insist on a meeting with their superiors.
• Put down the name of the police officer and the phone number where you can reach him.
• If the police and/or the prosecutor’s office refuse to file a criminal case, write a complaint in court. The law enforcement authorities are obliged to set up for a forensic medical expertise. In case it is necessary, insist on the expertise in written form, if the police officer refuses to send you to the forensic practitioner, go to any physician from any clinic. Tell the doctor about what has happened. Ask for the information to be indicated in the medical paper. Besides this, ask for a test on sexually transmissible diseases and HIV/AIDS.

• Before the expertise do not wash yourself and do not clean or change the cloths that you wear. The cloths may have important evidence (blood, sperm, hair, etc.) of the crime.
• If it is possible, do not eat and do not drink anything before appealing to the police and doctors. You could loose some important evidence.
• If you want, you can ask for a female police officer or investigator working on your case.
• Describe everything that happened in more details. This will allow you to avoid repeating the unpleasant memories. At the same time, this way you will be sure that you did not loose any important detail. Keep a copy of the letter.

• The law enforcement authorities are obliged to ensure you with a confidential criminal process. Please ask for your name and address to be held secret, especially if this is not known to the rapist.
• In case if the aggressor will threaten you for the fact that you have declared (or you intend to declare him) to the law you with the crime, inform the police or the prosecutor’s office immediately. If it is possible, register these threats on a tape, or the testimonies of the witnesses about the threats or such proposals.

• The law enforcement authorities are obliged to take measures of state protection, if your life, health or your property is in danger.

HOW TO ACT IN CASE OF AN ATTACK?

Despite the actions taken, it is important that you managed to survive. It means that you did all that you had to do.

Do not forget: it is the rapist who is guilty for committing the crime not the victim.
THE RAPE IS A CRIME

The rape is a crime against the sexual freedom of a person.

Art. 171 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Moldova defines the rape as “a sexual intercourse committed as result of physical or psychological constraint of the person, or by taking advantage of the fact that the victim could not defend herself/himself, neither to express his/her will.” The aggravating circumstances of the rape are: the repeated rape, rape committed by a group of persons, rape of a minor, rape with extremely severe consequences.

HOW CAN YOU DEFEND YOUR RIGHTS:

1. By writing a declaration to the police office, continued by filing a criminal case.
2. If during a criminal process you did not obtain the compensation of expenditures for medical treatment, the absent days from work, the services of the psychologist, of the attorney, etc., and neither compensations for the material damage, you can file a separate civil case for the purpose of recuperating your damages. You have the right to the paid services of an attorney, who can represent you interests in court.

If you are a sexual violence victim, appeal to the crisis centers for women, where you can be provided with free of charge medical, psychological and legal assistance.

During January-October 2001, the police authorities have registered 164 cases of rape and rape attempts, showing a decrease by 12,8% compared to the previous years. The law enforcement authorities have identified 139 persons who were involved, 68,3% of them being subject to investigations.

REMEMBER!

• Any person can become a victim of sexual violence, disregarding the age, the profession, the material status, race, nationality, physical shape, etc.
• The main cause of the rape is not only the rapist’s will to satisfy the sexual needs, but also his intention to suppress and humiliate the victim, to demonstrate his power.
• A big part of the rapists are married or have sexual partners.

The women who became victims of sexual violence do not have any guilt. The entire responsibility is that of the rapist.

We hope that these suggestions will help you make the first step towards moral healing and a more sure life. The next step is to contact the organizations which can offer you support!

The addresses of useful organizations:
1. Association of women of legal career, Chişinău, 68 Bucureşti str., of. 310, tel. 54-65-69; 27-54-62
2. Center for Diagnosis and Rehabilitation “Armonie”, MD-2012, Chişinău, 4A Veronica Micle str., tel. 22-24-37
3. Human Rights Center in Moldova (CpDOM), Chişinău, 16 Şfântul Târîi str., tel.: 23-48-00; 24-54-42
4. The University Legal Clinic from Bălţi, 38 Puşkin str., block 5, tel. (231) 24479
5. Legal Clinic of Comrat, 160 Lenin str., office 8, tel. (298) 29480
6. The Tiraspol Legal Clinic, 21/4 Zapadniu pereulok str., office 47, tel. (233) 355 90
7. Center for assistance and protection of victims of violence, Bălţi, 31 August 63 A str., tel. (231) 26357
8. National Center to Prevent the Child Abuse, (CNPAC) Chişinău, str. Calea Ieșilor 61/2 tel. 75-88-06; 59-2748
10. Center for psychological assistance of the family, Chişinău, str. 31 August, 87, tel. 22-01-19
11. National Center for Studies and Information on Women’s Issues, MD 2004, Chişinău, 194 A Ştefan cel Mare str., tel.: 24-13-93; 23-70-89

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Know your rights!
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