



Protect Yourself From Rape

BY CAPTAIN ED BAILEY

The thought or threat of rape has a devastating effect on a woman, and while this fear cannot be disregarded, the fact is that the incidence of rape among older women is low. It is believed that among reported rapes of older women, most are what are termed “secondary crimes” or crimes committed in conjunction with a primary crime such as a burglary. Many prevention techniques are the same as with other types of crime. Don’t place yourself in situations where it is possible to be assaulted or abducted without being seen or heard.

Tips to avoid victimization.

- Have your car or house keys in your hand and ready as you approach your door. Don’t linger. If you have to stop and search for your keys at the door, you become more vulnerable. Your attention is diverted to finding the key.
- Once inside your home or car, lock the doors. Don’t give someone the opportunity to get inside with you and control the situation.
- If someone tries to get in your car, drive away. Drive to a place of safety and call the police. Even if you are at a red light, if you can safely drive away, do it!
- If you think you are being followed in your car, drive to a police station or a service station where you can get help from someone who will come out to your car. Stay locked in your car, ask the attendants to call the police. If you have a cell phone, call 911 and let the emergency dispatcher know your location, color of your car, color of the suspect’s car and the physical description if you know. Drive to the front lot of the Independence Police Department if you are close.
- Be cautious when using elevators in office buildings, apartments, and someone gets on that makes you uncomfortable; get off before the door closes or at the next floor. Don’t get on an elevator with a suspicious looking person. Wait for the next car or an empty car. When you are on the elevator, stand near the floor buttons. If a situation arises, you are in a position to push the buttons for all floors, causing the elevator to stop at the next floor and providing you with an opportunity to exit. NEVER push the red emergency button. The emergency button causes the elevator to stop immediately, even between floors.
- Avoid enclosed stairwells when possible. Use the elevator because they are less isolated and used by more people.

- If you are a woman living alone, do not list your first name on your mailbox or in the phone book. Use your first initial and last name only. Don't advertise that you are a living alone.
- Secure your home or apartment and keep your doors and windows locked. Don't open your door to anyone unless you know who it is. **The rapist who is currently on the loose, gains entry into the residences by climbing in unlocked windows.**
- Be cautious about who you go out with. Date rape or acquaintance rapes are not crimes confined to younger persons or college students. An older woman should be just as careful about dating and whom she spends time alone with as any other woman.

In spite of any precautions you may take, there is still a remote possibility a rapist could attack you. There is no right or wrong answer to tell you how to react in a particular situation. The decision whether or not to resist an attacker is a personal one only you can make. You should know that rape is a very serious crime that inflicts tremendous psychological damage. Physical injuries are usually not permanent or serious. Your decision as to how to react should depend on the situation at the time, and whether or not there is a weapon involved.

If you are a rape victim, it is very important that you try to remember to do the following:

- Call the police and report the rape immediately.
- Do not bathe or shower until after you have had medical treatment and evaluation.
- Do not discard clothing or bed covering or any other articles that may provide evidence.
- If you want someone with you through any procedures or questioning, inform the investigating officers and they will contact the crisis center or anyone else you desire.
- Try to remember everything you can about the attacker no matter how minor it may seem.
- MOST IMPORTANTLY, know that the attack is not your fault. Victims do NOT cause sexual assaults.
- **CONTACT DETECTIVE AMY SCHWORER (859-356-2697) TO ENROLL IN ONE OF THE RAD CLASSES OFFERED THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.**