

DATE RAPE: TEN THINGS YOU CAN DO TO PROTECT YOURSELF

Thinking about date rape can be scary. It is especially scary to think that someone you know would hurt you. But it does happen. While date rape is never your fault, and you can't always avoid it, you can take steps to lower your risk.

1. Remember, you always have the right to say no!

- ✓ Even if:
 - You have been making out.
 - You have been drinking.
 - You have had sex before.
 - You said yes before – then changed your mind.
 - Your partner says, "You owe me."
 - You're dressed in sexy clothes.
 - You think he or she will get mad.

2. Use caution and trust your instincts.

- ✓ Do not go off alone with someone you do not know well or who makes you uncomfortable – trust your instincts.
- ✓ Suggest hanging out with a group, going to a public place, or double dating instead.



3. Be aware of different kinds of pressure.

- ✓ Rape is when someone forces you to have sex. That force can be:
 - Not stopping when you say no.
 - Threatening to hurt you.
 - Physically holding you down.
 - Using a weapon such as a knife or gun.
 - Having sex with you when you're too high or drunk to say no.
- ✓ It may also be rape if the person:
 - Threatens to tell other people you had sex if you don't give in.
 - Makes it seem like something worse will happen if you don't give in.
 - Says things like, "If you don't, I'll hurt myself."



4. Be clear about your limits.

- ✓ If someone is pushing you to have sex when you don't want to – say no clearly.
- ✓ Don't be afraid of hurting his or her feelings. If you don't say no clearly, he or she may think you are OK with what is happening.
- ✓ Remember, if the person doesn't listen to no, it's not your fault.

5. Stay in charge.

- ✓ Staying in charge means saying what you want and knowing what you are doing.
- ✓ Avoid drinking and using drugs. They make it hard for you to stay in charge.
- ✓ Call or text a family member or a trusted friend to come pick you up if you are unsure of your safety.
- ✓ Always carry money for bus or cab fare.
- ✓ Remember, it is better to get into trouble for being somewhere you shouldn't be than to get raped.



6. Watch for danger signs.

- ✓ If a person does not listen to you at other times, he or she may not listen to you in a sexual setting.
- ✓ If someone sits or stands too close or stares you down, he or she may not respect your limits.
- ✓ If a person seems to like it if you are uncomfortable, he or she may not respect your limits.

7. If you're afraid to say no...

- ✓ If you think saying no will make the situation worse, say you have to go to the bathroom. Then go make a phone call for help.
- ✓ It is OK to lie to protect yourself.

8. What if the person doesn't listen to no?

- ✓ Say no again – loudly.
- ✓ Say, "Stop. This is rape."

9. Ask yourself, is it safe to resist?

- ✓ Try to stay calm and decide what to do.
- ✓ Try to talk your way out or distract the attacker so you can get away.
- ✓ If you can, fight back. Push the attacker away – hard!
- ✓ Yell loudly. Run to where there are other people.
- ✓ Sometimes it is more dangerous to fight back. You may decide it is safer to give in. It is still not your fault!



Consider taking a self defense class. It can help you learn to say no and teach you how to protect yourself in dangerous situations.