

Prevention Tips

Risk Reduction



Meet in Public

Meeting in a public place is one of the biggest factors that will contribute to a safe date. When you meet in public, you're creating your own safety zone. Generally, the goal of a first date is to get to know each other. Well-trafficked public places are always your best bet.

Go Out Together

Go out as a group and come home as a group; never separate and never leave your friend(s) behind. Even if you are going to a party of someone you know, always bring a friend. Most sexual assault victims are assaulted by someone they know. Remember, if you invite your date to follow you home (or if you follow your date home) at the end of the evening, the possibility of your date ending in sex is greatly increased, whether that is your intention or not. If you are going on a date with someone you don't know or have just recently met, consider inviting a friend to come along with a date of their own. As a general rule, try to avoid being alone.

Don't Share Drink

If you go to a party, always hold on to your drink. Never set down your drink and come back to it. If you lose sight of your drink, get a new one. Don't accept drinks from anyone or drink from open containers such as a punch bowl. Be aware that alcohol and drugs are often involved in rape cases, as they compromise your ability (and your partner's ability) to make responsible decisions. If you choose to drink alcohol, drink responsibly. Remember, date rape drugs often have no color, taste, or smell, so roofied drinks don't always involve alcohol, but could also be something as simple as water.

While taking steps for your own safety is important, many cases of abuse or assault can also be avoided by becoming an active bystander to help others as well.

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Date smart. Be Safe. You can make a difference!

College life can be fun! However, all students should remember to be careful when becoming involved in any activity that has the potential for losing control of your environment. Dating, for example, may start out as just friendly visits, movie nights, or hanging out together, but can quickly spin out of control with poor behavior such as sexual harassment and sexual assault. It is an unfortunate truth that anyone can be a victim of such behaviors, and no one deserves to be victimized. To raise awareness and decrease victimization, a focus on safety is recommended. Below are a few tips to keep in mind for dating and other social activities.

Tell Somebody

Before your date, give someone you trust the information you have on this new person including his or her first and last name, phone number, and when they can expect you home. The more information available, the more quickly someone may be able to find you if/before the worst happens. Always have a cell phone charged and handy in case you need to call for help!

Drive Yourself

“Meeting there” is a good option because you are in control of your arrival and departure time. If you don’t like the person you have met up with, leave. Once you get into a stranger’s car, they have complete and total control. Consider not giving a stranger your address at first contact. If he or she insists on coming to your house, that may be a red flag. If you don’t have your own car, considering arranging for a friend to drop you off who could also pick you up if things go south.

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Personal Safety



Tips for Minimizing your Chances of Becoming a Victim

- **Be aware** of your situation and surroundings.
- **Trust your feelings.** If something feels wrong, it probably is. Seek help as soon as possible.
- **Be assertive and speak up.** Clearly communicate your feelings to your partner and/or to the other person.
- **Talk with your trusted persons** about sexual assault and other forms of violence.
- Does your partner: Threaten to hurt you or your children? Say it's your fault if he or she hits you and then promises it won't happen again (but it does)? Put you down in public? Force you to have sex when you don't want to? Follow you? Send you unwanted messages and gifts?
- Stay sober and watch out for dates and/or anyone who tries to get you drunk or high.
- Clearly communicate limits to partners, friends, and acquaintances.
- Never leave a party with someone you don't know well and trust.

Safety Tips - In Your Car

- Always make sure you lock your car doors, whether or not you are in the car. Always check the floor and rear seat before getting into your car.
- When returning to your car, make sure your keys are in your hand, ready for use in unlocking the door and turning on the ignition. They can also be used as a weapon, should that become necessary.
- If you suspect that you are being followed while driving, keep on going – do not stop and pull over until you get to some place that is well lit and where there are other people to assist you. If possible, drive to the nearest police station to let them know you are being followed.
- Avoid parking lots and garages that are poorly lit. Do not walk to and from your parked car alone if it is at night. Ask a group to walk together to the cars.
- If your car should break down, raise the hood and remain in the car with the doors locked until the police arrive. If you have a cell phone, call someone for help or call 911. If someone should stop and offer to assist you, roll down the window just enough to tell them they can call the police for you.