WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF I SEEK MEDICAL TREATMENT?

As soon as you can after the assault occurs, consider going to the emergency room of a local hospital (listed here). At the emergency room, doctors and nurses can treat any injuries, test for and treat sexually transmitted infections, and test for pregnancy.

If possible, the victim should not shower, bathe, douche, or change clothes or bedding before going to the hospital. If you do change clothes, do not wash the clothes you were wearing during the assault, and bring them with you to the hospital.

A doctor or nurse will call an advocate from the Peoria Center for Prevention of Abuse that is trained to assist victims in understanding medical and evidence collection procedures.

A nurse will also call the Peoria or Bradley University Police Department and an officer will come to the emergency room to speak with the victim. If s/he does not feel comfortable doing so, the victim does not have to speak with the police or with the victim advocate.

The victim has the right to request that a support person such as a friend or partner stay with her/him in the emergency room, and s/he has the right to request that every procedure be explained.

The victim has the option of having a rape evidence collection kit taken. S/he must give consent for evidence to be collected. During evidence collection, the doctors or nurses will examine the victim’s body and belongings for materials that may help to identify the perpetrator or strengthen a court case. Evidence collection procedures include oral, genital and anal swabs, hair combings, and fingernail specimens. The victim can decline consent to some evidence collection procedures and undergo others. If you are undecided about reporting the assault to police or prosecuting the perpetrator, you can consent to the evidence collection, but request that it not be released to law enforcement until you decide whether or not you want the police to conduct an investigation. An evidence collection kit can be completed up to one week after the assault, and the hospital can hold the completed kit for up to two weeks after evidence is collected.

If the victim suspects that a “rape drug” such as GHB or rohypnol was used, medical personnel can perform a urinary drug test. For information about the effects of rape drugs, click here. Rape drugs pass quickly through the body, so it is important to get tested as soon as possible after the assault. The urine sample can be held up to 48 hours before testing, so if you are unsure if you want a drug test, you can give a urine sample and ask that it is held until you make your decision.

Emergency contraception can be dispensed within 120 hours of assault in order to reduce risk of unwanted pregnancy. Emergency contraception can be purchased at local pharmacies. For more information about emergency contraception, click here.
If you choose not to go to the emergency room, consider seeking medical treatment at the Bradley University Center for Wellness or a private doctor. While they are unable to collect evidence, Bradley University Center for Wellness can treat injuries, test for and treat some sexually transmitted infection and pregnancy.