

Management of Sexual Assault Victims

Societal Impact

“It is being increasingly recognized that there is a need to strengthen the quality of existing services that support and provide care to women and girls who have experienced sexual violence.”

(World Health Organization, 2004)

Prevalence

- Many barriers to reporting make it unlikely that reported prevalence rates reflect the accurate scope of the issue of sexual assault

Immediate Emotional Impact

- Shock /Horror/ Fear
- Shame /Disgust
- Helplessness
- Dissociative reactions
- Fear of pregnancy
- Fear of sexually transmitted disease
- Culturally bound implications

Impact

- Relationship issues / fears
- Physical injury increases psychological risk
- Sense of Defilement / Stigma
- Self blame Guilt
- Reactions to the investigative and legal processes if assault is reported

Impact

Women who have experienced sexual violence constitute the single largest group of people suffering from PTSD (Calhoun & Resnick, 1993).