



# Reporting Sexual Assault

Operation Opal  
Dorset Police



Easy words  
and pictures



## Meet the team.

Here are some of the people from the 'Operation Opal' team at Dorset Police. They are specially trained to work on cases of sexual assault.

If you report a sexual assault, someone from the team will support you. They will be there to help, from the moment you report the crime.



## What is sexual assault?

- Someone having sex with you or touching you in a private place when you do not want them to.
- This could happen with your clothes on or off.



You may want to tell someone.

If you have been assaulted you might want to tell someone what has happened:

- friend
- family
- social worker
- care worker
- ... or someone else who you trust



If you are in danger right now,  
call 999 and ask for the  
police.

If you have been assaulted at some  
time in the past, and are not in danger  
right now, please call us as soon as you  
can on:

**01202 22 22 22**





## Did the assault happen very recently?

If you were assaulted less than 1 week ago, do not have a shower, a bath, or wash the clothes that you were wearing.

We may be able to find **evidence** of the crime, which will help us in **court** later on.



**We will ask you to come in  
for an examination as soon  
as possible.**

It is very, very important that you come  
in quickly.

A doctor will need to examine you.



The examination room will look like this.

It has to be kept very clean, and the people who work in this room have to wear special clothing.

If you are female, you will not be left alone with a male doctor. A female member of staff can be there with you.





A doctor will examine you.

It will take about an hour.

The doctor is looking for:

- body fluids (like semen)
- cuts and bruises on your body
- any other injuries or signs of the assault



Someone from the Operation Opal team will talk to you about what happened.

Someone from Social Services or the Mental Health Team might be there too.

You can have breaks, food and drink when you want to.



The interview will be filmed.

This is so that you only have to say things once. The film can then be used in court.

You can have someone there to help you to communicate if you need to. For example, a sign language interpreter.

Some cases will then go to **court**.



After a few months, the story about what happened to you will be heard in court.

Crown Court: A **Jury** will decide if the person who is **accused** of the assault is guilty or not.

**Magistrates** court: In less serious cases the magistrates will decide whether the person is **guilty** or not.



You do not have to be in the court room.

You can be in a room somewhere else in the building to answer any questions.

You do not have to see the person who is **accused** of assaulting you.

Someone from the Operation Opal team will be there to help and support you.





## More about our team

We can help and support you through the whole experience.

From the time you report the crime, to a court case if it happens, and beyond.

You can phone us, meet with us, ask us questions, and talk things over.

# Difficult Words Explained

**accused:** *the person who is **accused** is the person who you say has hurt you.*

**court:** *the room where the judge or the magistrates listen to the evidence and make their decisions.*

**evidence:** *information and facts about your story; such as things you have said and things the doctor has found during an examination.*

**guilty:** *the person who hurt you, once it has been proved in court.*

**judge:** *the person in charge of a crown court. They listen to the evidence and make sure that people are treated fairly.*

**jury:** *a group of people who make decisions about whether people are innocent or guilty in a Crown Court. They are all members of the public.*

**magistrates:** *in a case which is not too complicated or serious, **magistrates** will listen to evidence instead of a judge.*



## Useful Phone numbers

Dorset Police  
**01202 22 22 22**

Dorset Rape Crisis Line  
**01202 547445**

Victim Support  
**01202 606200**

