

Safety and Self Care

After a sexual assault, you may feel unsafe in certain situations like parties with lots of people or being in crowds, walking alone, and being around men you don't know.

Many people try and avoid these situations altogether, however, if it's getting in the way of you enjoying yourself and doing the things you normally do, it's important to talk to someone.

Below is a list of things you could try to help yourself ease some of the effects you are experiencing. You might have other things you could also add to the list.

Sleeping

- Go to bed at the same time each night
- Drink a glass of warm milk
- Take some deep relaxing breaths
- Dim the lights
- Remind yourself that you are safe

Eating

Eat healthy nutritious foods and try to eat regularly to keep your energy levels balanced

Alcohol, Drugs, & Caffeine

Limit or avoid alcohol, drugs and/or caffeine. These things can seem like a good idea at the time but more often than not, they have a temporary uplifting or blocking-out effect, resulting in anxious (feeling on edge) and/or depressed feelings. They can prolong symptoms like flashbacks, difficulty concentrating and can potentially become a risk to your health.

Distraction/Calming Activities

Try and keep doing the things you would normally do to maintain some feelings of normalcy in your life. Make time to do things you enjoy like:

- Sports
- Singing
- Writing/Journaling
- Music (play an instrument or listen to your favourite artists)
- Being with friends and family

Relationships

Spend time with people you like and trust and talk about what support you may need. If you have people (or a person) in your life that you trust, it's good to let them know how they can help you. Let them know you might need some quiet time after a flashback or that you do or do not want to talk about what has happened or what you are experiencing. You may need a hug or a shoulder to cry on or someone to distract you (like going for a walk or to the mall).

Please remember... If you find that even though you are doing your best, your symptoms still persist; do seek support from a service that understands about sexual abuse. You can call the centre and speak with a staff member.