

# MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA

**Military Sexual Trauma (MST)** refers to sexual assault or harassment that occurs while a service member is in the military. It is pervasive with both male and female victims and perpetrators.

During times of war,  
**SEXUAL ASSAULT RATES IN THE  
MILITARY INCREASE.**

## MST CAUSES UNIQUE PROBLEMS.

While **no less traumatic**, victims of MST face different challenges than civilian victims. They may:

- **Have to** continue to live or work with the perpetrator.
- **Feel Betrayed** by other service members.
- **Be Unwilling** to report the assault so as to protect their mission.
- **Fear** that their career will be jeopardized if they report the incident.

## WHILE DEPLOYED:

- **Familiarize Yourself** with new areas.
- **Always Travel** in a group.
- **Report Suspicious** activities or unauthorized people.
- **Be Informed** about cultural differences in the treatment of women.

## MST IS PREVALENT AND UNDERREPORTED

DoD estimates 8.4% of active duty women and 1.5% of active duty men have experienced unwanted sexual contact per year.

**71% of female and  
90% of male MST victims  
never report being attacked.**

## FOLLOW THE ABCs OF ACTIVE BYSTANDER INTERVENTION.

**A**

### Assess the safety of the situation.

If intervening will put you in danger, call the authorities.

**B**

### Be with others.

Groups that intervene are more likely to deter a potential attacker.

**C**

### Care for the victim.

Ask the victim if the sexual actions are consensual, or if they need medical assistance.

On average, there are over **3,000** reports of sexual assault in the military every year.

## IF YOU'RE SEXUALLY ASSAULTED:

- **Get to a Safe Place** away from the perpetrator.
- **Preserve Evidence** of the attack— Don't bathe or change your clothes.
- **Write Down** everything you can remember about the attack.
- **Call 9-1-1.** Seek medical care as quickly as possible.
- **Contact a Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC)** to get information about your options.
- **Remember** that this was not your fault.

Call DoD Safe Helpline: 877-995-5247  
Chat: [online.safehelpline.org](https://online.safehelpline.org)

## DON'T ASSUME. GET CONSENT.

- **Always get verbal consent** before engaging in sexual activity.
- **Stop immediately** if your partner says "Stop" or "No."
- **Don't engage** in sexual activity with anyone who is excessively intoxicated.

## REDUCE THE RISK OF SEXUAL ASSAULT.

- **Stay with Friends** – Never leave with strangers.
- **Avoid Isolated Areas** and stay aware of your surroundings.
- **Don't Drink to Excess** and keep your drink in hand.
- **Trust Your Instincts** – Leave if you feel uncomfortable.

**STAY ALERT – BE VIGILANT  
PROTECT YOUR FELLOW WARRIORS**