How to do a Forensic Exam

A patient presents to the ER with complaints of sexual assault and there is no SANE on call what do you do?

Call for a medical advocate 504-456-2723. They are a great help to the patients and may be able to help you as well.

Have extra labels made, 2 extra sheets. The labels are used to label the swab boxes and envelops that are in the kit

Obtain a kit from the SAFE center. They are in the second upper cabinet in the exam room.

Discuss options for the medical care and forensic evidence collection. The patient has the right to decline any part of the exam. Patients have the right to medical treatment, forensic evidence collection no matter if the case is reported or not. If the case is not reported there can be no patient name on the outside of the evidence kit to protect the privacy of these folks. Instead of the patient’s name on the outside of the kit, write in the MR# and the kit will be stored by the NOPD and if the victim later reports, the evidence kit can be found. If the patient has reported the incident it is important to put the police Item number on the forensic report and on the kit.

Have patient sign the consent form in the kit as well as for Plan B and nPEP if medically necessary. These consents are in the desk in the SAFE center R bottom drawer.

If the patient wants to call the police contact 911 and have them speak to the operator. A district officer will come interview the patient and then they will call Sex Crimes detectives to come out. This can take a while. If the crime occurred in a different Parish then call the appropriate Parish. There are phone numbers for outlying Parishes in the SAFE center rolodex.

Get patient history of event and record on forensic report.

Have patient undress over drop cloth provided in kit and then fold up the drop cloth to put into kit. Bag the patients clothing to provide to law enforcement. Bags are in the kit.

Inspect for injury and photograph. The camera is in the L bottom drawer of the desk in the SAFE center and the battery is on the charger next to the copy machine in the SAFE center exam room. To identify the patient for the camera initially take a photo of one of their labels. Then take one of the patients face. Take at least 3 photos of each injury: far away, close in, and with a scale. The scales are in the exam room next to the swab dryer. Bracket the patient in the camera by taking another photo of their label as the last photograph. Please put the battery back on the charger when finished with the exam and return the camera to the drawer.
**Draw blood** for HIV, Hepatitis Screen and RPR. If the patient needs nPEP also draw a baseline CBC, CMP, and UA. If the patient is impaired or is amnesic get ED tox with Rohypnol and GHB.

**Collect swabs** of any bitten, kissed or scratched areas on patients body.

**Do pelvic exam.** Examine external genitalia and anus for any injury. Photograph. Collect Swabs of the vulva, perineum, and anus. Insert speculum, photograph any injury and collect swabs of vaginal wall and cervix.

**Get UPT.**

**Provide medication:** Zithromycin, Rocephin, Flagyl, Pain meds, antiemetics, nPEP, Plan B if necessary.

If the patient **requires nPEP:** nPEP is dispensed by our pharmacy for the initial 5 days of treatment. Tube pharmacy the prescriptions with the patient’s sticker, height and weight on the back of the scripts. Be sure and call the pharmacy to let them know that prescriptions for nPEP have been tubed to them. The patient will need to go to the HOP clinic for evaluation and follow up and they will provide the remainder of the 28 day supply. There are maps to the HOP clinic in the R bottom drawer of the desk in the SAFE center for the patient. On this map is a red card that will expedite the HOP clinic visit. The patient must present to the HOP clinic by 8:30 am Monday – Friday (closed all holidays). Provide the patient with the prescription for the 23 day supply and the medication for 5 days from the pharmacy.

Provide the patient with **discharge instructions for follow up with the Family Justice Center or Metro for counseling.** There are pamphlets on the chest in the SAFE center. You can also instruct them to call the SAFE center at 903-4546 and a SANE will contact them at a later time.

There is new underwear and scrubs locked in the clothing closet in the SAFE center. The key is in the desk drawer.

Your patient should be dischargeable at this point.

**Dry the swabs in the SAFE center drier for one hour.** To preserve chain of evidence there is a lock on the cart for the drier. Package up the swabs by putting each one in a labeled swab box, placing it in the appropriate labeled envelope and sealing the envelope with red evidence tape.

**2 copies of the completed forensic paper work will need to be made.** Make sure that each page has a patient sticker on the top right and the name of the forensic examiner and item # on the bottom.

Place evidence, one copy of the forensic report, and the pink copy of the forensic consent inside the kit and seal with evidence tape. Place a copy of the forensic report and the yellow forensic consent on the outside of the kit secured with a rubber band. Secure all clothing bags collected with evidence tape and label with patient’s name.

**The kit is placed in the locked evidence refrigerator** in exam room in SAFE center. The combination is 8-14-4. Enter the patient’s information in the pink evidence book in the refrigerator as well as in the
SANE emergency room register ledger which is kept in the bottom L drawer in the desk in the SAFE center.

The original forensic report, forensic consent, nPEP and Plan B consent is placed in the bottom L drawer in the SAFE center desk. This paperwork is **specially handled by medical records** so please make sure it is not placed in the discharge bins in the ER.