

Pain from sexual assault often untreated, study says

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Only one-third of victims receive medication to ease their discomfort, researchers find.

(HealthDay)—Although most victims of sexual assault experience severe pain after their attack, fewer than one-third receive medication to ease their discomfort, according to a new study.

Researchers from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill examined the distribution and severity of pain experienced by women aged 18 or older who sought medical care from sexual-assault nurse-examiner programs within 48 hours of their attack.

The women were asked to rate on a scale of one to 10 the pain they felt in eight parts of their body.

The study, published in the August issue of the *Journal of Pain*, revealed most of the women had severe or [moderate pain](#) after their assault. More than half reported pain in at least four parts of their body, but fewer than a third were treated with [pain medications](#).

Twenty percent of U.S. women suffer a sexual assault at some time in their lives, the researchers said in a journal news release.

Victims of sexual assault should be asked about their pain and should be treated promptly with nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs or [narcotic painkillers](#) to ease their physical and [psychological distress](#), the researchers said.

More information:

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services provides more information on [sexual assault](#).

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