Medical-Forensic Management of Adult and Post-Pubertal Adolescent Sexual Assault Patients

ALGORITHM A: Patient Seeks Care

Sexual assault patient presents seeking care

- Provide private area as soon as possible and perform medical screening examination
  - Guidelines p. 9 & 17

- Contact sexual assault crisis center to coordinate response
  - Guidelines p. 10

- Contact Forensic Nurse Examiner or other designated healthcare provider
  - Guidelines p. 13

Explain medical-forensic options to patient:
1) Evidence collection and notification of law enforcement
2) Evidence collection without notification of law enforcement
3) Medical treatment only (no evidence collection)

- Patient requests evidence collection and notification of law enforcement
  - GO TO ALGORITHM B

- Patient requests evidence collection without notification of law enforcement
  - GO TO ALGORITHM C

- Patient requests medical treatment only
  - GO TO ALGORITHM D

Always comply with mandated reporting requirements. See Guidelines p. 13-14 and Appendix 6 for Virginia laws on mandatory reporting.
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ALGORITHM B: Evidence Collection AND Notification of Law Enforcement

Patient requests evidence collection and notification of law enforcement

Contact law enforcement in the jurisdiction in which the event occurred, or, if unknown, the county or city in which the presenting facility is located

Patient presents within 72 hours of the sexual assault

Yes

Collect evidence using a PERK, maintain chain of custody, and release evidence to law enforcement

Document and photograph injuries

Conduct testing and provide prophylactic treatment for STIs and HIV according to CDC guidelines*

Obtain pregnancy test and offer emergency contraception if negative‡

Provide referrals for crisis intervention and any necessary follow-up medical care (including repeat pregnancy testing and STI testing if applicable)

Guidelines p. 19

Appendix 13

Guidelines p. 17-18

No

Document and photograph injuries

Conduct testing and provide treatment as necessary for STIs and HIV according to CDC guidelines*

Obtain baseline pregnancy test‡

Provide referrals for crisis intervention and any necessary follow-up medical care (including repeat pregnancy and STI testing if applicable)

Appendix 13

Guidelines p. 17-18

*STIs recommended for testing and treatment: gonorrhea, chlamydia, trichomonas, syphilis, hepatitis, and HIV. Note that CDC recommends consulting with a pediatric HIV specialist prior to the initiation of HIV PEP in children under the age of 16. See Appendix 7.

‡At the time of publication, FDA-approved emergency contraceptive pills are approved for use up to 72 hours after unprotected intercourse. Some clinical guidelines recommend use of emergency contraception up to 120 hours after unprotected intercourse (ACOG, 2005; WHO, 2007). Patients should be informed that the efficacy of emergency contraceptive pills diminishes with time since unprotected intercourse.
ALGORITHM C: Evidence Collection WITHOUT Notification of Law Enforcement

Patient requests evidence collection without notification of law enforcement

- Yes
  - Collect evidence using a PERK and maintain chain of custody
  - Document and photograph injuries
  - Conduct testing and provide prophylactic treatment for STIs and HIV according to CDC guidelines
  - Obtain pregnancy test and offer emergency contraception if negative
  - Provide referrals for crisis intervention and any necessary follow-up medical care (including repeat pregnancy and STI testing if applicable)
  - Provide method for contacting law enforcement should the patient decide to file a police report
  - Follow facility protocol for release of evidence to law enforcement, the Division of Consolidated Laboratory Services, or other appropriate agency

- No
  - Document and photograph injuries
  - Conduct testing and provide treatment as necessary for STIs and HIV according to CDC guidelines
  - Obtain baseline pregnancy test
  - Provide referrals for crisis intervention and any necessary follow-up medical care (including repeat pregnancy and STI testing if applicable)
  - Provide method for contacting law enforcement should the patient decide to file a police report

*STIs recommended for testing and treatment: gonorrhea, chlamydia, trichomonas, syphilis, hepatitis, and HIV. Note that CDC recommends consulting with a pediatric HIV specialist prior to the initiation of HIV PEP in children under the age of 16. See Appendix 7.

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Patient requests medical treatment only (no evidence collection)

Conduct testing and provide treatment as necessary for STIs and HIV according to CDC guidelines.*

Obtain pregnancy test. If negative AND less than 72 hours since the assault, offer emergency contraception‡

Provide referrals for crisis intervention and any necessary follow-up medical care (including repeat pregnancy and STI testing if applicable)

Provide method for contacting law enforcement should the patient decide to file a police report

*STIs recommended for testing and treatment: gonorrhea, chlamydia, trichomonas, syphilis, hepatitis, and HIV. Note that CDC recommends consulting with a pediatric HIV specialist prior to the initiation of HIV PEP in children under the age of 16. See Appendix 7.

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