

What to Expect at a SANE Exam

Legal definition of rape = Assault that includes penetration, lack of consent and threat or actual use of force.

SANE (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner) – a registered nurse or nurse practitioner who has completed specialized training to assist sexual assault victims. They collect all forensic evidence and perform exams. SANE nurses are available at only specific hospital emergency rooms. The evidence collected is sealed in a MSAECK (Massachusetts Sexual Assault Evidence Collection Kit) and sent to a crime lab for evaluation. The SANE nurse records the victim's account of the assault and can testify at any legal proceedings.

Criteria for having a SANE exam:

1. Assault within 5 days (120 hours) unless only oral/anal penetration (then must be within 24 hours)
2. Patient is 12 or older
3. Patient is medically cleared by ER physician
4. Patient consents to the exam and evidence collection

Rape crisis counselor is brought in with SANE **if allowed by the patient.**

In Worcester we use **Pathways for Change**

Hotline # 1-800-870-5905

What to expect at the ER:

- Patient is evaluated through triage
- Medical screening by ER attending physician and primary nurse
- Once medically cleared and patient consents to exam, SANE is activated through beeper system and responds within 60 minutes
- Exam includes a thorough physical exam with swabs to obtain DNA and other legal evidence, documentation of victim's story and forensic photography as indicated.
- Medications are recommended for prophylaxis against STDs and pregnancy
- Instructions provided for Victim Compensation
- Recommendations provided for follow up
- Safety planning

It is the patient's choice to report to police. If they do not report kit is kept for 6 months before being destroyed if the patient is over 18. If the patient is under 18 the kit is kept for 16 years. If the case is reported to police the kit is sent the State Crime Lab for processing. **Should a victim decide to report after the exam but while the kit is still being held by police the kit can be processed according to a specific kit # given to the patient during the exam.**