

FAQ

How long will I be at the SARC?

The time spent at the SARC can vary, but it can be between 3-6 hours for most cases and includes a medical assessment, the forensic medical examination and arranging onward referrals.

Who will be present at the examination?

A forensic doctor or nurse will conduct the examination, usually with the support of the SOIT (Sexual Offence Investigation Team) or a crisis worker.

You will be given the option to have a crisis worker to stay with you in the medical room to support you. The crisis worker will discuss this with you before entering the medical room.

Does the examination hurt?

No, the examination should not be a painful experience. As with any intimate examination, it is more uncomfortable than painful. Whilst every effort is taken to preserve your dignity we do understand how upsetting it is to have an internal examination – we therefore make sure that this element of the examination is carried out as quickly as possible.

Can I bring a friend to support me?

Yes, you can bring a friend or relative to support you, but they will be asked to leave the room while we ask you some personal information.

Can I choose to have a male or female doctor/nurse/police officer?

Every effort is made to accommodate your wishes. Most staff are female, however, if you are not happy with the gender of your doctor/nurse/police officer, you will be given the option of waiting until we are able to accommodate your wishes.

All crisis workers employed by First Light are female.

JustGiving:

To donate, simply text 'FLSW001'
along with your donation amount to 70070

USEFUL CONTACTS

Samaritans 24hr Helpline

FREE - 116 123
or email: jo@samaritans.org

Victim Support

08 08 16 89 111

NHS Sexual Health (Mon-Fri 9am-8p.m)

0300 123 7123

WISE: Wiltshire Sexual Health

01722 425120

Wiltshire Emergency Adult and Child Social Care

Out of hours: 0300 456 0100

IMPACT: Substance Misuse Support

Swindon & Wiltshire: 0345 603 6993

Childline

Support for children and young people
0800 11 11

CAMHS

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
Swindon: 01865 903 422 Wiltshire: 01865 904 666

NAPAC

National Association for People Abused in Childhood
0808 801 0331 (10am-9p.m Mon-Thurs 10-6p.m Fridays)

NSPCC

National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
0808 800 5000

SPLITZ: Domestic abuse support services

Wiltshire: 01225 775276

SARC

Swindon and Wiltshire: 01793 267018
Bristol: 0117 342 6999
Gloucester: 01452 754390 (Mon-Fri 9-5) -
out of hours 0845 090 1234

ISVA

Independent Sexual Violence Advisor
01225 775276

MOSAC

Support for parents of sexually abused children
0800 980 1958 | www.mosac.org.uk

Nelson Trust: Sex Worker Outreach Project

Swindon: 01793 495812

SWINDON AND WILTSHIRE SEXUAL ASSAULT REFERRAL CENTRE (SARC)

A SERVICE PROVIDED BY



FIRST LIGHT

FREE HELP AND SUPPORT
for people who have been
raped or sexually assaulted.

PLEASE CONTACT US AT:

First Light, Swindon and Wiltshire SARC,
The Gables, Shrivenham Road, South Marston,
Swindon SN3 4RB

t: 01793 267018

e: swindonandwiltshiresarc@firstlight.org.uk

www.firstlight.org.uk

Charity Reg No. 1090457

www.facebook.com/FirstLightSW/

@FirstLightSW

[firstlight.sw](https://www.instagram.com/firstlight.sw)

WHO ARE WE?

First Light is the lead agency for Swindon & Wiltshire SARC (Sexual Assault Referral Centre).

We are a professional team who are specifically trained to support those who have been raped or sexually assaulted.

First Light believes in a world where everyone lives in safety, free from violence and abuse.

Our ethos is encompassed in our vision and our values: respect; integrity, non-judgemental, and; teamwork.

Our mission (SAFER) is to:

- Save lives by supporting you and your relationships to become safer
- Adapt and transform lives by working together with partner agencies
- Free lives by empowering you to cope, recover and thrive following violence and abuse
- Enhance lives by educating society and rehabilitating harmful behaviour
- Respect lives by valuing your life choices and developing your resilience

WHAT DO WE DO?

If you have been raped or sexually assaulted within the last 7 days the police can refer you to Swindon and Wiltshire SARC 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for a forensic medical examination, as well as carrying out a health and wellbeing check.

If you do not wish to have police involvement, we can still offer you the same service Monday-Friday 9 - 5 p.m and Saturday 10-4p.m with the support of our specially trained and experienced crisis worker team.

WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT?

When you arrive at the SARC you will be greeted by a crisis worker. They will support you throughout the process and will explain everything to you to help you decide whether you wish to proceed with a forensic medical examination.

If you have self-referred into the service, they will also need to take a first disclosure statement from you, in case you decide to report the incident to the police in future. The crisis worker will give you all the information you need in order to make an informed decision to report to the police, however, the decision to report is made by you. First Light will not hand over any evidence to the police without your consent.

- Crisis support from our specially trained team
- Risk and Needs Assessments
- Forensic medical examination
- Emergency contraceptive pill
- Pregnancy testing
- Sexual health advice and in some circumstances, starting treatment programmes
- New clothes (if yours have been taken for evidence)
- Shower/toiletries
- Space and time for you to decide what happens next

We can also make direct referrals into appropriate support services, including sexual health clinics, GPs, other relevant agencies (depending on need) and a referral for onward support into the Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) service.

PRESERVING EVIDENCE

The sooner you report to the police the better chances of them recovering evidence which may assist in future prosecution. If you have been sexually assaulted you can help preserve evidence in the following way by trying to avoid:

- Drinking and eating, including non-essential medication
- Washing any part of you including your hair and teeth
- Smoking
- Going to the toilet or discarding tampons or sanitary towels
- Removing or washing any clothing worn at the time of the incident or afterwards

HOW CAN YOU CONTACT US?

If you wish to report the incident to the police please ring 999 or 101; they will arrange everything for you directly with the crisis worker. They will also be able to contact our out of hours crisis worker team if you do not wish to report the incident to the police; just state that you would like to self-refer for a forensic medical examination. Alternatively, you can telephone us directly on 01793 267018.

CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT

The information you give is important to us and will remain confidential.

Exceptions to this may occur if you, your children, or someone else is at risk of significant harm. We have a written confidentiality policy which will be explained to you in detail at your first appointment.

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

We are a victim focused charity who aims to ensure that equality and diversity is at the heart of everything we do. Every person has the right to be treated fairly and with dignity and respect regardless of gender, disability, ethnicity, religion and belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, age, pregnancy or maternity, marriage and civil partnership, in both the services that we provide, and as an employer.