

# BRFSS Fact Sheet

# Sexual Violence



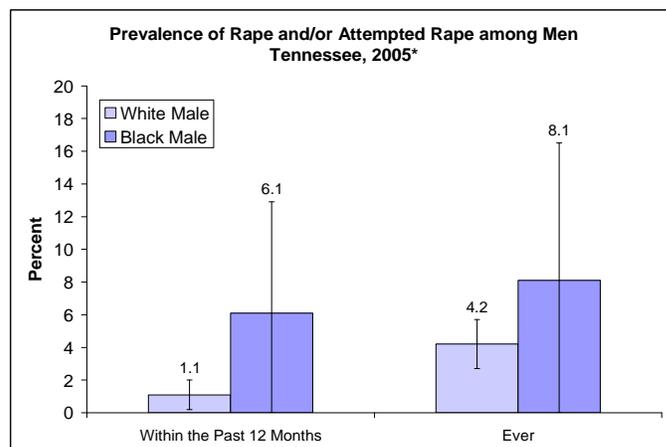
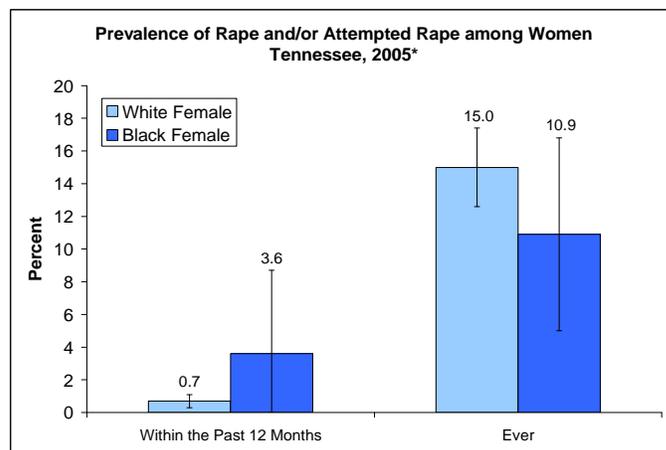
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Sexual violence is a serious problem that affects millions of people every year.<sup>1</sup> Available data greatly underestimate the true magnitude of the problem – rape is one of the most underreported crimes.<sup>1</sup> For example, only 39% of rapes and sexual assaults in the U.S. were reported to law enforcement officials in 2002.<sup>1</sup> Sexual violence can have very harmful and lasting consequences for victims and their families. These include sexually transmitted diseases, pregnancies, immediate and long term psychological consequences, and strained relationships with family, friends and intimate partners.<sup>1</sup> Much remains unknown about the factors associated with sexual violence, but they are likely to involve individual, relational, community and societal factors.<sup>1</sup>

- In 2005, 9.5% ( $\pm 1.4$ )\* of Tennessee adults reported being the victim of rape and/or attempted rape at some point during their lifetime (i.e. lifetime prevalence).
- 1.7% ( $\pm 0.9$ ) reported being the victim of rape and/or attempted rape during the past 12 months (i.e. 12-month prevalence).
- 1.7% ( $\pm 0.7$ ) of adults reported that in the past 12 months they had been exposed to unwanted sexual situations that did not involve touching (e.g. flashing, peeping, sexual harassment) and 2.0% ( $\pm 1.1$ ) reported that sexual parts of their body were touched without their consent.
- The lifetime prevalence of rape and/or attempted rape was three times as high among women (14.0%  $\pm 2.1$ ) as among men (4.8%  $\pm 1.7$ ).
- The 12-month prevalence of rape and/or attempted rape was higher among black women (3.6%) than among white women (0.7%). However, the lifetime prevalence was higher among white women (15.0%) than black women (10.9%).
- Both the 12-month and lifetime prevalence of rape and/or attempted rape were higher among black men than among white men.



#### References:

1. National Center for Injury Prevention and Control ([www.cdc.gov/ncipc](http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc))
2. Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network ([www.rainn.org](http://www.rainn.org))
3. The National Women's Health Information Center ([www.womenshealth.gov](http://www.womenshealth.gov))

Prepared by the Tennessee Department of Health; Office of Policy, Planning and Assessment; Surveillance, Epidemiology and Evaluation section based on 2005 TN Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System data.

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- The 12-month prevalence of rape and/or attempted rape decreased with increasing age, from 5.4% among 18-24 year olds to approximately 0.2-0.3% among those aged 55 years and older.
- Among 18-24 year olds, the 12-month prevalence of rape and/or attempted rape was higher among women (8.1% ± 7.9) than among men (2.6% ± 4.1). Among those older than 24, the prevalence was higher among men (1.7% ± 1.3) than women (0.4% ± 0.3).
- Persons with a lifetime history of rape and/or attempted rape were more likely to report one or more days of poor physical health or mental health during the past 30 days (53.2% and 50.3%, respectively) than those without a history of rape (32.2% and 27.4%).

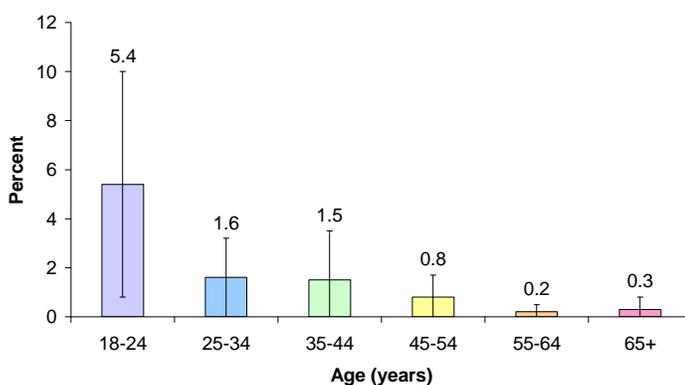
### What do I do if I've been sexually assaulted?<sup>2,3</sup>

- Get away from the attacker and to a safe place as fast as you can
- Call a friend or family member you trust, or call a crisis center or hotline to talk with a counselor
- Do not change clothes or wash, comb or clean any part of your body so that hospital staff can collect evidence
- Go to the nearest hospital emergency room as soon as possible so that you can be examined, treated for any injuries and screened for possible sexually transmitted diseases.
- You or the hospital staff can call the police to file a report
- Ask hospital staff about possible support groups
- Remember it wasn't your fault

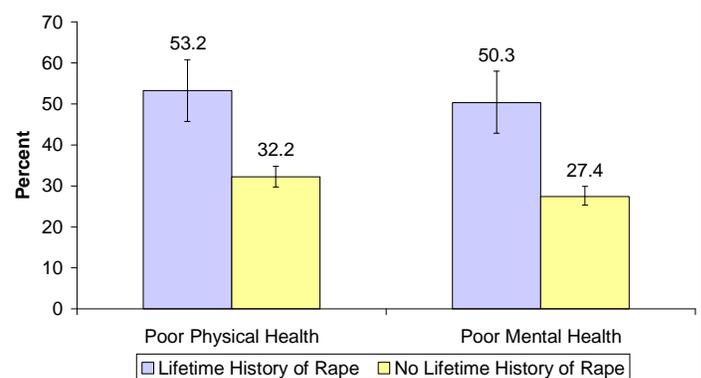
### National Sexual Assault Hotline 1-800-656-HOPE

The Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network (RAINN) operates the National Sexual Assault Hotline, which provides free and confidential counseling 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. In addition, the RAINN website ([www.rainn.org](http://www.rainn.org)) provides listings of local sexual assault crisis centers and hotlines by zip code and state.

12-Month Prevalence of Rape and/or Attempted Rape  
Tennessee, 2005\*



Perceived Health Status Among Sexual Violence Victims  
Tennessee, 2005\*



\*The number above each column indicates the percent value for that column. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals, as do ranges for percentages given in the text.