

WHAT IS A FORENSIC EXAM?

A medical forensic exam is an exam preformed by nurses specially trained in caring for victims of trauma. These nurses are trained on injury documentation, evidence collection, court and legal processes, and many other topics related to these victimizations.

WHY DO WE NEED THIS?



The forensic nurse can help to make sure that the patient's body is safe. We identify and document any trauma, treat and test for sexually transmitted diseases, and work with advocacy for safety planning. Forensic nurses also can collect evidence and act as experts in the court room.

WHO DO WE SEE?



Victims of sexual assault, human trafficking, domestic violence, family violence, child abuse and elder abuse. Victims of ALL ages. Victims of all gender identification & non-english speaking patients.

WHERE DO WE SEE PATIENTS?



We see patients in different hospital locations around the Rio Grande Valley area including: Rio Grande Regional Hospital, Valley Regional Hospital, Free Standing ER 24/7 San Juan, Free Standing ER 24/7 McAllen, Free Standing ER 24/7 Edinburg.

Please contact our hotline to know the closest location for your patient.

HOW CAN SOMEONE GET AN EXAM?

Anyone can call our 24/7 hotline answered by a forensic nurse to call for an exam. We receive calls from patients, law enforcement, schools, hospitals, & advocacy agencies.



FORENSIC
CENTER of EXCELLENCE



956-688-8399

WHAT IS A FORENSIC EXAM?

01: CONSENT

We need your permission to do this exam. If you are under 13 then your parent will sign with you. This is when your nurse will explain the whole process and can answer any questions. No one will be forced to do ANY part of the exam, but it is best to complete the whole exam for your health & safety.

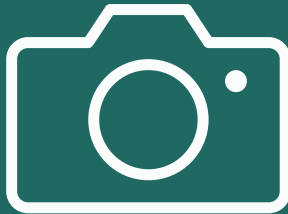
02: TALK WITH THE NURSE

This is the time when you get to talk to the nurse alone so the nurse can best understand how to treat you and look for any injuries! After this part, your support person can come right back in the room.

03: PHYSICAL EXAM

At this time the nurse will look over your body for any injuries! We will document any bruise, scratch, or cut at this time and take pictures of them (even if they are just from falling off your bike, they are important!)

04: THE GENITAL EXAM



After looking at your body we also have to look at your private area.

NOTHING we do is painful, and if you EVER experience pain tell your nurse and we will stop. Looking at this area is important so we can see any injuries, healed injuries, signs of infections, or anatomical variations that have not been detected.

We take pictures of this area for the purpose of magnifying the photos to detect anything missed with our eyes and to review over with our doctors. The pictures are protected and only ever released to authorized personnel involved in your case.

05: EVIDENCE COLLECTION

Texas Law states that if contact has been made with the perpetrator in the last 120 hours we will collect evidence in the form of swabs. These swabs are able to collect DNA evidence in this time-frame but the exam is still very important even without this step!

06: STI TESTING AND MEDICATION

We do testing on all of our patients! The testing includes testing for chlamydia, gonorrhea, HIV, HEP C, and syphilis.

07: DISCHARGE

You have made it through the whole exam! Now we give you all the information you need to follow up with any test results, evidence collection, and any other questions you may have!