**SART exam** (Sexual Assault Response Team exam)

A SART exam can do two things: provide sensitive, thorough medical care and collect evidence that may be helpful to the prosecution of your case at criminal law, or in another proceeding such as through a Stanford Title IX Investigation.

Sometimes, these exams are known as forensic evidence collection exam, medical-legal exam, SAFE exam, SANE exam, or “rape kit/exam.”

Try not to eat, drink, wash, or brush prior to the exam. However, if you have done any of these, do not worry, you should still get the exam.

Your clothes may be taken, consider bringing a change of clothes if you’re able, otherwise you will be provided with a change of clothes.

Important: Medical options are confidential, although medical personnel are required by California law to report to the police instances where they observe physical injury caused by assault.

**Where to go & how to get there**

In Santa Clara County (the county that Stanford is within), SART exams occur at Santa Clara Valley Medical Center (SCVMC). You have the option of providing your own transportation, arranging for a ride from a friend or family member, or the police agency (such as the Stanford University Department of Public Safety) ordering the exam may offer transportation.

Stanford’s Confidential Support Team (CST), is available to connect you to a ride down to Valley Medical Center. SART exams are available 24 hours a day. You should call and let the SART Team know that you are coming 408-885-6466. Unless otherwise advised by the SART team, go to the Emergency Department of SCVMC, 751 S. Bascom Avenue, San Jose and let them know that you need a SART exam.

Confidential Support Team (CST) between 8am-5pm at 650-736-6933 or after-hours (24/7) at 650-725-9955 to coordinate confidential transportation.

**SUDPS** transport: 650-329-2413. Let them know that you would like to be transported to SCVMC for a SART exam (this is not necessarily a confidential option).

I. SART Contact information
   A. SCVMC: 408-885-5000
   B. Sexual Assault Response Team (SART): 408-885-6466
   C. Address: 751 S Bascom Ave, San Jose, CA 95128

**What to Expect**

A SART exam may take up to several hours.
You have the right to refuse any part of the exam at any time.

You will be briefly helped in the Emergency Department of SCVMC, and the ED team will determine if you have injuries that require immediate treatment; if so, those will take precedent over the SART exam process.

Once you have been medically cleared in the Emergency Department of SCVMC, you will be escorted to the Family Waiting Room, which is a more private space than the ER waiting room.

There may be a wait for the nurse examiner to arrive.

A nurse will take your vitals (such as blood pressure, pulse, temperature)

The nurse examiner will call the YWCA of Silicon Valley and an advocate will meet you at the hospital. Within an hour of your arrival the advocate will arrive and is available to support you in the forensic evidence collection process. The advocate can explain the process of the exam as well as your rights and choices. It is your choice whether the advocate stays with you in the exam room, waits in the waiting area, or leaves.

A detective will arrive and will want to interview you (unless it's anonymous reporting). You have the right not to participate in any interview at this time.

The nurse examiner will explain the exam and you will be asked to provide informed consent.

You will be asked to describe the events of the assault, possibly in the form of your own narrative or an interview. These answers will then direct the course of the medical exam.

The exam begins with a general health check: blood pressure, blood draw test, heart rate, looking at your eyes, ears and nose, etc.

1. All medication is provided (within the first 72 hours you’re eligible for post-exposure prophylactic HIV medication) for STIs, emergency contraception, and any additional medications for any other possible infections
2. Don’t worry if you’ve been drinking while underage: lab draws are not punitive (used to differentiate anything that may have been drug/alcohol facilitated or on their own accord).

Physical evidence is collected from head to toe, in the form of hair and oral swabs, to identify both your DNA and that of the person who assaulted you. A lamp is used to look for evidence such as semen or saliva.
A pelvic exam may be done. Initially, the nurse examiner will look at external genitalia, and may do an internal exam (vaginal or anal, depending on the assault). You have the right to stop the exam at any moment, if it becomes too physically or emotionally painful.

Photographs may be taken of physical evidence (e.g. bruises, lacerations, tears), but these photographs are focused on such a small part of your body and attached to only your SART kit case number so that your identity will not be able to be inferred from any photographic evidence. There is a picture of your face taken to use for an identifying photo for the kit.

Once all the evidence is collected, it becomes part of a SART kit that is signed over to the police. When the police finish their investigation, the evidence is turned over to the relevant District Attorney’s Office (depending on where the assault occurred; if it occurred at Stanford, this would be the Santa Clara County District Attorney).

You will be offered the opportunity to shower after the exam.

**Support During the Exam**

You have the right to have a certified advocate from the YWCA Silicon Valley present who can maintain privileged communication and will have knowledge of medical rights and the criminal legal system. They can provide confidential and anonymous services throughout the medical, legal, and administrative procedures of the SART exam. We recommend that you take advantage of this free service.

In addition to a certified advocate, you may also have a support person such as a friend or family member with you.

The decision is yours alone regarding which non-medical personnel are in the exam room with you. You may ask anyone to leave at any time.

**Anonymous Reporting**

You can come to SCVMC for anonymous reporting (as a “Jane Doe” under VAWA) as well as an incident that you want reported to law enforcement.

If you believe anonymous reporting is in your best interest, tell the nurse practitioner that you don’t want to report to law enforcement at this time.

The nurse examiner will still call law enforcement because they will have to get an incident/case number to get to you (the patient) before you leave SCVMC. You then have up to 2 years to decide if you want to make a report to law enforcement, so you should retain both the incident number and medical record number.

If you decide to move forward within the 2 year timeframe, you will call SCVMC or the YWCA and state that you want to go ahead with prosecution.
After a SART Exam
A patient is entitled to a copy of the SART exam when it is complete. Speak to the nurse examiner about how to request a copy, or seek a copy through the Stanford University Department of Public Safety (SUDPS) at 650-329-2413. If you are pursuing an investigation at Stanford (or in a civil proceeding), the SART exam report will be an important piece of evidence.

For criminal prosecutions, the relevant District Attorney’s office will make a decision regarding the case. If the case moves forward and enters criminal court, you may be called to speak in court as a witness.