

# Abusive Relationships, Stalking & Harassment Guide for College Students

[Chayn India](#) - March 2016

---

*If you are a college student who may be experiencing abuse, stalking, or harassment, please take our quick survey to tell us what you think about this guide: <https://chayn.typeform.com/to/ST6WLi>*

---

## ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This guide was crowdsourced by [Chayn's](#) team of volunteers to help fight the growing epidemic of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), Stalking, and Harassment faced by college students in India.

The guide includes information about why and how abuse happens, different kinds of abuse, how to deal with it, information on mental and sexual health, and legal information. This guide also includes information about stalking and harassment, Indian laws on stalking and harassment, and how to cope with being a victim of stalking and harassment.

Abuse can happen in any kind of relationship - whether you are married or not. If you are in an abusive relationship with your partner, or family member, you deserve to get the help you need. Read this guide to find out how you can help yourself.

Want to volunteer with us & join our dynamic group of international volunteers?  
Sign up here: [chayn.co/join/](http://chayn.co/join/)

## ABOUT THE LICENSE

Attribution CC BY: This license allows you to distribute, remix, tweak, and build upon this work,



even commercially, as long as you credit CHAYN for the original creation. View more on this license [here](#). Legal code can be found [here](#).

# GET IMMEDIATE HELP HERE

Women's Helpline India: 1091

Speak to a Trained Counselor at [Love Doctor](#)

[How to Report a Rape in India](#)

[Step-by-Step Guide: From FIR to Judgement](#)

Find all information about abuse at [Chayn India](#)

[File a complaint at the National Commission for Women](#). The Complaints and Investigation Cell of the commission processes the complaints received oral, written or suo moto under Section 10 of the NCW Act.

The complaints received relate to domestic violence, harassment, dowry, torture, desertion, bigamy, rape, refusal to register FIR, cruelty by husband, deprivation, gender discrimination and sexual harassment at workplace.

The complaints are tackled as below :-

- Investigations by the police are expedited and monitored.
- Family disputes are resolved or compromised through counseling.
- For serious crimes, the Commission constitutes an [Inquiry Committee](#) which makes spot enquiries, examines various witnesses, submits the report with recommendations. Such investigations help in providing immediate relief and justice to the victims of violence and atrocities. The implementation of the report is monitored by the NCW. There is a provision for having experts/lawyers on these committees.



# INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE/RELATIONSHIP VIOLENCE & ABUSE AT HOME

## *Introduction*

Every relationship has its difficult moments. Many of us go through life believing that problems are a natural part of relationships. But this is not always true. There are some difficulties in relationships that require special attention, since they can indicate abusive, problematic behaviour.

The trouble is, many of us don't quite know whether what we're going through is actually abuse.

You do not have to be married to experience abuse. In fact, it does not matter whether you are married or not - you deserve the right to get help if you are being abused.

The information in these pages will help you in figuring out whether the difficulties you're experiencing is actually abuse. Being able to differentiate between abuse and the temporary ups and downs in a relationship doesn't require a deep understanding of the subject. If you are unhappy about your relationship with your partner or a family member, then read this page to find out more about why and how abuse happens, and what you can do about it.

## RELATIONSHIP OR INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE AND ABUSE

- What is 'abuse'?
- Types of abuse



- Are you in an abusive relationship?
  - Is your partner abusing you emotionally or verbally?
  - Is what you're going through physical abuse?
  - Is your relationship with your partner unhealthy?
  - Do they yell, scream and shout at you?
  - Have they ever hurt you in a physical way?
  - Have you been forced into intimacy when you didn't feel like it?
  - Should you keep going or is it time to let go?
- 

# 1. AM I BEING ABUSED? AM I IN AN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP?

In a relationship, a person can become abusive in several ways. This abuse can take the form of both words and actions.

Examples of verbal abuse includes name-calling, belittling you, shouting at you and threatening violence.

Physical abuse manifests itself in actions such as pushing, shoving or any kind of harm inflicted on your body.

Sexual abuse is when your partner forces or coerces you into performing sexual acts on them or even when they force themselves on you.

Controlling you is also a sign of abuse. This happens when your partner exerts power over you by invading your privacy or limiting your decisions or movements in life. For more detailed examples of what qualifies as abuse, follow this link:

<http://chaynindia.com/are-you-being-abused/what-is-domestic-violence/>

---

## Isolation



Isolation, a situation often accompanied by controlling behaviour and extreme jealousy, of the abused partner is common in abusive relationships. Your partner might try to limit your contact with your family or friends and will try to restrict your access to spaces where you meet other people or spaces where he has no control of you, e.g. university social outings and parties, academic related meetups, student unions...- basically any kind of group or community where you might participate and have relationships not connected to your partner.

If your partner tries to keep you from attending college or tries to control when you meet people, he has no right to do so.

Whether your relationship is casual or serious, your partner is in no way entitled to control who you spend your time with, especially if it's detrimental to your emotional well being, as well as your personal and professional growth. Your friends and family are an important support in life. In a healthy relationship, your partner would not try to create distance between you and your loved ones.

## *What counts as isolating behaviour?*

- Telling you that you care more for your friends, family and pets than for them<sup>1</sup>
- Telling you they are the only one who understands you and loves you<sup>1</sup>
- Controlling incoming information including what you read<sup>1</sup>
- Using jealousy to justify their actions
- Being rude, critical or dismissive of your visitors/friends
- Controlling your money and preventing you from travelling and meeting others<sup>5</sup>
- Making you feel guilty or calling you names if you spend time with friends and family<sup>1</sup>
- Demanding you to spend time with them and pressuring you to not attend school/college/hobbies<sup>3</sup>
- Checking up on you by calling and texting you when you are with friends
- Not trusting you about where and who you are with when they are not around
- Telling you to keep your shopping visits or other social plans short
- Cancelling your meetings with friends themselves and/ or directly telling your friends to stay away from you

## *How do I deal with controlling behaviour?*



If your partner tries to control your behaviour, make it clear that you do not accept this kind of behaviour. If he or she keeps calling or texting you, do not reply to them at that moment.<sup>4</sup>

Controlling behaviour and isolation can be an early sign for abuse and should not be taken lightly.<sup>2</sup>

If your friends and family voice their concern about your partner controlling and isolating you, listen to them. When your dear friends and your partner whom you feel attached to are adopting opposing stances, you might feel unsure who to believe with everyone claiming to want the best for you. It may help to visit a counselor at your college or uni to have someone with an objective perspective listen to your situation.

1. <http://speakoutloud.net/intimate-partner-abuse/isolation-tactic-of-control>
2. <http://speakoutloud.net/intimate-partner-abuse/isolation-tactic-of-control>
3. <http://speakoutloud.net/intimate-partner-abuse/isolation-tactic-of-control>
4. <http://speakoutloud.net/intimate-partner-abuse/isolation-tactic-of-control>
5. <http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/567/whats-going-on-in-there?act=1>
6. <http://www.loveisrespect.org/wheel-video/isolation-exclusion/>  
<http://www.datingabusestopshere.com/news/warning-signs-isolation/>

#### References:

1. <http://speakoutloud.net/intimate-partner-abuse/isolation-tactic-of-control>
2. <http://www.datingabusestopshere.com/news/warning-signs-isolation/>
3. <http://www.caring-unlimited.org/what-is-domestic-violence/for-family-and-friends/how-to-help/dating-abuse-what-every-parent-should-know>
4. <http://www.datingabusestopshere.com/news/warning-signs-isolation/>
5. <http://www.breakthecycle.org/blog/know-signs-spotlight-isolation-friends-and-family>

---

## SYMPTOMS OF ABUSE

Relationship violence or intimate partner violence (IPV) doesn't just start suddenly, out of the blue. It begins slowly and builds up. In the beginning you may not even notice the abusive and controlling behaviours of your partner.

Domestic/relationship violence does not just occur within the relationships of married couples. It can happen in any relationship no matter the age or sexual orientation of



the partner. Intimate partner violence is very common among teen and college student relationships.

## *Symptoms/warning signs of intimate partner violence include:*

- Your partner is very jealous
- Your partner accuses you of cheating on them
- Your partner wants you to only spend time with them
- Your partner wants you not to spend time with your friends and family
- Your partner makes you feel guilty about not spending time with them
- Your partner is very codependent (acts like they always need you and your attention)
- Your partner makes you miss college classes, projects, events and lectures
- Your partner wants to control who you talk to, what you do, what you wear
- Your partner checks your phone and computer
- Your partner lies to other people about you/makes up rumours about you
- Your partner will hurt you and then try to make up for it by being very nice and caring for a short while after the abuse
- Your partner will make you feel sorry for them

## *What is not acceptable in any relationship?*

Abuse in a relationship is never acceptable. You are a strong and amazing human being who deserves love and respect. It does not matter if you have a boyfriend or girlfriend. They do not own you. You are an independent person. They should love you as you are and not try to control or change you.

Any relationship that shows signs of the following behaviour is unhealthy and not normal.

## *Unacceptable behaviour in a relationship:*

- Being hit, slapped, kicked, physically hurt
- Being verbally abused, shouted at, made to feel bad
- Being controlled, told what to do, where to go, who to talk to, what to wear



- Being criticised for your looks, weight, intelligence, social class, choices
- Infidelity/unfaithfulness
- Extreme jealousy to the point where they get angry and “punish” you
- Disrespect for you
- Dishonesty
- Spying/checking your phone or computer
- Extreme codependence
- Not allowing you to speak your mind or voice your opinions

## 2. WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT IT? WHAT DOES THE LAW SAY?

### *You are not alone*

If you are in a committed relationship or are simply dating/going out with someone, but they are abusive towards you (either verbally or physically or in other ways), then your relationship is unhealthy and harmful.

Nobody deserves to be treated badly or controlled. Control is a form of abuse too. You are a strong human being who deserves to be loved and treated with respect.

Being in an abusive relationship or experiencing Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) can be confusing and mentally and emotionally exhausting. Don't worry, we are here for you and you are not alone.

Read the information on this page to inform yourself about your options and ways to cope, get out, and care for yourself.

You deserve happiness and freedom, not violence and fear. Reach out and get help if you want to. It is never too late to ask for it.



# HOW TO DEAL WITH ABUSE

Visit [Dealing With Abuse](#) to find out how to cope with:

1. Mental Abuse: *Verbal Abuse such as yelling, name-calling, blaming, and shaming. Isolation, intimidation, threats, religious blackmail, making you feel guilty and controlling behaviour. Financial Abuse such as confiscating your bank cards, keeping you on a strict stipend, checking your purse and restricting your movements.*
2. Physical Abuse: *Physical Abuse such as punching; slapping; hitting; biting; pinching; kicking; pulling hair out; pushing; shoving; burning and strangling.*
3. Sexual Abuse: *Sexual Abuse such as unwanted kissing, touching, rough or violent sexual activity, rape or attempted rape, using sexual insults, pinching nipples to inflict pain and shame, refusing to use condoms or restricting access to birth control, and not allowing you to protect yourself from contracting sexually transmitted diseases (STIs).*

## WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE HIT

No one should suffer physical assault from anybody, not even in relationships. If you are being physically assaulted by your partner or anyone else, you need to leave the relationship.

### *Get help and help yourself*

- Consider calling the police or talking to other people you trust such as parents, teachers or school counsellors. Read the "Can I tell the police?" section below.
- Keep a journal describing the physical abuse and [document your injuries if need be to provide evidence](#) when reporting to the police



## Create a safety plan. You should:

- Have detailed plans in case of dangerous situations if you break up with the assaulter.
- Identify safe friends and safe places that you can turn to in case your assaulter looks for you
- Identify any adults or figures at college you can tell or turn to regarding the situation that can help you be safe.
- Consider changing your route to and fro school, and create a buddy system so that you will not be caught alone
- Be aware of the relevant hotlines and organisations you can turn to for help if your assaulter continues to pursue and hit you

## Getting a protective order

- If you are continually pursued and physically assaulted, you should consider getting an injunction and keep it on your person at all times. More information below.

### References:

1. <https://victimsofcrime.org/help-for-crime-victims/get-help-bulletins-for-crime-victims/bulletins-for-teens/assault>
2. <http://stoprelationshipabuse.org/develop-a-safety-plan/>
3. <http://stoprelationshipabuse.org/get-help/college-safety-plan/>
4. <http://stoprelationshipabuse.org/get-help/safety-planning-for-teens/>

# WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Being in an abusive relationship is a serious matter. Talk to someone if you think you are in an unhealthy relationship. You are still young and you have your whole life ahead of you. This is a time for you to be happy, explore the world, and focus on your education.

If being in this relationship is affecting:

- Your relationship with your family,
- Your relationship with your friends,



- Your studies,
  - Your mental health,
  - Your day-to-day life,
- then, you should get help.

If you are afraid for your life, or are afraid your partner may seriously harm you you should get help immediately.

## ***Who can I talk to?***

Talk to anyone you can trust. Confide in a close friend or parent. It is important that your loved ones know what you are going through and how serious it is. Don't feel like you are going through this alone. Your loved ones would want to know if you were in pain or unhappy.

## ***Can I tell the police?***

If you are hit or abused, or feel threatened and unsafe, your first instinct might be to go to the police and lodge a police complaint. However, there have been many instances where Indian police do not take cases of relationship violence among youth/college students seriously.

This is because most Domestic Violence laws in India are for married couples. Because you and your boyfriend/girlfriend are unmarried, the police will not take your case seriously.

However, there are laws that protect you if you have been physically assaulted or hit.

[Indian Penal Code, Section 351 - Assault](#)

[Indian Penal Code, Section 354 - Assault or criminal force to women](#)

Be careful when you go to the police with your case. Make sure you know what you are accusing your abuser of, that you have proof, and take someone with you as a witness.

Be warned that the police may not take you seriously. This is an unfortunate reality in India, so be prepared for any outcome.



# What will the police do?

The police will help you file an FIR against your abuser for physically assaulting/hitting you.

Restraining orders do not really exist in India, but something called an "[injunction](#)" does.

An [injunction](#) is an order issued by a court that forces the defendant—a person, corporation or government entity—to do something or stop doing something, depending on what the plaintiff is requesting. In relatively rare cases, the court may issue a mandatory injunction, compelling a person, company, or governmental unit to take affirmative action in carrying out a specified action.

This means you can say you want to file an injunction against your abuser in order to prevent them from coming in contact with you. This is considered a last resort, if all other avenues have failed.

# Can I tell the university?

If you experience abuse at college or at home, it is important to take advantage of the support system at your college if you are able. Most colleges will have a mentoring system in place, so that you can express your concerns and have the opportunity to speak to qualified harassment and abuse counselor. At many colleges, students will be assigned a professor as a mentor, who can refer you to specific counselors on campus. It can be beneficial to talk to someone about your experience. You might feel more comfortable talking to your mentor or counsellor than your friends and family because most colleges should ensure that you are anonymous and that anything you tell them is in confidence.

However, in India the campus support at many colleges will not be of a high standard. This may be because they are poorly funded or the counselors are not properly trained.

Be aware of this and prepare yourself for their reaction to your problem. They may not be as supportive as you want them to be. Do not be disappointed if they do not take your problem seriously, or if they react negatively. You deserve proper counseling and you deserve to talk to someone who will listen to you and give you advice. You deserve for someone to make you feel better about your situation, and like they are going to help you.

If you need to speak to someone about love, relationships, or sex, visit [Love Doctor](#).



# ***Can I tell my parents?***

Whether you decide to talk to your parents about your experience is dependent on your relationship with them and whether you feel comfortable doing so. It is really important to talk to someone if you are in an abusive relationship because it is far better than suffering in silence. Speaking to your parents can be a good option because they are in a position to emotionally support you and help you find ways to deal with and report the abuse. However, it may be the case that you feel unable to speak to parents and family members, either because you do not feel comfortable, or because the family members might be involved in the abuse somehow. If this is the case, there are many other people that you can talk to - your friends, your college or the authorities. You are never alone in dealing with assault and abuse.

# ***What will they do?***

Your parents could react in a number of ways. This depends on your relationship with them and how conservative or traditional they are. They may not like that you have a boyfriend/girlfriend. They may believe the lies or rumours that your boyfriend/girlfriend may be spreading about you. They may want to take extreme action. They may want to confront the abuser. They may want to go directly to the police.

It is important that you discuss the situation calmly with them. Try to tell them not to be impulsive, and to think about what is the best way to tackle the situation. Show them this page, and ask them to read and learn about abusive relationships.

Remember, they have your best interests at heart but they may not know the correct way of tackling an issue like this. Ask them to listen to you and believe you. If necessary, ask a trusted relative or someone whose opinion you respect to be present to talk to your parents.

# ***When Should I Get Help?***

There is no 'right time' to seek help. You may need time to think about what has happened to you or to consider your relationship. It is also important to take time to choose who you will approach for help, to ensure that it is someone that you can trust and feel comfortable talking to. However, after sexual assault you must consider



getting medical help as soon as possible as you may be at risk of pregnancy or sexually transmitted infections. Also, if you wish to report the abuse to your college or the authorities, make sure to keep evidence of the abuse and report it as soon as possible after the event. Remember that the sooner you seek help the sooner you will be able to overcome violence and abuse.

---

*Need to talk to someone? [Go to Love Doctor](#) to speak to trained counselors about anything to do with love, sex, and relationships.*

---

## Further Reading

Read an academic article that examines the problem of domestic abuse towards women in India [here](#). The article suggests that a change in mindsets across many sectors is needed to prevent domestic abuse.

Find out about how many instances of domestic violence go unreported and don't appear in official statistics [here](#).

Read about India's 'code of silence' when it comes to talking to about sexual abuse [here](#). It's suggested that there needs to be more discussion and openness, to make the home a safe place for Indian women.

---

# ABUSE AT HOME

Are you being abused at home? Abuse can take many forms and can also be happening at home. You might be emotionally, verbally, physically, or sexually abused at home by someone you know. Remember, this is not your fault. It must be very difficult to go through something like this. You are not alone.

Any form of abuse is WRONG and ILLEGAL. You do not deserve to be abused. You are a strong and amazing human being who deserves to be treated with love and respect.



If you are being abused at home, confide in someone you trust. DO NOT confide in anyone who you think might tell your parents. This is VERY IMPORTANT.

Don't go to the police alone. They may force you to return home.

Make a plan to leave the house. You will need to be financially stable to do this. Save as much money as you can. Talk to a professional counselor who can give you advice. Keep your important documents, such as passport, birth certificate, school certificates with you. When you go to the safe place, do not tell your abusers or relatives where you are.

If you are under 18, you can go to [Childline 1098 Service](#). Call 1098 if you want to report child abuse.

Your parents may also be pressuring you to study and do well in college. Remember, they think this pressure will force you to study hard but that might not always be the case. If you do not get good marks in college, do not worry. It is not the end of the world. There are many successful people who have achieved a lot in life who did not get the best marks in college. If the pressure is too much, consider talking to your parents about the way they pressure you to study. Ask them to speak to a counselor with you, who can explain that their pressure is affecting you negatively.

*Are you being forced to marry by your parents? Click [here](#) to find out what to do.*

In India it is very difficult to leave your parents' home. If you are being abused, seek help only if you know you will be safe and it will not put you in any danger. Your parents may get very angry or violent if they think you have told someone what they have done to you/how they have treated you. Be careful of this. If you do escape, do so in a very secretive manner. Police and relatives may force you to go back home, so only go to them in a very serious emergency. If you fear for your life and think you may be seriously harmed or killed, immediately get help. Go to a friend's house or contact the police.

[Information on getting out.](#)

[Information on making a safety plan.](#)

[Information on escaping within India.](#)



[Information on escaping outside India.](#)

---

# Your Mental Health

Experiencing abuse, violence, an unhappy relationship or other traumatic events can result in mental and emotional stress. Being in an abusive relationship is one of the biggest reasons for mental stress. It is completely normal to need mental health care if you have experienced abuse or violence. [For in-depth information on mental health issues and treatments go here.](#)

## Depression

If you have been feeling sad or cannot find pleasure in usual activities almost on a daily basis, for a long period of time (at least two weeks), and these feelings of sadness are not caused by normal bereavement (for example, if someone you loved recently passed away), then you might be suffering from major depressive disorder, which people commonly refer to as [depression](#).

## Anxiety

If you are experiencing extreme, irrational fear, and/or intense worry that affects your everyday life, you may be suffering from an anxiety disorder. [Click here to find out if you are suffering from anxiety.](#)

## Self-Harm and Suicidal Thoughts

This is totally normal, and nothing to be alarmed about. It is extremely important that you get help if you are self-harming or thinking about suicide.

Practicing acts of self-harm, and having suicidal thoughts can be an extremely painful experience. Contrary to certain myths and misconceptions, people who go through self-harm and/or suicidal thinking are not doing so in order to seek attention. The reason why most people engage in behaviours of self-harm is because they are



experiencing such intense emotional pain, that they feel the only way to handle it is to transform it into physical pain. [Find out more here.](#)

## *Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)*

Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is an anxiety disorder that develops after experiencing or witnessing a traumatic event which involved threat of death or injury to the person or others, and caused feelings of helplessness, horror, or extreme fear. [Read about symptoms of PTSD and how to cope here.](#)

## *Treatments for Mental Health Issues*

Domestic abuse can have very negative consequences for a person's mental health so if you have been a victim of domestic abuse, you may experience symptoms of depression or anxiety, or even both. You need to understand that this is your body's normal reaction to the overwhelming stress that being in an abusive relationship puts you through. It doesn't mean that you are weak or flawed, it means you are human! Do not blame yourself for going through feelings of depression or anxiety, because it is not your fault you are suffering. No one chooses or deserves to suffer from a mental health problem. Indeed, some may struggle so much that they might feel as if they are losing control or going crazy. If that is the case for you, find peace in the fact that this is not true: you are neither losing control, nor going crazy. You are simply going through a rough time. Please, realise that you are not alone.

[Find out more about how you can cope and deal with mental stress that stems from abuse here.](#)

---

# **SEXUAL HEALTH AND CONTRACEPTION - MYTHS AND INFORMATION**

Have you had sex with your partner?

Are you unsure about contraception and birth control?

Do you know the best way to avoid pregnancy?

[Click here to find out more about sexual health in India.](#)



# ***Do you need information on abortion in India?***

Abortion is legal in India. You do not need anyone's permission to get an abortion.

Take a trusted and caring friend with you for support. They can make sure you are OK and make sure that you are treated well by the medical staff and doctors at the clinic.

Remember, you deserve to be treated with kindness and respect. You are not wrong for wanting an abortion. You are not a bad person. You have every right to make this decision by yourself, for yourself. You do not have to feel guilty. This is your decision, and yours alone.

## ***About Abortion***

*(taken from Lovematters.in)*

Abortion means that a pregnancy is ended by removing the foetus or embryo. This takes place before the baby is viable. An abortion can happen spontaneously, then it's usually called a miscarriage, or it can be done on purpose.

An abortion can either be done with the help of medication, or with surgery.

## ***Medical Abortion (up to 9 weeks of pregnancy):***

With a medical abortion you take two different medicines 36-48 hours apart. First you take a pill that stops the pregnancy – it blocks the hormone that keeps you pregnant. You will be able to go home and continue your normal everyday activities. As you wait for the second part of the treatment, some women have little bleeding and mild cramps but most won't. You should consult the doctor if you have heavy bleeding after taking the first pill. Then anywhere in another few days, you take another drug – it could be a pill you swallow or one you put inside your vagina. This part of the process is painful as your womb lining breaks along with the embryo through bleeding from your vaginae: you must take painkillers.



## *Surgical Abortion:*

For a surgical abortion you have an operation. There are two main types of operation, depending on how long you've been pregnant.

For both operations, you have an anaesthetic. This could be a general anaesthetic, which means you're asleep during the operation. But you can also just have a local anaesthetic. You then have an injection in your cervix, the neck of the womb, inside your vagina right at the top. This makes your cervix numb, and you stay awake during the operation.

Between about eight weeks and fifteen weeks into a pregnancy, the kind of abortion performed is called suction aspiration. The doctor gradually opens up your cervix a little until it's wide enough for a thin, flexible tube to fit through. Then everything inside your womb is sucked out through the tube.

After about fifteen weeks into a pregnancy, the kind of abortion performed is called Dilation & Curettage (D&C) or Dilation and Evacuation (D&E). Your cervix is opened wider than for a suction aspiration abortion, so the doctor can use instruments to remove the contents of your womb.

After a surgical abortion you can feel sick and faint, and have painful stomach cramps.

## *Looking for places to get abortion in India?*

<http://www.indiacom.com/yellow-pages/abortion-clinics/>

[Abortion clinics in Delhi](#)

## *Abortion in India:*

<http://www.1to9months.com/abortion.html>

<http://india.angloinfo.com/healthcare/pregnancy-birth/termination-abortion/>

---

# **WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE RAPED**



First thing you need to remember is that this is not in any way your fault. Know that you are not alone and you can definitely can get over this hurdle.

After the sexual assault, seek a safe place immediately. It can be a place where you feel secure and in control. Don't be afraid to reach out to someone you trust for support, like a close friend or family member.

Be aware that people may not react in a caring or supportive way towards you. Do not let this affect your desire to get medical attention and care for yourself. You deserve to be listened to and treated with care and respect. If friends, relatives, police, doctors treat you badly you have every right to seek help elsewhere. They are legally obliged to help you and treat you with care. If they do not, they are in the wrong, not you. You are doing the right thing by seeking help and medical/psychological care.

Contact the police or any relevant campus departments for help and to report the case. If you're afraid, get someone you trust and contact them together.

Remember to preserve any form of physical evidence. Try not to clean any part of your body and clothes. Refrain from washing, eating, drinking or using the bathroom. This will help later on in preserving all evidence when reporting the case to the relevant authorities.

Head to the hospital or any medical center to treat your wounds. You may also wish to have a sexual assault forensic exam to document further evidence against your rapist. Do get examined medically within the first 24 hours after the incident, as it will be difficult to prove that rape has occurred the longer you wait.

In India, every hospital must have a rape medical center and they must treat you for free.

You must have a female doctor or female police officer present with you during the examination.

The two-finger test (where the doctor inserts two fingers inside your vagina) is ILLEGAL and you have every right to refuse this.

[Guidelines for medico-legal care for survivors/victims of sexual violence](#)  
[What do you do if you have been raped?](#)



Similarly, report the case as quickly as you can. It is a difficult experience but the longer you wait, the harder it is to prove your case.

Check out this resource on how to report a rape in India:

<http://blogs.wsj.com/indiarealtime/2013/01/10/how-to-report-a-rape-in-india/>

## Rape examination in India: Checklist

(Taken from [Firstpost.com](http://Firstpost.com))

Indian laws do provide a proper mechanism, a protocol whereby there is a checklist that must be followed in case of medical examination of a rape survivor.

- *One*, medical examination can only be done with the prior consent of the rape survivor.
- *Two*, only allopathic government doctors, registered with the Medical Council of India are allowed to conduct the examination. There should ideally be a woman gynaecologist present during the examination.
- *Three*, samples are to be collected from the genitalia and under the nails.
- *Four*, a female attendant must be present during the time of the medical examination failing which the doctor can be charged with indecent assault under the law.

References:

1. <http://ccwrc.org/blog/what-every-college-student-needs-to-know-about-sexual-assault-acquaintance-rape-and-the-red-zone/>
2. <https://rainn.org/get-information/sexual-assault-prevention/campus-safety-sexual-assault>
3. <https://rainn.org/get-information/sexual-assault-recovery/tips-for-after-an-attack>
4. <http://ccwrc.org/about-abuse/about-sexual-violence/rape-sexual-assault/>
5. <http://mynation.net/rapelaw.htm>

# What can I do if my friend has been sexually assaulted?



If someone you know has been sexually assaulted, let them know that you are here to help and support them. Never blame or question their experience and treat her with respect and care.

## *What you can do to help when the incident has occurred*

When your friend first comes to you, she might be in shock and distress. Bring her to a safe place to help her calm down.

- Talk to her. Allow her to speak as much or as little she wants to, and do not pressurise her. Reassure her and discuss various options to take.
- Bring her to a medical center or hospital to get treated.
- Offer to call the police to report the case.
- Assist her in contacting the relevant rape hotlines or organisations to seek help.

## *What you can do to help after the incident*

- Be with her and let her know that your perspective of her will not change because of the incident
- Monitor her emotional moods. She might suffer from depression or anxiety, and help her seek the relevant therapy or help.
- Be patient with her through her recovery stages. Listen to her if she wants to talk about her experience and do not pressure her to get over it.

Lastly, do remember to take care of yourself. Supporting a friend through this traumatic experience can be stressful for you as well. Talk to a counsellor if you feel distressed, and you can work out some solutions to help your friend as well. Don't forget to manage your own emotions well so that you can better support your friend through her journey to recovery.

References:

1. <https://counseling.uoregon.edu/dnn/SelfhelpResources/SexualAssaultSexualAbuse/HowtoHelpaFriendWhoHasBeenRaped/tabid/389/Default.aspx>
2. <http://www.pandys.org/articles/tipsforfriends.html>
3. <http://www.911rape.org/help-a-friend>
4. <http://www.nhs.uk/chq/Pages/2487.aspx?CategoryID=118>



---

# ARE YOU BEING STALKED OR HARASSED ON CAMPUS?

## *Introduction*

If someone is giving you unwanted attention, they are stalking you. They may be following you, tracking your movements around college or when you go out, sending you messages, e-mails, phone calls, letters, or showing up where you are.

This is illegal and wrong. No one should be stalking you or following you. Their behaviour may be affecting your day-to-day life. It may be scaring you and making you afraid to go out or to be alone.

Constantly calling, messaging, e-mailing someone is harassment. These forms of harassment are illegal.

Keep reading this page to find out more about stalking and harassment and what you can do to take care of yourself.

## *Questions to ask yourself:*

Are you stalked or harassed on campus?

Not sure what stalking or harassment is?

Want to find out if you have been stalked or harassed?

Would you like to know what you can do if you've been stalked or harassed?

Do you know what the law says about stalking and harassment?

Find out why you shouldn't have to put up with stalking or harassment during any part of your life or education.



# 1. AM I BEING STALKED OR HARASSED? WHAT COUNTS AS STALKING AND HARASSMENT?

## *What is stalking?*

Stalking is any unwanted attention or contact, it can often be obsessive and can include being harassed or intimidated. Stalkers tend to believe that their victims are in love with them, are in need of being rescued or have wronged them. There are various methods of stalking. all meant to make a victim feel isolated and unsafe, and various types of stalkers (see [more](#)). Most importantly, stalking is a crime.

## *Methods of Stalking:*

- Following/tracking/spying - this can be done both physically and online
- Vandalizing the property of a victim
- Sending unwanted gifts
- Sending unwanted emails/SMS messages/messages on social networking sites
- Repeatedly phone calling a victim
- Showing up at a victim's home, place of study or work
- Threatening and intimidating
- Blackmail - this can include emotional blackmail and manipulation, i.e. the stalker threatens to harm himself in order to get the victim to interact with him
- Asserting control over a victim
- Verbal abuse and defamation

### [Fact Sheet on Stalking](#)

Stalking has many physiological, emotional and physical effects on victims (see **Why Being Cyber Stalked Is Dangerous**). If you are being stalked, it is important to know that you are not



to blame. Try to find a supportive network, service or group, and if possible, immediately seek an Injunction Order against your stalker.

Stalking is a serious issue - whether it happens online or in the offline world. It is a violation of your privacy, it directly impacts your life and can put you in danger. No one has the right to do this to you.

Stalking is also illegal in India. Reporting your stalker and demanding protection for yourself is your right. You should not be ashamed or afraid of claiming it. While some people may tell you that "it is not a big deal", or you may even tell yourself that, your safety and well-being *is* a big deal. And those who threaten this safety and well-being by violating your privacy and encroaching your space through stalking, are acting illegally. You have the full right to report your stalker to whatever authorities you feel most comfortable speaking to - it may be your university, the police, etc.

Although it is always your choice, talking to someone about the stalking can be an important step. While some people may try to play it down, talking to a trusted friend, or family member, and explaining to them why the issue is serious, and how it makes you feel, can be a relief. Stalkers (especially in the cyber-world) are often bullies and can (directly or indirectly) attack you to lower your self-esteem and make you feel hopeless.

Remember - they are the ones who are wrong, not you. They are acting against the law, and violating your privacy. You are entitled to feel scared or overwhelmed if you are being stalked, and you should reach out for help wherever you feel comfortable looking - by turning to a friend, or reporting the stalking to authorities. Stay strong!

## WHAT IS CYBER STALKING?

Cyber stalking can take on many forms but causes harm/injury all the same. Stalking is stalking, whether it is done physically or digitally, and is a criminal offence. The effects on a victim of cyber stalking are similar to those of being cyber bullied, with the exception that women being stalked always feel as though they have to look over their shoulder and ensure their safety. The chance of a violent crime being committed as a result of being stalked is as real as it is unsettling and stressful to victims.



Cyber stalking is a means of stalking someone electronically or monitoring them via the internet. In 2013, the Indian Parliament ruled that cyber stalking was a criminal offence and a man who is found guilty of stalking can receive a prison sentence of up to five years and may be liable to pay a fine. [1] However, getting an Injunction or Protection Order to thwart cyber stalking is no easy feat.

The 1963 *Specific Relief Act* states that the court will grant a victim of stalking an Injunction Order if:

1. There is a *prima facie* case in favour of the party seeking the order,
2. Irreparable damage may be caused to the party if the order is not passed and such damage may not be ascertained in terms or money and payable as damages, and
3. Where the balance of convenience lies with the party requesting for the order.

[2]

As illustrated, one must go through the court first to seek protection where it would be more reasonable to go to a local police station. The *Specific Relief Act*, written in 1963, does not account for the digital age or what action law enforcement or civilians should take in cases of cyber stalking.

## Examples of Cyber Stalking:

- Receiving threatening or unwanted online communication, often containing obscene language, i.e. emails, SMS messages
- Being harassed or threatened in an online chat room
- Having your computer or mobile device tracked or infected with viruses
- "Flaming" - an act in which you are verbally abused online
- Identity theft: Having your email forged or having someone pretend to be you online, thus ruining your reputation
- Being solicited for sex
- Having your information collected to be used as blackmail against [3]



# Why Being Cyber Stalked Is Dangerous

Being cyber stalked by an intimate partner is an act of domestic violence, meant to control and socially isolate victims. Being stalked by strangers, co-workers, anonymous online users, neighbours, carries a high level threat of potential crimes being committed, often violent crimes or murder. Cyber stalking ruins lives, the verbal abuse women face has an impact on their self-esteem and similar to cyber bullying, could lead to suicide. Being stalked causes a victim severe trauma and can result in the following emotional, psychological and physical symptoms:

- Loss of sleep
- Loss of appetite
- Stress
- Hypervigilance
- Feeling like you've lost control
- Feeling like you have no personal safety
- Nightmares [4]

[1] [Cyberstalking legislation - India](#)

[2] [Specific Relief Act 1963](#)

[3] [Cyberstalking](#)

[4] [Effects of Cyber Stalking](#)

***IN INDIA YOU CAN FILE A COMPLAINT TO YOUR CITY POLICE  
DEPARTMENT'S [CYBER CRIMES UNIT](#)***

## 2. WHAT SHOULD I DO?



# *Keep a log for evidence of stalking or harassment*

Here is a useful Stalking Incident Log Sheet you can print off and keep. Any time your stalker/harasser sends you a message/calls/follows you, write it down on the log sheet along with the time and date of the incident, and everything you remember about the incident.

Download the log sheet here:

[https://www.unlv.edu/sites/default/files/page\\_files/27/Stalkinglog.pdf](https://www.unlv.edu/sites/default/files/page_files/27/Stalkinglog.pdf)

## *Should I tell the police?*

If you decide to go to the police, be warned that they may not take your complaint seriously.

However, be sure you are prepared. Learn about the various laws on stalking and harassment and know what you are filing an FIR for.

## *Should I tell the university?*

Each university has their own regulations and policies regarding sexual abuse, assault, and harassment. Check with your college campus counselor or Student Union about their Sexual Harassment Committee or Department.

If the harassment or stalking is taking place on campus then it is a good idea to tell the campus counselors about it. If your harasser/stalker is another student, they may be able to intervene on your behalf. You should not have to study and socialise on the same campus as your harasser/stalker. You have every right to be protected on your campus. You have a right to a safe and harassment-free education and social life.



# Should I tell my parents?

Whether you decide to talk to your parents about your experience is dependent on your relationship with them and whether you feel comfortable doing so. It is really important to talk to someone if you are being stalked or harassed because it is far better than suffering in silence. Speaking to your parents can be a good option because they are in a position to emotionally support you and help you find ways to deal with and report the stalking/harassment. However, it may be the case that you feel unable to speak to parents and family members, either because you do not feel comfortable, or because the family members might be involved in the stalking/harassment somehow. If this is the case, there are many other people that you can talk to - your friends, your college or the authorities. You are never alone in dealing with stalking and harassment.

---

## Stalking and Harassment Laws in India

Before 2013, offences such as stalking and sexual harassment were not adequately accounted for in Indian law. Fortunately, both stalking and cyber-stalking were specifically made illegal under the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act in 2013. Section 354D of the Indian Penal Code states the following:

1. *Any man who —*
  1. *follows a woman and contacts, or attempts to contact such woman to foster personal interaction repeatedly despite a clear indication of disinterest by such woman; or*
  2. *monitors the use by a woman of the internet, email or any other form of electronic communication, commits the offence of stalking;*

*Commits the offence of stalking*

The Act also introduced new laws regarding sexual harassment in the workplace:



1. *A man committing any of the following acts —*
  1. *physical contact and advances involving unwelcome and explicit sexual overtures; or*
  2. *a demand or request for sexual favours; or*
  3. *showing pornography against the will of a woman; or*
  4. *making sexually coloured remarks,*

*shall be guilty of the offence of sexual harassment.*<sup>1</sup>

For more information on the laws concerning stalking and harassment visit Chayn India: <http://chaynindia.com/law-divorce/>

[1] THE CRIMINAL LAW (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2013

<http://www.prsindia.org/uploads/media/Criminal%20Law,%202013/Criminal%20Law%20Amendment%20Bill%20as%20passed%20by%20LS.pdf>

## ***Laws under Indian Penal Code (IPC)***

- **Section 209:** Obscene acts and songs, to the annoyance of others like:
  - a) does any obscene act in any public place or
  - b) sings, recites or utters any obscene song, ballad or words in or near any public place.
- *Punishment:* Imprisonment for a term up to 3 months or fine, or both. (Cognisable, bailable and triable offense)
- **Section 354:** Assault or use of criminal force on a woman with intent to outrage her modesty.
- *Punishment:* 2 years imprisonment or fine, or both
- **Section 376:** Rape
- *Punishment:* Imprisonment for life or 10 years and fine
- **Section 509:** Uttering any word or making any gesture intended to insult the modesty of a woman
- *Punishment:* Imprisonment for 1 year, or fine, or both. (Cognisable and bailable offense)



# The Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act (1987)

Although it is not known to have been used in cases of sexual harassment, the provisions of this act have the potential to be used in two ways:

- If an individual harasses another with books, photographs, paintings, films, pamphlets, packages, etc. containing 'indecent representation of women'; they are liable for a minimum sentence of two years
- A 'hostile working environment' type of argument can be made under this act. Section 7 (Offences by Companies) – holds companies where there has been 'indecent representation of women' (such as the display of pornography) on the premises guilty of offenses under this act.
- *Punishment:* Minimum sentence of two years

*For Legal Support Call:*

*Lawyer's Collective: 24373904*

*Human Rights Law Network: 24324503*

## Self Care Checklist

**Create a support network for yourself:** Confide in people you trust. They will be able to keep an eye out for you, helping you keep safe. Take a friend along with you whenever you leave home and try to stick together no matter what. In case the stalker is someone close to you, they will be alert or stop altogether once they find out that your loved ones are being watchful.

**Record evidence:** If you are receiving threatening calls or emails then make sure to save and forward them to people you trust. This can be recorded as evidence of harassment and help present your side of the case.

**DO NOT respond to the stalker:** Make sure to never respond to any calls, texts or emails made by the person harassing you. They might take it as encouragement and the situation might escalate.

**Be cautious:** While interacting with people keep your personal information private. This includes your phone number, address, business schedule etc. One at home take care to lock all doors and windows carefully and do not let people you don't know that



well inside your private space. For example, if there is someone is there with a delivery at the door, call the company to confirm. This might make you feel paranoid but it is your safety that matters at the end of the day.

**Change your routine:** Try to change your daily schedule to throw the stalker off guard . Be aware of your surroundings at all times. If you feel that the situation is still not under control, make sure to to go to any legal effort necessary to get the authorities involved.

**Have a backup contact:** Consider asking someone to be another contact for the police. This will be helpful in a situation if you are stressed or traumatized, they can talk to the police and get details if you feel you cannot cope at that time.

**Finally, DO NOT at any COST blame yourself. You are not responsible for another person's actions. The only thing that matters is your safety. Protect yourself.**

---

*Need to talk to someone? [Go to Love Doctor](#) to speak to trained counselors about anything to do with love, sex, and relationships.*

---

## Further Reading

Read this real life account by Arunima Mazumdar about how she was harassed and stalked, and what the police did when she filed a complaint to them: [“The Policeman Said: He Hasn’t Done Anything to You Yet, So Why File a Case?”](#)

Read about some cases where stalkers/harassers were caught and convicted [here](#). The article also brings to light reasons why people are hesitant to go to the police, and how seriously police take stalking crimes.

Read how and why the new stalking laws in India have failed to protect victims of stalking and harassment [here](#).

Watch students at Delhi University speak about their experiences of sexual harassment [here](#). The students discuss why they are not to blame for their experiences.



[An in-depth study of Victims of Stalking in India: A Study of Girl College Students in Tirunelveli City](#)

[One in two DU girls sexually harassed](#)

[Experiences of Delhi University students](#)

[20 Laws Against Sexual Harassment Most Indians Don't Know About](#)

---

*If you are a college student who may be experiencing abuse, stalking, or harassment, please take our quick survey to tell us what you think about this guide: <https://chayn.typeform.com/to/ST6WLi>*

---

