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Navigating Medical Care After Experiencing Sexual Assault →





What a survivor does after experiencing sexual assault is **always** their choice.

Receiving medical care after experiencing sexual assault can be an **important step** to make sure a survivor is okay.

Reasons survivors may choose to receive medical care:

- Check for any known or unknown injuries.
- Get testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections.
- Receive emergency contraception to prevent pregnancy.
- Collect evidence in the case they want to report to the police now or at a later time.



Medical Mandated Reporting:

Mandatory reporting laws require medical professionals to report sexual assault under specific conditions. These laws drastically vary by state and may include mandates for reporting:



Survivors under the age of 18



Survivors with certain disabilities



Survivors in later life



Weapons or serious physical injuries

Before a medical forensic exam:

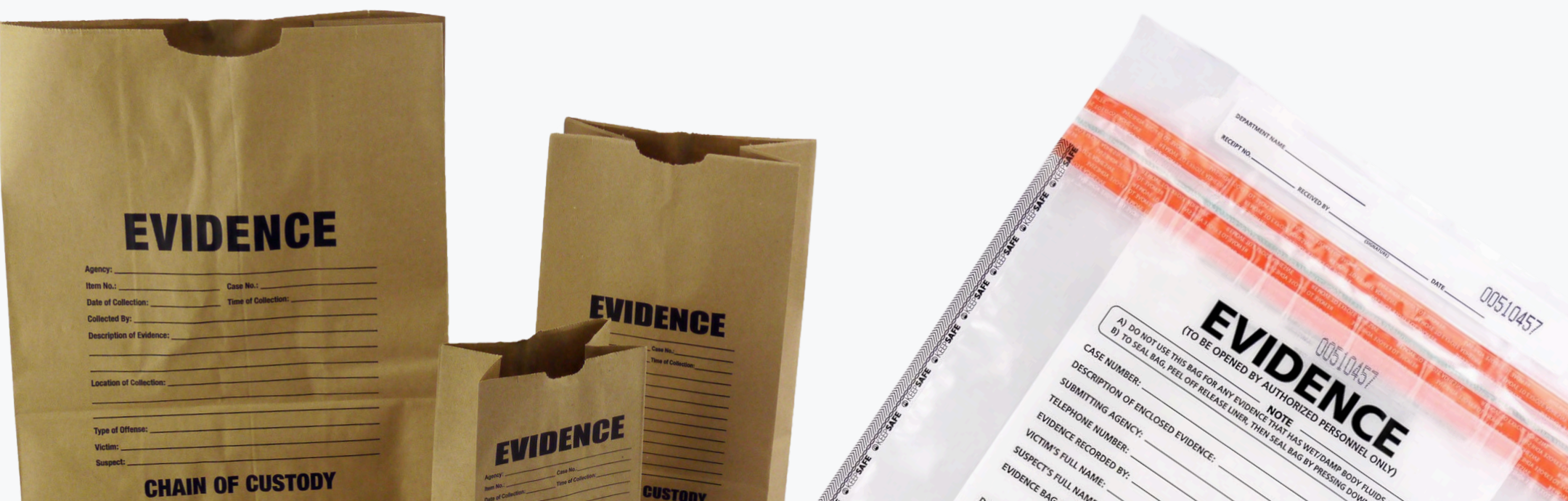
- Decide if you would like to have someone with you. You can be supported by a friend, family member, or victim advocate.
- Bring the clothes you wore **during** the sexual assault and anything you **changed into after** the sexual assault (including a bra, if you wear one).
- If you are still wearing the clothes from during or after the assault, and if it is possible, bring a change of clothes.
- It is recommended not to shower, bathe, douche, gargle, brush your teeth, or wash your clothes and bedding, if you have not already done so, but you can still have an exam either way.

What to expect during a medical forensic exam:

- A nurse or doctor will start the medical forensic exam by asking questions, including about your health history and what happened to you during the sexual assault.
- The physical exam may include a vaginal or anal exam, depending on the sexual acts that may have been committed during your assault.
- During the exam, the doctor or nurse will typically swab your body for potential evidence, such as DNA, and they may request a blood or urine sample.
- They will also typically take photographs or draw diagrams of any injuries you may have, and they may collect your clothing.

Important things to know:

- Your clothes will most likely be collected as evidence.
- If any item is particularly valuable, either because it is expensive or difficult to replace, or because it is very personal or special to you, **you have the right to say no to any item being taken from you.**
- You can say no to any or all of the procedures during the exam, and you can stop the exam at any time.
- Nothing will happen unless you agree.







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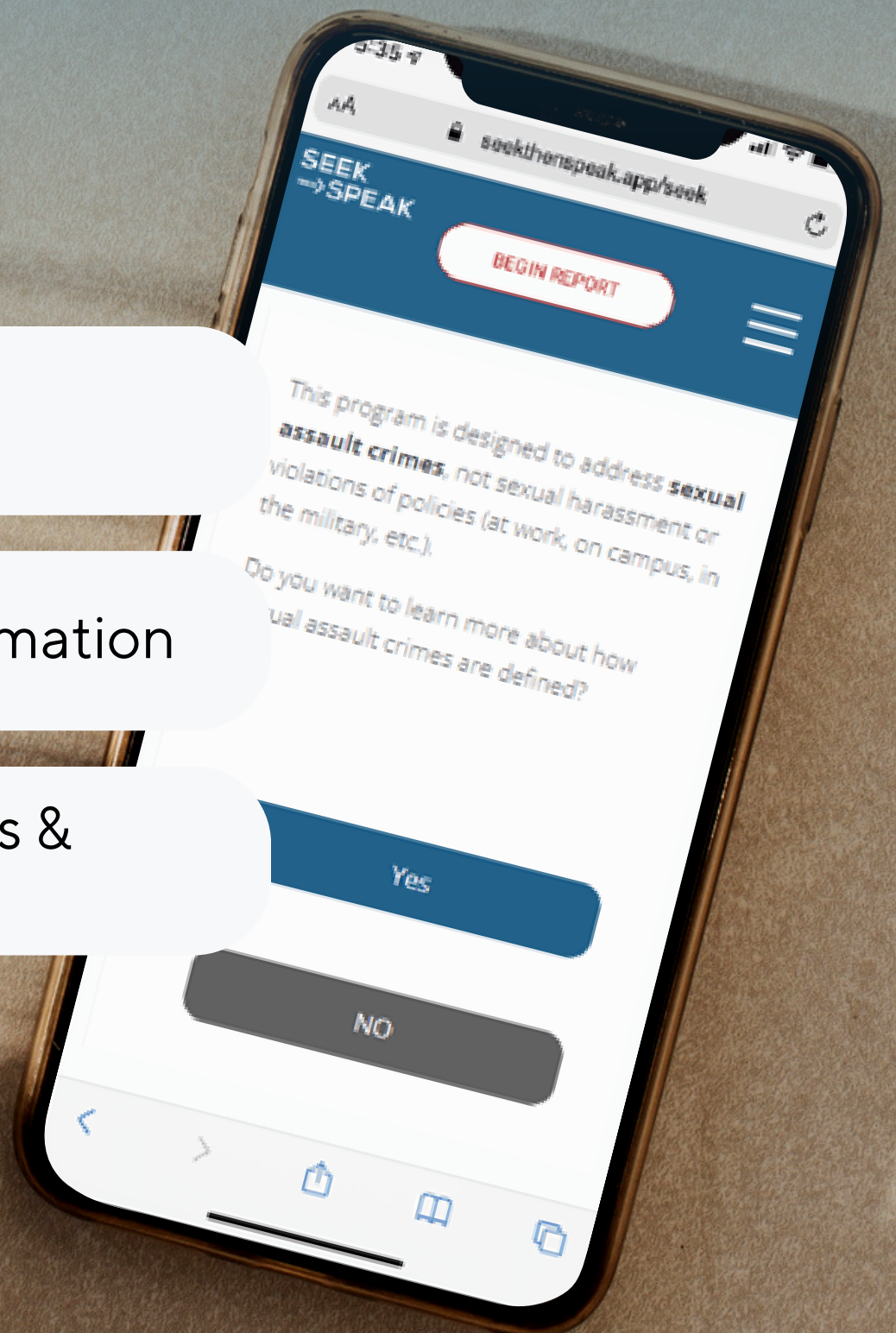
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 Explore your options

 Privately gather information

 Designed for survivors & their support people

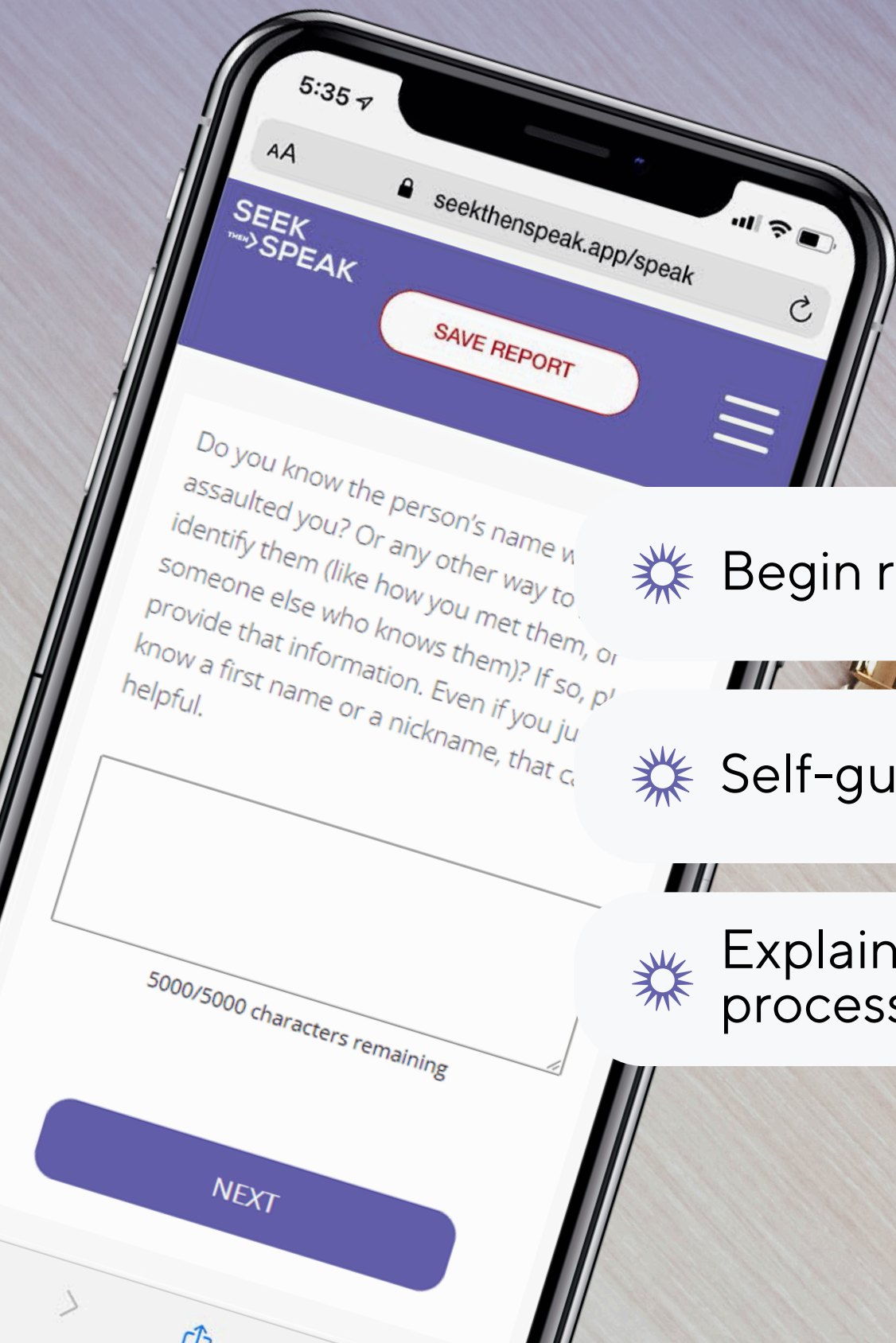




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Begin reporting



Self-guided interview



Explains the entire reporting process

Goal D

Goal Summary

Domain

Key