



## E104 Giving a Voice to Male Rape Victims Through Novel Short Tandem Repeat (STR) DNA Findings

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**Learning Overview:** After attending this presentation, attendees will have increased understanding and competency on the subject of male rape victims and DNA analysis findings from sexual assault kits of male victims.

**Impact on the Forensic Science Community:** This presentation will impact the forensic science community by providing new research findings regarding male rape victims and their sexual assault kit DNA analysis findings to inform knowledge, practice, and policy for researchers, forensic examiners, forensic scientists, law enforcement, and criminal justice system professionals.

Traditionally, rape has been considered to occur between a male perpetrator and a female victim. However, sexual assault is a crime that affects all genders. Although the majority of rapes are male to female, current findings indicate that 1 in 71 men will be raped in their lifetime.<sup>1</sup> While the psychological effects of male victim rape and its underreporting are well documented, very little has been reported regarding DNA findings from sexual assault kits of male victim rapes. After an intensive search for earlier publications concerning the topic, only three articles were found to have relative correlation to this topic. Two of the three articles date back to 1978 and 1982 and the studies focused on spermatozoa findings in the anal cavities of female victims.<sup>2-4</sup> Current best practice is to obtain STR DNA profiles from sexual assault kit samples to enter into the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Combined DNA Index System (CODIS). This study methodology is an exploratory, retrospective design to identify male rape victims from a sample size of 5,442 victims who received sexual assault forensic examinations with sexual assault kit evidence collection.

Approximately 5% of the victims in this study were male ( $N=246$ ). Male victims were found to have less non-anogenital and anogenital injury, although they reported more violent acts by suspect(s). Male victims reported that ejaculation occurred less often during the assault than female victims. Male victims were found to have more physical or mental impairments, increasing their vulnerability for sexual assault. Male victims had substantially lower development of STR DNA profiles and CODIS-eligible DNA profiles of perpetrator ( $p=.007$ ). In fact, female victims were 40% more likely to develop a CODIS-eligible profile from sexual assault kit DNA analysis than male victims.

Due to low STR DNA profile yields and increased targeting of mentally impaired or otherwise vulnerable male victims, we must improve our response to male victims to ensure justice to all victims of sexual assault.

### Reference(s):

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### Males, Rape, STR DNA