

## Timescales for collection of forensic samples

### Information for professionals who receive disclosure of sexual assault or rape

This information sheet details the timescales within which there may be forensic value in completing an examination of someone to collect samples after they have been raped or sexually assaulted.

These are the timescales used by The Bridge SARC as at 20<sup>th</sup> August 2015. They are based on guidelines published by the Faculty of Forensic and Legal Medicine on their website [www.fflm.ac.uk](http://www.fflm.ac.uk).

A forensic medical examination may still be of value even if the person who was assaulted has already washed. **You can call The Bridge 24/7 on 0117 342 6999** if it would be helpful to discuss a specific situation.

Other items that might provide forensic evidence can be collected and stored. Clothing and bedding should be stored in paper bags if possible but plastic bags if not. Items such as tampons, sanitary towels, condoms, false nails or jewellery should be stored in plastic bags if possible.

#### POST-PUBERTAL – forensic and toxicology sample recovery timescales

48 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Vulval, Vaginal, Perianal and Anal swabs following DIGITAL PENETRATION</li> <li>✓ Mouth swabs and oral rinse following ORAL PENETRATION</li> <li>✓ Skin swabs to recover body fluids (if not washed/showered this can be 120 hrs)</li></ul>
72 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Peri-anal, perineal, internal anal, rectal swabs following ANAL PENETRATION</li> <li>✓ Penile swabs</li> <li>✓ Blood (if ONLY alcohol is involved the time is shorter owing to metabolism)</li></ul>
120 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Urine (if definite evidence of DFSA this can be extended to 14 days but expensive)</li></ul>
168 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Vulval, Vaginal, Endocervical swabs following VAGINAL PENETRATION</li></ul>
Indefinitely	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Clothing (unwashed if possible)</li></ul>

## PRE-PUBERTAL - forensic and toxicology sample recovery timescales

48 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Vulval, Vaginal, Perianal, Anal and Rectal swabs following DIGITAL PENETRATION</li><li>✓ Mouth swabs, mouth rinse following ORAL PENETRATION</li><li>✓ Skin swabs to recover body fluids, can be longer if not washed</li></ul>
72 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Peri-anal, perineal, anal, and rectal swabs following ANAL PENETRATION</li><li>✓ Vulval, and vaginal swabs following VAGINAL PENETRATION</li><li>✓ Blood (if ONLY alcohol is involved the time is shorter owing to metabolism)</li></ul>
120 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Urine (if there is definite evidence of Drug Facilitated Sexual Assault this can be extended to 14 days)</li></ul>
Indefinitely	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Clothing (unwashed if possible)</li></ul>