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# Texas Preventable Disease

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# NEWS

Frank Bryant, Jr. MD, FAAFP  
Chairman  
Texas Board of Health

Robert Bernstein, MD, FACP  
Commissioner

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TEXAS STATE DOCUMENTS  
COLLECTION

NON-CIRCULATING

**Bureau of Epidemiology, 1100 West 49th Street, Austin, Texas 78756-3180 (512-458-7207)**

## IMPACT OF MARITAL RAPE ON THE VICTIM

During initial intake interviews completed at rape crisis shelters across Texas in 1985, 1,905 women who were battered by their husbands or partners reported that they also were sexually assaulted. Among these women, 1,715 were forced to have sex with their batterer, 114 were forced to engage in sexual activities with another person, 152 were sexually abused with objects, and 191 were sexually abused by other means.<sup>1</sup>

Women who report being sexually assaulted by their husbands face the same physical and psychological traumas encountered by victims of stranger assaults. The forced sexual contact has denied the woman the most basic right of control over her own body. Victims of marital rape report being forced to have sex with their husbands after being physically battered or in order to avoid a threatened beating. Many women are sexually assaulted during periods when their doctor has prohibited sexual intercourse, such as after giving birth or after surgery. Others are forced to engage in sodomy or bestiality.

The victim of marital rape feels the same fears that victims of stranger rape do, the difference being that the fear does not diminish over time. Spousal rape is not a one-time assault. Once a husband forces sex on his wife, he tends to repeat that type of assault throughout the course of the marriage. Sexual assault becomes part of the battering cycle. The marital ties themselves make it difficult for many women to stop the assaults. The wife may feel she has no right to refuse her husband, no matter how brutal or bizarre his demands become. She may have young children and no feasible way of supporting them if she leaves her husband. She may know from past experience that he will resist any attempt on her part to get away, tracking her down until he finds her and beating and sexually assaulting her more viciously than before.

The sense of betrayal, humiliation, and guilt is often intensified in the victim of marital rape. The loss of love and trust she expected in her marriage is difficult to face. She is humiliated by the actions forced on her, especially when sodomy or bestiality plays a part in the sexual assault by her husband. She feels guilty that she cannot forgive him for violating her, or guilty that she still loves him after what he has done to her.

Escaping a sexually and physically violent marriage is very difficult for many women. Lack of financial independence, social and family expectations that she keep her marriage together, and fears of her children's future often force her to stay in that relationship. Living with fear lowers her ability to reach out for help; it deters her from taking initiative or independent action to stop the violence; it reduces her self-esteem and her sense of self-worth.

When she does try to break away, a woman with children must face the continuing contact with her ex-husband that comes from shared custody or visitations. Many women report that the fear of sexual assault continues even after the marriage is dissolved. Every time he comes to pick up the children for the weekend, or when he joins the celebration of some milestone in the children's lives, the threat is still there. That threat is reinforced by the fact that throughout the marriage there was no recourse to criminal prosecution. The civil legal option she did exercise does not protect her from his continuing presence in her life, and thus does not end the continuing fear.

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For more information concerning marital rape, contact your local rape crisis center. There are 49 centers in Texas. If you do not have a center in your community, contact Ann J. Robison, Program Specialist for the Sexual Assault Prevention and Crisis Services Program, Bureau of Emergency Management, Texas Department of Health, 1100 West 49th Street, Austin, Texas 78756-3199, or call (512) 465-2601.

This article was prepared by Rebecca Jasso, Executive Director, Baytown Area Women's Center.

#### REFERENCE:

1. Texas Department of Human Service. Family Violence Program statistics, 1985 data.

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### **DANGER SIGNALS OF A MARITAL RAPIST\***

If you answer yes to these questions, help is available through your local rape crisis center.

- Has he ever forced sex on you?
- Does he seem especially to like sex when you don't?
- Does he want you to perform sex acts you don't like?
- Is he particularly fond of bondage or violence in sex?
- Has he ever threatened you with violence?
- Does he like to end fights by having sex, even if you are not in the mood?
- Is he overpossessive and extremely jealous?
- Does he have temper tantrums?
- Does he have trouble communicating his feelings?
- Are you ever afraid of him?
- Does he bully you?
- Does he frequently insist on having things his way rather than compromising differences?
- Has he been violent toward previous wives or girl friends?
- Does he drink too much and get violent when he's drunk?
- Does he attack people physically?
- Has he ever hit or beaten you?
- Does he control your money and keep you financially dependent on him?
- Do his parents have an abusive relationship?

\*Adapted from Helen Benedict's RECOVERY, New York, 1985, by Rebecca Jasso, Executive Director, Baytown Area Women's Center.

**Monthly stats here**  
**MONTHLY SUMMARY OF REPORTABLE DISEASES IN TEXAS**  
 Dates of Onset: May 31 to July 4, 1987

REPORTABLE DISEASE	PHR 1	PHR 2	PHR 3/12	PHR 4	PHR 5	PHR 6	PHR 7/10	PHR 8	PHR 9	PHR 11	WEEKS 22-26 1986	WEEKS 22-26 1987	CUMULATIVE 1986	CUMULATIVE 1987
Amebiasis	1		4	1	3	7		14	1	3	29	34	202	151
Botulism											0	0	1	4
Brucellosis								1			1	1	10	19
Campylobacteriosis	1		10		18	24	8	6	11	19	99	97	355	354
Coccidioidomycosis			1						1		9	2	34	18
Dengue											0	0	0	0
Encephalitis	1	2			3	1				2	19	9	76	40
Hansen's Disease											3	0	22	16
H. influenzae infections	1		1	4	7	5	1	2	4	9	0	34	0	339
Hepatitis A	3	3	21	3	52	13	8	13	7	12	132	135	1,071	960
Hepatitis B	1	1	14	10	50	6	6	10	1	17	129	116	784	703
Hepatitis D											0	0	0	1
Hepatitis, NR-NB	1				5	2				2	21	10	111	89
Hepatitis, U				3	26	4		5	3	50	61	46	485	272
Histoplasmosis											6	0	47	34
Legionellosis	1				1		1				1	3	20	17
Leptospirosis											0	0	2	0
Listeria						1				2	0	3	2	18
Lyme Disease											0	0	1	5
Malaria			1	1	1					1	7	4	42	24
Measles					15	9		3	1		39	28	358	311
Meningococcal infections			1		2	2	2	1	1	1	9	9	76	82
Meningitis, Aseptic	3	2	1	1	33	11	3	1	9	27	220	81	560	272
Mumps					6			2		1	3	9	132	219
Pertussis											20	0	58	0
Psittacosis											0	0	4	1
Relapsing Fever											0	0	1	0
Reye Syndrome											0	0	7	5
RMSF											2	0	12	7
Rubella											0	0	64	3
Salmonellosis	2	5	13	8	64	24	17	19	21	47	250	220	845	906
Shigellosis	1	4	18	3	18	7	2	19	20	18	128	110	500	534
Tetanus											1	0	7	2
Toxic Shock Syndrome										1	3	1	10	6
Trichinosis											0	0	2	0
Tularemia											2	0	4	0
Typhoid					1						1	1	14	6
Typhus, Endemic						1					5	1	32	8
Vibrio infections					1			2			0	3	0	5
Chickendox	55	19	137	46	1,556	242	133	459	116	1,367	2,844	4,130	20,464	21,745
Influenza	340	55	162	327	865	150	95	694	28	427	4,934	3,143	62,056	43,747

NOTE: There have been no reported cases of: Anthrax, Cholera, Diphtheria, Plague, Polio, Q Fever, Rabies, or Yellow Fever in 1987.  
 \* \* \*

**MONTHLY SUMMARY OF REPORTABLE OCCUPATIONAL DISEASES IN TEXAS**  
 MAY 31, 1987, THROUGH JULY 4, 1987

REGION	1	2	3/12	4	5	6	7/10	8	9	11	WEEKS 22-26 1986	WEEKS 22-26 1987	CUMULATIVE 1986	CUMULATIVE 1987
ELEVATED BLOOD LEAD LEVELS †	1			1	30					10	105	42	365	538
ACUTE OCCUPATIONAL PESTICIDE POISONING				1									1	3
SILICOSIS §														
ASBESTOSIS §														

† Blood lead level  $\geq 40$  ug/dl in persons 15 years of age or older; summarized by date of blood lead test.  
 § Regular summaries of these reportable occupational diseases will be included as reporting procedures become better established.

\* \* \*

**CUMULATIVE TOTAL FOR DISEASES REPORTED TO THE BUREAU OF**  
**COMMUNICABLE DISEASE SERVICES JUNE 1987**

REGION	1	2	3/12	4	5	6	7/10	8	9	11	STATEWIDE 1986	STATEWIDE 1987
TUBERCULOSIS	5	11	41	11	175	45	58	103	67	295	798	811
P&S SYPHILIS	12	30	60	7	488	81	125	63	104	440	1963	1410
GONORRHEA	454	565	1383	501	8507	2337	2010	744	1580	6761	30431	24842

CUMULATIVE TEXAS AIDS CASES BY DATE OF DIAGNOSIS  
THROUGH JULY 17, 1987

COUNTY *	1980-1982		1983		1984		1985		1986		1987		CUMULATIVE		
	CASES	DEATHS	CASES	DEATHS	CASES	DEATHS	CASES	DEATHS	CASES	DEATHS	CASES	DEATHS	CASES	DEATHS	(CFR%)
BEXAR	3	3	13	12	9	7	27	20	42	23	22	7	116	72	62
BRAZORIA	0	0	0	0	1	1	7	7	9	4	1	1	18	13	72
BRAZOS	0	0	1	1	5	5	3	3	4	0	1	1	14	10	71
DALLAS	7	7	25	20	73	71	134	115	248	131	143	39	630	383	61
EL PASO	0	0	2	2	1	1	1	1	7	2	6	1	17	7	41
FORT BEND	0	0	0	0	1	1	9	9	8	3	6	0	24	13	54
GALVESTON	0	0	1	1	4	3	5	4	12	6	7	2	29	16	55
HARRIS	27	24	73	71	173	151	304	241	477	248	187	32	1241	767	62
JEFFERSON	1	1	0	0	2	1	4	4	8	1	6	2	21	9	43
NUECES	0	0	0	0	4	3	2	1	10	5	6	1	22	10	45
TARRANT	1	1	1	1	8	7	28	22	37	14	31	5	106	50	47
TRAVIS	0	0	3	3	19	16	36	31	43	15	29	8	130	73	56
** WALKER	0	0	1	1	4	4	4	4	14	6	3	0	26	15	58
ALL OTHERS	0	0	8	8	19	18	49	39	90	46	44	10	210	121	58
STATEWIDE	39	36	128	120	323	289	613	501	1009	504	492	109	2604	1559	
	CFR%	92	CFR%	94	CFR%	89	CFR%	82	CFR%	50	CFR%	22		CFR%	60

\* COUNTIES LISTED INDIVIDUALLY ARE THOSE WITH A CUMULATIVE TOTAL OF 10+ CASES.

\*\* 19 CASES ARE TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS INMATES

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