

Taking care of yourself

Going to court can be an overwhelming experience. You might feel scared, stressed or worried about:

- seeing the accused
- being a witness
- being asked difficult questions
- having to remember and talk about what happened.

Suggestions for looking after yourself

It is important that you look after yourself before, during and after the court case.

- Gather as much information as you can about the court process, what to expect and what your rights are as a victim of crime.
- See if someone can go to court with you to provide support and companionship.
- Before court, try to get enough rest and eat well.
- Learn relaxation techniques to help you stay calm.
- Talk to someone: a close friend or relative, a counsellor, someone from a victims support group or anyone else you feel you can trust and confide in.
- Do something just for you that you enjoy.

Safety

Your personal safety is very important. While at court if you are scared, intimidated or threatened you should let the Police Officer in Charge or the prosecutor know. Some courts have safe rooms where you can wait. Speak to the police officer, prosecutor or witness/victim support service to see if these rooms are available.

Support at court

If you are a witness, you can have someone with you while you give evidence at court. This is known as court support. Court support can be provided by a service or family/friend depending on your needs. The Judge will decide where they sit so that you can see them. They cannot help you to answer the questions but it may be comforting to have them near you. You can speak to the prosecutor or the Witness Assistance Service about the role of your support person.

Counselling

Some witnesses and victims of crime find that counselling is a helpful support for them as they are going through the court process.

Counselling can help by:

- giving you a place to talk about what has happened
- helping you to understand what you are feeling
- assisting you with ways to cope.

For information about counselling, please contact the **Victims Access Line** for more information on: (02) 8688 5111 or 1800 633 063.



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