

## Need to Preserve Vaginal Swab in Victims of Sex Assault

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A four and half year old female child was examined by medical board with allegation of rape and sodomy under general anesthesia. On examination, there was no evidence of injury to genitalia and anal region. Vaginal and anal swabs were taken; smears were prepared and sent for analysis to FSL. The hymen was intact. However five bruises were present on different parts of the body 2 to 4 days duration. She was not wearing the same undergarment, hence was not preserved.

FSL report indicated the presence of human semen on the vaginal swab and smears which was suggestive of sexual activity.

In children, hymen mass not ruptured but can become red & congested along with inflammation & bruising of labia 1. In young children as the vagina is small & hymen is deeply situated, adult penis may not penetrate 2.

In present case occurrence of crime said to be on 13<sup>th</sup> Oct 1997 at 4 PM & the case was reported to police on 14<sup>th</sup> Oct 1997 at 7.15 PM. The time between occurrence of crime & medical examination was 2 days & 18 hours that is early 3 days. The vulva is vascular part of the body so evidence of sexual activity out side the introitus even if congestion may disappear. So there is possibility of sexual activity & discharging of semen outside the introitus & entry of semen inside the vaginal canal. Pregnancy may even occur through fecundation ab extra i.e. by the mere deposition of semen on the vulva without penetration.

Sexual activity could be detected in this case where no local (genital) injury was present only due to the presence of human semen as per the FSL report.

### References:

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2. Parikh CK. Parikh's Textbook of Medical Jurisprudence, Forensic Medicine and Toxicology. CBS Publishers and Distributors, Delhi, 1999.