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(FILE PHOTO)

Should women carry weapons to protect themselves from attackers?

Self-defense experts don't encourage it

News1130 Staff March 27, 2015 7:24 am

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VANCOUVER (NEWS1130) – Public safety is back in the spotlight in a big way after two violent sexual assaults in less than 12 hours in Vancouver.

One woman was attacked while jogging near UBC. Another woman was sexually assaulted in a home in Strathcona.

Witnesses have described the second assault as a scene out of a horror movie.

Despite that, self defense experts are stopping short of suggesting women head out and arm themselves.

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- [Vancouver woman tied up, sexually assaulted inside of a Strathcona home](#)
- [Sexual assault near UBC](#)

Awareness of a person's surroundings is the best way they can protect their own safety, says Louisa Weizman with [Hit and Run Self Defense](#).

"Be more proactive. Maybe jog with a buddy. Maybe jog towards the curb where people are more likely to see you. Be aware of your surroundings. Especially if you're a jogger and you wear ear buds — take one side out and be aware of what's going on around you," she suggests.

But when it comes to a weapon, she says it could do more harm than good. "We don't really encourage it. Carrying weapons around, you need to know how to use them."

"A lot of people think carrying pepper [or bear] spray, they'll just pull it out and use it... What happens is they're not familiar with it and they'll end up spraying it in their own face."

Weizman says the best weapon is often a person's voice.

Police partly credit an arrest in yesterday's second sexual assault to the victim, who screamed loud enough to alert people on the street.

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