

**SHE Excellence Center Safety & Health Message**  
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## Tips to Avoid Being a Crime Victim While Shopping

- **Be aware of your surroundings. Look for suspicious persons wherever you are.**
- **Remember where you parked your car. While this may sound elementary, many shopping areas are spread out over large areas. Being unable to locate a car can cause you undue confusion and stress that may present you as a better target to a criminal.**
- **If shopping late in the day or after dark, park in an area that is well lighted. Keep in mind, if you are shopping at a mall, the time the store closes from which you enter the mall, as some stores close earlier than others. This may keep you from having to walk unnecessary distances to you car if you find the store has closed earlier than you expected.**
- **Shop in pairs at the very least. Take a friend or family member shopping with you. There is something to be said for safety in numbers.**
- **As you return to your car, make sure to keep your car key in your hand.**
- **Avoid carrying large amounts of cash. Pay for purchases with checks, credit, charge or debit cards. Carry cash and wallets in a front pocket to reduce your chances of having your pocket picked.**
- **Don't leave phones, purses, packages, or any other item of value in your parked car where they can be seen. Always conceal these items.**
- **While these steps don't guarantee you will not become the victim of crime, they will hopefully reduce your chances of falling prey to a criminal.**

Source: Gaston County, N.C. Police Department

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If you have questions or comments, please contact by e-mail  
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