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Rape May Be Linked To Series

A 37-year-old woman was tied up and raped in her home early this morning, and Sacramento County sheriff's deputies are investigating the possibility it may be the 16th attack by the so-called east area rapist.

"The MO (method of operation) is the same" as the east area rapist, said sheriff's department spokesman Bill Miller.

The woman, who was alone in her home east of Watt Avenue, between Robertson and Whitney Avenues, said...

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She was asleep when she was attacked and never saw the rapist. She told authorities he was blindfolded and gagged her, which is similar to methods used by the east area rapist in other attacks.

She told officers the rapist rummaged through her house for as long as three hours, although she was not sure. The east area rapist also has stayed in his victims' homes for several hours.

After he left, the woman managed to get her gag off and scream for help. Officers said a neighbor heard her and helped her call the sheriff's department around 6:45 a.m.

Miller said the rapist apparently entered the house by forcing open a sliding glass window.

Miller said the victim was separated from her husband and had a small child, who was staying elsewhere Monday night. The east area rapist has never attacked while there was a man in the home, although occasionally there have been children.

The last previous attack attributed to the east area rapist occurred Feb. 7 in Citrus Heights. He has raped and attempted to rape 14 other women in the Del Dayo, Carmichael, Glenbrook and Rancho Cordova areas.

He has been described as being between 25 and 35 years of age, white, between 5 feet 8 inches and 6 feet tall, clean shaven, with dark, neatly cut hair and of medium build.

His attacks have always occurred between 11 p.m. and 6:45 a.m.; his victims ranged in age from 16 to the late 30s.