

Education Update

Trinitas Regional Medical Center
Education Department

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Domestic Violence

A victim of domestic violence is any person who has been physically, verbally emotionally, or sexually abused by an intimate partner or former intimate partner. Fewer than 1 in 10 cases of domestic violence are reported.

Types of Domestic Violence

Physical: Hitting, pushing, shoving, kicking, punching, biting (1/3 of domestic violence assaults involve the use of a weapon)

Sexual: Unwanted, forced sexual activity

Psychological: Stalking, isolation, over-protectiveness, jealousy, threats

Emotional: Put-downs of partner, mother, employee roles, name-calling, humiliation

Financial: Denied access to bank accounts, credit cards or personal property

Warning Signs of Domestic Violence

- Delay between onset of injury and seeking treatment
- Explanation by the patient which is inconsistent with the injury
- Prior history of trauma
- Chronic pain symptoms for which no cause is apparent
- A partner who seems overly protective and will not leave the victim's side

If you have any questions or concerns about a particular patient, please talk to your immediate supervisor or contact the Social Work Department.

Did You Know?

- 1 out of every 4 women who enters the health care system is a victim of domestic violence.
- Almost 25% of pregnant women seeking prenatal care have been battered during pregnancy.
- Children living in homes where a mother is abused are more likely to be abused.
- Domestic violence affects people who are married, divorced, living together, dating and adults from all social, economic, religious, sexual and ethnic groups.

Cycles of Violence

There are 3 repeating phases in the cycle of domestic violence:

1. Tension building phase:

The abuser's behavior starts escalating, becoming overly critical, yelling, swearing and making threats. The victim becomes hyper-vigilant and tries to keep peace at all costs.

2. Explosion:

The abuser loses control during an emotionally traumatic episode that can include physical violence.

3. Calm:

The abuser often apologizes, promising never to do it again. The victim remembers the good times, and refuses to press charges or seek help. This is the phase during which the victim is lulled into believing that the situation will change and therefore he/she stays in the relationship.