



INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

Intimate partner violence (sometimes called domestic violence) happens a lot. It can happen to anyone—women, children, or men. Women are the most common victims. One of every three women will be abused at some point in her life. The abuser may be a man or a woman, but men are usually the abusers. This handout can help you figure out what is happening and make a plan to protect yourself and your children.

What is Intimate Partner Violence?

You are being abused if someone . . .

- Kicks, shoves, slaps, punches, shakes, pinches, pulls your hair, or physically harms you in any way
- Forces you to have sex against your will or makes you have sex in ways that are painful or ways that make you feel bad about yourself
- Keeps you away from friends or relatives or does not allow you to work or needs to know where you are all the time
- Says things to you that make you feel bad about yourself or calls you names in front of your children or others
- Threatens to hurt your children if you do not do what he/she wants
- Hurts your dog, cat, or other pets to punish or scare you
- Threatens to take your children if you leave him/her
- Threatens to kill himself/herself if you leave

The Things Listed Above Happen Sometimes, But Not Every Day. Is That Still Intimate Partner Violence?

Yes. Intimate partner violence usually follows a cycle or goes through phases like these:

Phase 1—Things start to get tense. Your partner may be silent or slam doors or criticize things. You can tell there is going to be a blow up, so you start to be very careful trying to keep the blow up from coming.

Phase 2—The blow up happens: yelling, hurting you, hurting your children, hurting your pets, or breaking things.

Phase 3—The “honeymoon.” The abuser seems calm. He may say, “I’m sorry.” Your partner may promise that a blow up will never happen again. Things are calm for a few days or even a month. Then the tension starts to build again, and you go back to phase 1.

You deserve to feel safe and secure. The reverse side of this sheet has information on how to leave an abusive relationship.



Contact numbers for use in an emergency:

Police/emergency:	911	Legal aid:	_____
Local shelter:	_____	Trusted friend:	_____
Clinic:	_____	Animal shelter:	_____

I Don't Think That My Partner Means to Hurt Me or Make Me Feel Bad. It Just Happens. Maybe I Even Cause It.

Almost everyone who is being abused denies it to herself or to others. No one wants to think that the person she loves would hurt her. You may have grown up in a home where your parents hurt you too. *It can be very hard to know in your heart that you do not deserve to be hurt.*

Getting Ready to Get Away From Intimate Partner Violence

1. *Save some money.* Go to a bank and open a savings account in your own name. Whenever you have a little money, put it in the account.
2. *Set up an emergency bag.* Put some money, an extra set of keys, copies of important papers, and a set of clothes for you (and your children) in a safe place or with someone you trust.
3. *Plan for pets.* Call the local animal shelter to find out how you can get emergency help for your dog or cat when you leave your partner.
4. *Practice how to get out of your home.* Which doors, windows, elevator, or stairwell would be best?
5. *Protect yourself.* If a blow up happens while you are getting ready to leave, protect yourself. Try to avoid rooms that have only one exit, like the bathroom or kitchen. Try to avoid rooms that have weapons in them.
6. *Get legal help.* Whenever you are hurt, notify the police. Ask that a report be written. Ask for the DR number—that way you will know a report has been written. It is against the law to physically hurt people. Contact your local legal aid or legal aid in a nearby city.
7. *Get other help.* Your health care provider or someone at the clinic where you got this paper may be able to help you get other assistance, too.
8. *The bottom of this sheet is meant to be torn off and used in an emergency.* Choose a pair of shoes you will wear to leave, pull up the inner sole of the shoe, and put the bottom of this paper in the shoe. Put the inner sole back on top of the paper so that it is hidden. You might also put a copy of this paper in a plastic bag and hide it under a rock in your yard or some other safe place.

This page may be reproduced for noncommercial use by health care professionals to share with clients. Any other reproduction is subject to JMWH approval. The information and recommendations appearing on this page are appropriate in most instances, but they are not a substitute for medical diagnosis. For specific information concerning your personal medical condition, JMWH suggests that you consult your health care provider.

-
1. Plan in advance a safe place to go—a shelter, the police, or the home of a friend.
 2. Plan how you would get to the safe place.
 3. Pack a bag with: 1 or 2 days of clothing for you and your children; important papers—birth certificates, social security card, school records; extra keys; some money; and prescription medications.
 4. Know who to call for help—see the other side of this paper for where to get help.
 5. Leave.