

Danger Assessment Questionnaire

Abuse between partners and ex-partners can lead to severe injury, or even murder. While you cannot predict what will happen, answering the questions below can help you think about whether you may be in danger of being harmed again, or of harming yourself. Your partner may not always be abusive or violent, but violence tends to recur and to be more dangerous each time it reoccurs.

If you answer yes to even one of the questions below, you may be in danger and should take measures to protect yourself. Review the information from your doctor or nurse. Make a safety plan and call support services for counseling and legal options.

1. Has the physical violence increased in frequency over the past year? _____ Yes No
2. Has the physical violence increased in severity over the past year _____ Yes No
and/or has a weapon or threat with a weapon been used?
3. Does your partner ever try to choke you? _____ Yes No
4. Is there a gun in the house? _____ Yes No
5. Has your partner ever forced you into sex when you did not wish to do so? _____ Yes No
6. Does your partner use drugs? That means "uppers" or amphetamines, _____ Yes No
speed, angel dust, cocaine, "crack," street drugs, heroin or mixtures.
7. Does your partner threaten to kill you and/or do you believe _____ Yes No
he is capable of killing you?
8. Is your partner drunk every day or almost every day? _____ Yes No
(In terms of quantity of alcohol.)
9. Does your partner control most of your daily activities? _____ Yes No
For instance, does he tell you with whom you can be friends,
how much money you can take shopping or when you can take the car?
10. Has your partner ever beat you while you were pregnant? _____ Yes No
(If never pregnant by your partner check here _____)
11. Is your partner violently and constantly jealous of you? _____ Yes No
For instance, does your partner say, "If I can't have you, no one can"?
12. Have you ever threatened or tried to commit suicide? _____ Yes No
13. Has your partner ever threatened or tried to commit suicide? _____ Yes No
14. Is your partner violent outside of the house? _____ Yes No

*Questionnaire adapted from Campbell, J. (1986). Nursing assessment for risk of homicide with battered women. *Advances in Nursing Science*, 8(4), 36-51. Used with permission.

I don't know how to help

If the abuse was that bad, she'd leave

JUST ASK

I'm a doctor, not a social worker

I don't have the time or resources

The abuser could sue me

It's a private matter

It doesn't happen in my practice

I could have to testify in court

Patients don't want me interfering

I can't make a difference.

Ask the question End the silence



Indiana
State
Medical
Association

*A reference guide to domestic violence
intervention for Indiana physicians*

Physicians's Guide to Confronting Domestic Violence

Make information accessible

Make domestic violence information available to your patients confidentially. Rest rooms are ideal locations for this information. Even when abusers accompany victims to appointments, they rarely accompany them to the rest room. This information should include local shelter phone numbers and a safety plan. It should be small enough to be tucked inside a person's clothing. Plastic information holders may be purchased from the Indiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence. The Domestic Violence Network will supply referral cards with local numbers and a safety plan for Marion and surrounding counties.

Screen universally

Make a point to ask all patients if they have been physically abused. Explain that you routinely ask this question. You might say, "Because violence is so common, I routinely ask about it. Have you been hit, kicked or shoved by someone?"

Appoint a staff member to assist

Designate one of your staff members as a domestic violence coordinator for your office. After you identify victims and their at-risk children, this person can provide a copy of the Danger Assessment Questionnaire (printed on back). He or she also can assist patients in filling out the form and ensure that it becomes a part of the patient's record.

Document injuries

Document all injuries every time you see a patient. Always document the patient's story and your opinion, even if a patient denies being abused. Identify the abuser by name and address if possible. Photograph all injuries. This information can later be used in court to establish a pattern of abuse. This is one of the most important things physicians can do to help domestic violence victims.

Supply safety information

Give identified victims safety information before they leave your office. This should include local shelter phone numbers and a safety plan. It may also include the National Domestic Violence Hotline number, (800) 799-SAFE. Note in the medical record that the patient was given this information.

Make reports

Physicians are required by law to report child and dependent adult abuse. Report child abuse to county Child Protection Services offices or law enforcement. Report dependent adult abuse to Adult Protection Services, the Indiana Department of Human Services or law enforcement. Work with your patients to gain their confidence, so that they will report domestic violence on their own.

Follow up

Continue to follow up with patients who have confided abuse to you. Ask, "Have you been hit or scared since the last time I saw you?" Identify at-risk children. Include all this information in the patient's medical record.

Just ask

Please don't make excuses. A busy day is not a good reason for leaving this question out of your routine history. Your patients and their children are depending on you.



**Ask the question
End the silence**

Safety Plan

- Establish a safety signal to alert a neighbor to call the police.
- Have a bag packed including the following items:
 - change of clothes for you and your children
 - address book with phone numbers of friends, relatives, shelters, doctors, lawyers, etc.
 - money (include change for pay phone)
 - extra keys to house and car
 - emergency medicines
 - important papers (checking and savings account numbers, lease, No Violent Contact Order/Protective Order, birth certificates, Social Security numbers for you, your children and partner, ADC/SSI/Medicaid cards, etc.)

REMEMBER: Avoid long-distance calls if possible (these calls can be traced). Advise school system, court and welfare not to give out any information.

Please copy for distribution

Resources for Doctors & Patients

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Adult Protection Services

251 E. Ohio St.
Indianapolis, IN 46204
(317) 327-5407
(800) 992-6978
Fax (317) 327-5404

Indiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence

1915 W. 18th St.
Indianapolis, IN 46202
(317) 917-3685
24-hour hotline:
(800) 332-7385

Domestic Violence Network of Greater Indianapolis

2620 Kessler Blvd. East Dr.
Suite 230
Indianapolis, IN 46220
(317) 475-6110

ELDER ABUSE

Bureau of Aging and In-home Services

Dept. of Human Services
Government Center South,
W-454
P.O. Box 7083
Indianapolis, IN 46207
(888) 673-0002