

**Responding to Intimate Partner Violence**

Women's Resources of Monroe County  
Local Domestic & Sexual Violence Crisis Center  
24/7 Hotline (570) 421-4200

**\*\*INFORMATION SESSION\*\***

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**Women's Resources of Monroe County**  
24/7 Hotline (570) 421-4200

- Adult, teen, & child counseling
- Temporary, emergency shelter
- Legal advocacy
- Medical accompaniment at ER
- Education/Training & Awareness Events

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**Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)**

- Includes physical violence, sexual violence, stalking and psychological aggression (including coercive tactics) by a current or former intimate partner (DOJ)
- May or may not be cohabitating
- Same sex or heterosexual partners
- Partners do not need to be sexually active
- Does not discriminate

<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/intimatepartnerviolence.pdf>

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### Warning Signs/Red Flags

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- Unexplained/poorly explained bruising, cuts, burns, etc.
- Self harm/mutilation
- Suicide ideations attempts
- Withdrawn
- Marked change in behavior/affect
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Alcohol and/or drug abuse

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### Health Concerns Associated with IPV

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## General Health Concerns

- Asthma
  - Bladder and kidney infections
  - Circulatory conditions
  - Cardiovascular disease
  - Fibromyalgia
  - Irritable bowel syndrome
  - Chronic pain syndromes
  - Central nervous system disorders
  - Gastrointestinal disorders
  - Joint disease
  - Migraines and headaches
- <http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/intimatepartnerviolence/consequences.html>

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## Reproductive Concerns

- Gynecological disorders
  - Pelvic inflammatory disease
  - Sexual dysfunction
  - Sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS
  - Delayed prenatal care
  - Preterm delivery
  - Pregnancy difficulties like low birth weight babies and perinatal deaths
  - Unintended pregnancy
- <http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/intimatepartnerviolence/consequences.html>

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## Psychological Concerns

- Anxiety
  - Depression
  - Symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
  - Antisocial behavior
  - Suicidal behavior in females
  - Low self-esteem
  - Inability to trust others, especially in intimate relationships
  - Fear of intimacy
  - Emotional detachment
  - Sleep disturbances
  - Flashbacks
  - Replaying assault in the mind
- <http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/intimatepartnerviolence/consequences.html>

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Guidelines For Responding to IPV

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What should providers ask?

- **Current and lifetime** exposure to IPV victimization
- Direct questions about physical, emotional and sexual abuse
  - “Do you feel safe in your relationship/home?”
  - Has your partner ever been physically violent with you?”
  - Has your partner ever forced you to do something you don’t want to do?”
- Discuss confidentiality and mandatory reporting laws

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Who should be routinely asked about IPV?

- **All** adolescent and adult patients regardless of cultural background
- Parents or caregivers of children in pediatric care

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## How should inquiry occur?

- **Routinely, regardless of the presence or absence of indicators of abuse (annually)**
- **Orally** as part of a face-to-face health care encounter
- Included in written or computer based health questionnaires
- **Direct & nonjudgmental** language that is culturally/linguistically appropriate
- **Private**: no friends, relatives (except children under 3) or caregivers should be present
- **Confidential**: prior to inquiry, patients should be informed of any reporting requirements or other limits to provider/patient confidentiality

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## When should inquiry occur?

- As part of the routine health history (e.g. social history/review of systems)
- As part of the standard health assessment (or at every encounter in urgent care)
- During every new patient encounter
- During periodic comprehensive health visits (assess for current IPV victimization only)
- During a visit for a new chief complaint (assess for current IPV victimization only)
- At every new intimate relationship (assess for current IPV victimization only)
- When signs and symptoms raise concerns or at other times at the provider's discretion

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## No Disclosure/Refusal

- Respect their decision
- Assure them you are there should the situation change
- Discuss risk factors

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**How To Respond To IPV Disclosures**

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**Health and Safety Assessment**

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- Goals
  - a) create a supportive environment in which the patient can discuss the abuse
  - b) enable the provider to gather information about health problems associated with the abuse
  - c) assess the immediate and long-term health and safety needs for the patient in order to develop and implement a response.
- Should occur immediately after disclosure

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**Health and Safety Assessment**

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- "Are you in immediate danger?"
- "Is your partner at the health facility now?"
- "Do you want to (or have to) go home with your partner?"
- "Do you have somewhere safe to go?"
- "Have there been threats or direct abuse of the children (if s/he has children)?"
- "Are you afraid your life may be in danger?"
- "Has the violence gotten worse or is it getting scarier? Is it happening more often?"

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## Interventions For Patients Experiencing IPV

- Provide validation
- Provide information
- Respond to safety issues
- Make referrals to local resources

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## Confidentiality

- Make a mandated report if required (varies state to state)
  - Safety plan with patient (is abuser in waiting room, home with children, will patient be safe to go home, etc.)
- Unnecessary breach of confidentiality may put patient in more danger
  - Employers, insurers, law enforcement agencies, and community members who discover abuse may discriminate against a victim or alert the perpetrator.

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## Follow Up & Continuity of Care

- Offer to make (at least one) follow up contact/ appointment with patient in a way that is safe for them
  - Continue to ask about current situation, review medical records
  - Conduct safety assessments
  - Communicate reassurance, validation, & concern
- Encourage patient to seek services through local domestic and sexual violence crisis center

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**Support**

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- Wish List Available on Amazon
  - <https://www.amazon.com/gp/registry/wishlist/?ie=UTF8&cid=A51EI-GBT925PK>

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**Questions?**

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