

Intimate Partner Violence Resources

Overview

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention describes intimate partner violence (IPV) as physical violence, sexual violence, stalking and psychological aggression (including coercive acts) by a current or former intimate partner. OB-GYNs are particularly well-suited to identify, assess and initiate intervention for women involved in abusive relationships, especially during pregnancy. Please reference the following information and resources about IPV when providing preconception, prenatal, postpartum and family planning care for your patients.

IPV Effects on Pregnancy

IPV is a strong risk factor for premature delivery, and living in an environment of violence is also associated with low birthweight. Beyond the physical trauma of violence, IPV might also be a marker for toxic stressors.

- In the US, more than 324,000 pregnant women are exposed to IPV every year.¹
- IPV happens to 6.3 percent of the Medicaid population, compared to 3.8 percent of all women.²
- Studies have repeatedly shown IPV increases the likelihood of preterm births by a factor of 3.³

Addressing IPV

RADAR, developed by Massachusetts Medical Society (MMS)⁴, can help you identify IPV in your patients. RADAR stands for:

- **R**emember to ask about IPV routinely.
- **A**sk your patient, in private, directly about violence with questions like, “At any time, has a partner hit, kicked or otherwise hurt or frightened you?”
- **D**ocument findings related to suspected IPV in the patient’s chart.
- **A**ssess your patient’s safety. Is it safe to return home? Find out if any weapons are kept in the house, if children are in danger and if the violence is escalating.
- **R**eview options with your patient. Know the types of referral resources in your community (e.g., shelters, support groups, legal advocates).

Screening Tools for IPV

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) recommends specific screenings during early and late stages of pregnancy. The agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ)/ U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) recommend six tools that showed the most sensitivity and specificity for IPV⁵, including:

- HITS (Hurt, Insult, Threaten, Scream)
- OVAT (Ongoing Violence Assessment Tool)
- STaT (Slapped, Things and Threaten)
- [HARK](#) (Humiliation, Afraid, Rape, Kick)
- CTQ-SF (Modified Childhood Trauma Questionnaire – Short Form)
- WAST (Woman Abuse Screen Tool)

The CDC has compiled a comprehensive list of these tools and other tested screenings available at cdc.gov > More > Injury, Violence & Safety > Violence Prevention > Intimate Partner Violence > [Intimate Partner Violence and Sexual Violence Victimization Assessment Instruments for Use in Healthcare Settings](#)

Recommended Interventions

Should your patient disclose victimization, you should:

- Call the police if your patient is in danger.
- Call Child Protective Services if a child is in danger.
- Encourage the patient to contact a local domestic violence shelter or call the state hotline.
- Advise the patient to get a protective order and ensure it extends to their workplace.
- Provide information, validation and support including how to access relevant websites, hotlines and local advocacy services.
- Recommend setting up a follow-up appointment.

Patient Resources

The National Domestic Violence Hotline

- **By phone:** Call 800-799-SAFE (7233) available 24 hours a day, seven days a week
- **Online:** thehotline.org offers online support via chat from 7 a.m. to 2 a.m. Central Time

National Sexual Assault Hotline

- **By phone:** 800-656-4673 (HOPE)
- **Online:** rainn.org

National Child Abuse Hotline/Childhelp

- **By phone:** 800-4-A-CHILD (1-800-422-4453)
- **Online:** childhelp.org

DomesticShelters.org

- **Domestic Violence Shelter Search:** domesticshelters.org

Printable Resources

- [Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies Poster](#)
- [Safety Plan Palm Cards](#)
- [National Health Resource Center on Domestic Violence Online Library](#)

We're Here to Help

If you have questions about the information in this guide or would like us to provide materials for your patients, please contact your UnitedHealthcare Clinical Practice Consultant. Thank you.

¹2015 National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS)

²Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS)- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) (Email inquiry, April 19, 2019)

³Preterm Birth: Causes, Consequences, and Prevention Richard E. Behrman, Adrienne Stith Butler, Editors, Committee on Understanding Premature Birth and Assuring Healthy Outcomes ISBN: 0-309-65898-5, 790 pages, 6 x 9, (2007)

⁴Massachusetts Medical Society

⁵ahrq.gov/professionals/prevention-chronic-care/healthier-pregnancy/preventive/partnerviolence.html#frequent