

MONTHLY MEMO:

Domestic Violence Against Women

overview

Domestic violence happens within an intimate relationship and is characterized by behavior from one partner seeking control. This can take on many forms, such as physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional. The consequences are often both physical and mental, with women leading the statistics of victimization.



Physical Consequences

- Victims often feel shame, embarrassment, confusion, and lowered self-esteem.
- Being a victim of domestic violence is linked to increased risk for PTSD, depression, and suicide.
- Exposure to trauma can lead to stress, fear, and isolation, which may lead to depression and suicidal thoughts or behaviors.
- Survivors of domestic violence may internalize verbal abuse from their partner. They may blame themselves for their situation or feel anger and resentment towards themselves.
- After enduring abuse, survivors may experience difficulties in new relationships as well. Other effects can be seen, such as shutting people out, not being able to trust others, and not wanting to do things that you once enjoyed.

Mental Health Implications

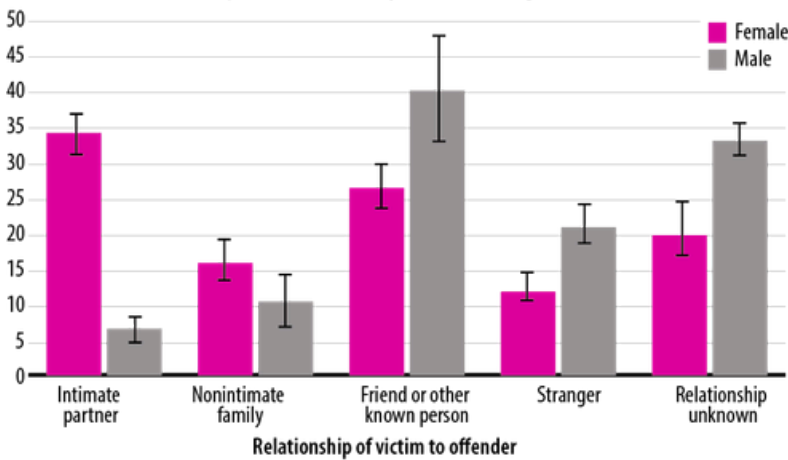
- The immediate physical impact can range from minor to serious injuries such as cuts and bruises, broken bones, and injuries to organs.
- Victims might also experience internal bleeding, gastrointestinal issues, STDs, and can sometimes lead to death.
- Traumatic brain injury is a serious risk of physical abuse and is caused by being hit on the head or falling and injuring your head.
- Domestic violence survivors are more likely to experience health problems and perceive their overall health as poor compared to those who have not experienced domestic violence.
- About 75% of female survivors experience some form of injury related to domestic violence. In addition to injuries, common physical symptoms include headaches, insomnia, chronic pain, gastrointestinal symptoms, chest pain, back pain, and pelvic pain.

statistics

- In 2021, the rate of a woman being murdered by an intimate partner (34%) was 5x more likely than for men (6%).
- 76% of all female murders were by someone they knew, be that a relative, partner, or household member
- In 2023 these rates rose, with intimate partners being responsible for 50% of female homicides to males (10%).
- Intimate partner violence contributes to 6% of all suicides.
- Over 47% of women have encountered contact sexual violence, physical violence, or stalking by an intimate partner during their lifetime.
- Break the Cycle reports around 75% of fatal victims of domestic violence are women

FIGURE 1

Percent of murder victims, by sex and relationship of victim to alleged offender, 2021



Signs of Domestic Violence

There are many signs and ways to tell if you, or a loved one, are being abused. They can be expressed psychologically, financially, physically and sexually. Some common signs are: extreme jealousy, insulting, demeaning, or shaming you in front of others, control over shared or personal finances, pressuring to perform sexual acts or use of drugs or alcohol, intimidation through violence, preventing communication with friends or family, and preventing one from making their own decisions.

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The Cycle of Domestic Violence

It is important to identify the cycle of domestic violence to help prevent any further harm to you or others. There are four commonly notable stages in domestic violence. First, the tension buildup stage is when the abuser creates stress and tension for the pair. Second, the incident. Essentially in the incident stage the abuser lashes out through forms of physical, sexual, verbal, and psychological abuse to try and assert their dominance over the other. In the reconciliation stage, the abuser will attempt to gaslight the victim and act like nothing happened as well as make attempts to try and apologize for whatever incident may have occurred. Last stage, known as the "honeymoon" stage, things seem to be back and better than ever, but most of the time this doesn't seem to be the case and the cycle may repeat again.

CYCLE OF ABUSE

1. TENSIONS BUILD

The abuser creates tension and the survivor's stress builds.

2. INCIDENT

The abuser lashes out through physical, verbal, psychological or sexual abuse tactics to dominate the survivor.

3. RECONCILIATION

The abuser makes excuses or attempts to apologize for the incident. Gaslighting is common, aka, "Nothing happened."

4. CALM

Things seem peaceful, maybe even better than before. But often, this doesn't last long before the cycle starts over.

Note: The Cycle of Abuse was originally created by psychologist Lenore Walker. The Cycle does not represent all cases of domestic violence.

DomesticShelters.org

*Sources & links to corresponding websites are cited at the end of this email.



SOURCES

[Bureau of Justice Statistics](#)

[Domestic Shelters Organization](#)

[Domestic Violence Statistics 2024](#)

[Habor Community Health](#)

[Psychiatry Association](#)

[PubMed Central](#)

[National Domestic Violence Hotline](#)