

## QUESTIONS HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS SHOULD ASK PATIENTS ABOUT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

**S**

What **STRESS** do you feel in your relationships?

Do you feel **SAFE** in your relationships/marriage?

Should I be concerned for your safety or for the safety of your children?

**A**

Are there situations in your relationship where you have felt **AFRAID**?

What happens when you and your partner disagree?

Has your partner ever threatened or **ABUSED** you or your children?

**F**

Do any of your **FRIENDS** or **FAMILY** know you have been hurt?

Do you think you could tell them? Would they give you support?

In case of an **EMERGENCY** do you and your children have a safe place to go?

**E**

If you are in danger now, would you like help in locating a shelter or in developing an emergency plan?

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*Modified from Mary Louise Ashur, M.D.,  
Journal of American Medical Association, 5/12/93*

## LOCAL REFERRAL NUMBERS

- Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles (562) 435-3501
- Long Beach Police Dept./Domestic Violence Unit (562) 570-7277
- Long Beach City Prosecutor (562) 570-5600
- Long Beach District Attorney (562) 491-6301

## SHELTERS

- WomenShelter, Long Beach (562) HER-HOME (437-4663)
- Su Casa, Lakewood/Artesia (562) 402-4888
- Rainbow Services, San Pedro (310) 547-9343
- Interval House, Seal Beach (714) 891-8121 or (562) 594-4555
- 1736 Family Crisis Center, Redondo Beach (562) 379-3620

## SUPPORT GROUPS

- Sexual Assault Crisis Agency (562) 989-0309 x 105
- CA Black Women's Health Project (310) 412-1828 x 15
- Jewish Family & Children's Service (562) 427-7916

## BATTERERS' TREATMENT PROGRAMS

- Alternatives to Violence, English only; Gay/Lesbian sensitive. (562) 493-1161
- Family Service, English/Spanish (562) 493-1496
- Options Counseling, English only; Day Group. (562) 989-0809

## HOTLINES

- Sexual Assault Crisis Agency Hotline (562) 989-5900 or (310) 644-3921
- L.A. County Domestic Violence Hotline (800) 978-3600
- L.A. County Child Abuse Hotline (800) 540-4000

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## SCREENING & REFERRALS

### DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & THE ROLE OF HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS

**Domestic/Intimate Violence** is the most common cause of injury to women in the United States. As a health care provider, **YOU** can help save a woman's life by knowing the signs and symptoms of domestic violence and by practicing appropriate screening and referral procedures.

### PHYSICAL SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

- Injuries to head and neck
- Multiple or repeated injuries or bruising at different stages of healing.
- Vague complaints about headaches or stomach pains.
- Intentional injuries to breast, abdomen, or genitals
- Miscarriage or any injury during pregnancy.

### BEHAVIORAL SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

- Delay in seeking medical care & seeks care in different facilities.
- Explanations inconsistent with the nature of the injury.
- Partner refuses to allow woman to be alone during examination.

### *Interview the Patient Alone*

An abused woman will not answer questions about being battered in front of her abuser. Doing so could put her or her children in danger of future abuse. Whenever possible, arrange for a female health care professional to interview and examine the patient alone.

### *Routinely Ask Questions about Battering*

Ask every patient (male and female) about the presence of violence in his/her home. You may want to begin by saying, "I'm so concerned about the amount of violence in families that I ask all my patients about it." Include screening questions in the social history, past medical history, review of symptoms, or history of current illness. See over for sample interview questions.

### *Be Supportive*

Most victims of domestic violence, assess the patient's safety and share your assessment with her. They may feel too ashamed or may not see a partner's behavior as battering. Let the patient know you are comfortable discussing the issue of intimate violence. When asked about abuse in a supportive and caring atmosphere, victims often respond. Even if the patient doesn't confide in you, your support could encourage her to get help when she is ready.

### *Make Referrals*

When you suspect violence, assess the patient's safety and share your assessment with her. Explain that domestic/intimate violence is against the law and that you are mandated to report the abuse to the police. Strongly encourage her to call one of the hotline numbers listed on this brochure. Give the patient a list of phone numbers for local resources including the hotline numbers for rape crisis, child abuse, and your local shelter.

### TEMPORARY RESTRAINING ORDERS

The Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles offers free services to eligible clients, helping them to obtain protective orders. The Domestic Violence Clinic takes no appointments. Clients are seen on a first come, first served basis. Clinic hours are Monday, Wednesday and Friday, please arrive at 9 a.m.. We are located at the Long Beach Courthouse, Room 40C, 415 West Ocean Boulevard, Long Beach, California 90802.