

Incorporating Domestic Violence Screening into Workers' Compensation and Occupational Medicine Histories

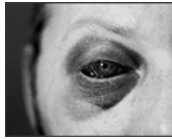
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Defining the Problem

- Domestic Violence is more than you think

- Not just physical
- Not always obvious
- Not always visible
- Not always women



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Defining the Problem

- Domestic Violence is multi-dimensional

- Physical Violence
- Emotional Violence
 - Verbal Abuse
 - Threats against others
 - Children
 - Pets
 - Family members
 - Cherished objects

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Defining the Problem

- Domestic Violence is multi-dimensional
 - Financial “Violence”
 - Limited access to funds
 - Economic enslavement
 - Bankruptcy
 - Coercion
 - “Guilt Trips”
 - Sexual Abuse
 - Forced sex

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Impact on the Work Place

- Assaults frequently occur at work
- Homicide was 2nd leading cause of workplace deaths of women in 2000
- DV causes missed time from work

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Magnitude of the Problem

- >4 Million women beaten or abused / yr
- Health related costs of sexual / physical assault by intimate partners >\$5.8 Bil
- Lost productivity and earnings \$1.8 Bil

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How This Presents

- Head, Neck, Face injury
- Orthopedic Claim – Upper Extremity
 - Distal Fracture / Spiral Fracture
 - Defensive wounds
 - Carpal Tunnel, Overuse Syndromes



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Red Flag Indicators

- Headaches
- Chronic Pain Syndromes
- TMJ
- Extreme Weight Loss / Malnutrition
- Psychological Injuries

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How This Presents

- Often advanced warning
 - Someone knows something is going on
 - Victims often in denial
 - Employers / Co-workers often in denial
 - "don't want to get involved"

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Program Development

- Screening for DV by Occ Med
 - Typically looks only for specific trauma
 - MVA
 - Slip and Fall
 - Accidental injuries
 - Typically doesn't look behind the workplace injury
 - Victims often deny / rationalize/ blame self

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Program Development

- Occupational Medicine / Forensic History
 - Pushed or shoved you?
 - Thrown objects at you?
 - Refused help or care when sick or injured?
 - Threatened with a weapon?
 - Threatened harm to loved ones or treasured objects?

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Program Development

- Use Established Screening Instruments
 - LifeSpan (www.lifespan.org)
 - JHSON (www.dangerassessment.org)
 - HITS (Sherin 1998, Fam.Med)
 - WAST (www.ifponline.com)

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Program Development

- Have resource info at work and clinic
 - Victims have limited access to communications at home
 - Risky for victims to have brochures
 - Can provoke violent reaction in abuser

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Handout

If you are being abused at home ... you are not alone.

Millions of women just like you are victims of abuse or violence in their homes.

Remember:

- Abusing you may or may not mean your partner is violent.
- It's possible for you to control your situation.
- You have the right to live in a safe and healthy home.

What you can do to protect yourself:

- Use your own judgment about when to leave to get away from an abusive situation.
- Contact your local domestic violence program to help you make a plan.
- Get your own car, a phone, and a place to stay.

We care about your health and well-being. We are here for you.

Call 911 if you are in danger or need help.

For more information, contact the Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women at 800-853-2688, or visit our Web site at www.oava.gov.

Office on Violence Against Women
U.S. Department of Justice

California Workforce Training Center

1-800-725-SAFE

Source: Photo credited to Sherry Matthews-Thompson/ISTOCK

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Evaluation

- Identification of abuse cases / intervention
- Referrals to assistance organizations
- Reduced Group Health / Workers' Comp \$
- Reduced absenteeism
- Increased productivity

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Justification

- Uneasy about asking sensitive questions ?

- US Preventive Services Task Force
Asking questions about abuse is justifiable

- High prevalence of abuse
- Value in identifying victims
- Low cost to screen
- Low risk to screen in that setting

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Justification

- Uneasy about asking sensitive questions ?

- American Academy of Family Physicians
- American College of Physicians
- American Medical Association
- Am. Col. Gynecologists and Obstetricians

Recommend screening for Domestic Violence

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Justification

- Uneasy about asking sensitive questions ?

- JCAHO

- Mandates all hospitals screen for DV

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RESOURCES AND REFERENCES

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DIMENSIONS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

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