

Intimate Partner Violence: Care Instructions



Overview

If you want to save this information but don't think it is safe to take it home, see if a trusted friend can keep it for you. Plan ahead. Know who you can call for help, and memorize the phone number.

Be careful online too. Your online activity may be seen by others. Do not use your personal computer or device to read about this topic. Use a safe computer, such as one at work, a friend's home, or a library.

Intimate partner violence—a type of domestic abuse—is different from an argument now and then. It is a pattern of abuse that one person may use to control another person's behavior. It may start with threats and name-calling. Then, it may lead to more serious acts, like pushing and slapping. The abuse also may occur in other areas. For example, the abuser may withhold money or spend a partner's money without their knowledge.

Abuse can cause serious harm. You are more likely to have a long-term health problem from the injuries and stress of living in a violent relationship. People who are sexually abused by their partners have more sexually transmitted infections and unplanned pregnancies. Anyone who is abused also faces emotional pain. Anyone can be abused in relationships. In some relationships, both people use abusive behavior.

If you are pregnant, abuse can cause problems such as poor weight gain, infections, and bleeding. Abuse during this time may increase your baby's risk of low birth weight, premature birth, and death.

Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety. Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if you are having problems. It's also a good idea to know your test results and keep a list of the medicines you take.

How can you care for yourself at home?

- If you do not have a safe place to stay, discuss this with your doctor before you leave.

- Have a plan for where to go, how to leave your home, and where to stay in case of an emergency. Do not tell your partner about your plan. Contact:
 - The National Domestic Violence Hotline toll-free at 1-800-799-7233. They can help you find resources in your area.
 - Your local police department, hospital, or clinic for information about shelters and safe homes near you.
- Talk to a trusted friend or neighbor, a counselor, or a faith leader. Do not feel that you have to hide what happened.
- Teach your children how to call for help in an emergency.
- Be alert to warning signs, such as threats, heavy alcohol use, or drug use. This can help you avoid danger.
- If you can, make sure that there are no guns or other weapons in your home.

When should you call for help?



Call 911 anytime you think you may need emergency care. For example, call if:

- You or someone else has just been abused.
- You think you or someone else is in danger of being abused.

Watch closely for changes in your health, and be sure to contact your doctor if you have any problems.

Where can you learn more?

Go to <https://www.healthwise.net/patiented>

Enter **G282** in the search box to learn more about "**Intimate Partner Violence: Care Instructions**".

©2006-2023 Healthwise, Incorporated.

This care instruction is for use with your licensed healthcare professional. If you have questions about a medical condition or this instruction, always ask your healthcare professional. Healthwise, Incorporated disclaims any warranty or liability for your use of this information.