

What everyone should know about Domestic Violence from



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Q:

What exactly is dating/domestic violence?

According to the National Center for Victims of Crime, domestic violence is the willful intimidation, assault, battery, sexual assault or other abusive behavior perpetrated by an intimate partner against the other. Violence in any form (either physical, emotional or verbal) between two people in a dating relationship is considered dating violence. According to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, 1 in 4 women will experience some kind of domestic violence in her lifetime. Common examples of domestically violent behavior are belittlement, humiliation, control or physical abuse against a romantic partner.

Top 3 Tips for Dealing with Domestic Violence

1 Take the "small stuff" seriously

In most cases, the abuse starts out small and just escalates over time. Sometimes women think mildly controlling or obsessive behavior is flattering. After a jealous outburst from a partner, it's not uncommon for a girl to think to herself, "Wow, he got really emotional about me talking to that other guy. He must really like me!" Most humans have some jealous reflex, but we also have a choice of how to best handle our emotions.

2 Don't wait for it to get better

Sometimes women in domestic violence situations engage in false hope, thinking the behavior will stop after marriage or kids. Sadly, these commitments most often only make the relationship more abusive. Women can become trapped in relationships in which their partner abuses them and cuts them off from their support network and any access to finances. It's a slow process of devastation that is well-planned on the abuser's part.

3 Ask for help if when you need it

While being in an abusive situation might make you feel isolated, scared and helpless, there is definitely hope. Call the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1 (800) 799-SAFE. These trained professionals will help assess your situation and give you reliable guidance on how to handle it. During this difficult time, be sure to get support from family and friends. Fill your life with people who will pick you up when you feel insecure or discouraged.

Quiz:

Does your significant other do any of these things?

- Monitor your daily activities and ask tons of questions when you get home
- Accuse you of cheating
- Try to isolate you from your family and friends
- Tell you what to wear
- Discourage you from getting involved in college activities or social groups
- Verbally belittle or make fun of you publicly or privately
- Become upset or violent, especially after getting drunk
- Try to control your money
- Destroy your personal items or sentimental things
- Threaten you if you leave
- Punch, slap, push or kick you (or any other physical abuse)
- Force you to have sex when you don't want to

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