

## What You Should Do

- *Never* be provoked into retaliating with physical or verbal abuse yourself.
- *Always* talk to your doctor about your health and seek medical attention for any injuries. If you are seeing a mental health counselor, tell them about your domestic violence concerns. They may not ask. Many counselors believe it only happens to women.
- *Always* keep a record of dates and times of incidents and keep copies of medical records and police reports. Take photographs of injuries. Keep these documents in a safe place.
- *Always* take legal advice.
- *Insist* that police record your injuries and take a report and that it is recorded accurately.
- *Don't keep silent.* Seek out counseling for yourself, contact official domestic violence and victims advocates offices where available, tell a friend.
- *Recognize that it happens to men as well.* You are not alone. You may have to "put on your male hero hat" however, and make an effort to find others. You can even start your own support group with the help of a concerned mental health professional. Don't be afraid to ask for help from others. It is not a sign of weakness; it is a sign of strength.
- *Find help.* Stop Abuse For Everyone™ website [www.safe4all.org](http://www.safe4all.org) has a list of resources which may indicate what kinds of help are available in your area. Listings are frequently updated. *If there is a helping organization in your area, contact them for information on this brochure or should contact them directly.* The SAFE website also has a support/discussion group which you can join.
- *Plan for the worst.* Have a safe and secret place to go. Have emergency money ready.
- **Don't make excuses for the abuser's violence—get help and leave!**

- *Volunteer.* When you are safe, volunteer with the organization that gave you this brochure, or Stop Abuse For Everyone™, and help others in similar situations.
- *Read more about it.* The first book devoted to this issue features facts, personal stories from real men, examines society's views about male victims and domestic violence, proposes solutions, and offers a detailed and comprehensive self-help chapter. You can order *Abused Men-The Hidden Side of Domestic Violence* by Philip W. Cook through your local bookstore, through [www.safe4all.org](http://www.safe4all.org) or by calling Greenwood/Praeger Publishing at 1-800-225-5800.

The helping agency that gave you this brochure can be contacted here:



Stop Abuse For Everyone™ is a non-profit 501(c)3 charitable organization. P.O. Box 95, Turin, OH 47062. [www.safe4all.org](http://www.safe4all.org)  
 Your tax-deductible charitable contribution to SAFE is needed and appreciated!

## ARE YOU

(Or Someone You Care About)



# SAMPLE

MALE VICTIM  
 OF INTIMATE PARTNER  
 VIOLENCE?

Yes, it *does* happen to men! According to the largest published survey of U.S. couples, *two million men a year* are severely assaulted by their female mates. That's a man kicked, bitten, hit with a fist or object, beaten up, and had a knife gun or other deadly weapon used or threatened to be used against them every 15.7 seconds!\*. A similar Canadian survey shows 270,000 male victims of severe domestic violence a year.\*\*

\*National Family Violence Survey, (1989) funded by the National Institute of Mental Health. Also, see Violence Against Women Act Survey (1998) which found 835,000 male victims a year in the U.S. or nearly 40% of the total domestic violence victims.

\*\* University of Calgary, Dept. of Sociology. 1990.

Surveys also show that gay men experience domestic violence at a rate similar to that of heterosexual couples.

### What are the signs of domestic violence?

- Do you change your behavior because you are afraid that violence might result if you don't? Do you often have the feeling of "walking on eggshells"?
- Do you feel that no matter what you do, you can't do anything right? Does your partner tell you that you are worthless, unattractive, that no one else would want you?
- Has your partner ever hurt or threatened to hurt you or your children?
- Does your spouse abuse drugs or alcohol? Do they become out of control get extremely angry and then come home up afterwards? Do you consistently worry about the next time you get high?
- Has your partner ever tried to keep you from getting medical help?
- Do they prevent you from sleeping at night? Are you worried about being "kicked in the rear" while sleeping?
- Has your partner ever deliberately destroyed or damaged something of value to you?
- Does your partner throw things at you or break objects during an argument?
- Is your partner extremely jealous? Does your

intimate partner unjustly accuse you of flirting with others or having affairs? Is it hard for you to maintain relationships with others because your intimate partner doesn't approve of them?

- Has your partner ever forced you to have sex or made you do things during sex that made you feel uncomfortable?
- Does your partner sometimes spend large sums of money and refuse to tell you why or what the money was spent on? Do you know what the family's assets are and where important records are kept? If you wanted to know, would your partner make it difficult for you to do so?
- Has your intimate partner ever kicked you in the testicles?
- Has your partner ever bit you, hit you with a hard object, scratched you, slapped you, hit you with their fist, thrown hard objects at you, or threatened you with a knife or gun?
- Does your partner frequently threaten you with never seeing your children again if you leave- because "women always win custody"?

If any of the above has happened to you, you are experiencing domestic abuse. If several of the things above have been happening, you are in severe danger.

### How Men Cope

- *Take on an "I can handle it" attitude.* Even if you have been hurt much worse physically playing sports or other activities, this is not the case as you are physically attacked by your intimate partner. It hurts emotionally as well as physically. Continuing this pattern can result in depression, substance abuse, loss of confidence, and suicidal thoughts. It can also result in death at the hands of your partner or by someone your partner has induced to kill you.
- *"Men Don't Tell."* The actual title of a CBS TV movie about male victims of domestic violence. Keeping silent and not confiding to a friend, relative, or health-care professional is a common reaction of both male and female victims of

domestic violence because it's embarrassing. Men, however, face a greater degree of disbelief and ridicule than do most women in this situation, which helps reinforce the silence.

They make excuses for apparent injuries and explain them as due to accidents or being hurt while playing sports when friends or medical personnel ask.

- *Hiding From it.* Men often escape from a bad home life that they are afraid of by spending extra time at work, staying in "their space" (garage/den) at home, or even sleeping in the car or at a friend's place.

### Why They Stay

- *Fear of failure* - Men have been told that "to be a man" they must be responsible and be a provider. If they leave the family, they are abandoning responsibility and they see themselves as failures as to what a man is supposed to be.
- *Fear for the Children* - Many men stay in abusive relationships because they feel they can act as protector for the children from abuse. They fear leaving because they assume the legal system will not grant them custody because they are a man, and fear that visitation in the hands of a controlling spouse will never be easy, or that they may never see their children again.
- *Few resources* - There are few shelters available for male victims of domestic violence, but hardly any such services for men in the U.S. or Canada. Sometimes abused men call the authorities but find there is no help available and are even treated rudely. Sometimes men call police, but even if they are the only party with observed injuries, they are told to leave the house, not their spouse. Sometimes the police are very helpful.