

Relationship Check-Up

Did you know that women abuse can start during pregnancy? If you were abused in the past, it can get worse once you are pregnant. The abuse will not stop once the baby is born.

Abusive relationships can mean any relationship that involves physical, psychological, verbal, sexual, spiritual, or financial abuse.

Physical Abuse

- slapping, hitting, shoving, biting, hair pulling, throwing things
- threatening someone with a weapon
- holding someone against their will
- denying her access to her health care provider
- taking away aids such as a guide dog or cane.

Psychological or Emotional Abuse

- threatening to take the children away from her
- stalking or harassing her
- controlling her time and what she does
- isolating her from family and friends
- threatening to hurt someone she cares about

Verbal Abuse

- Calling her names and other verbal means of attacking her self esteem
- Humiliating her in the presence of others

Sexual Abuse

- Denying sexual intimacy or forcing her into unwanted sexual acts
- Forcing her to get pregnant or have an abortion
- Infecting her with a sexually transmitted infections

Spiritual Abuse

- Belittling her spiritual needs
- Not allowing her to attend a place of worship

Financial Abuse

- Limiting access to family finances
- Using her credit cards without her permission

Relationship Quiz

1. Do you find that your partner doesn't want you to see other friends or participate in activities that do not include him/her?
2. Does your partner criticize the way you dress, talk, look?
3. Are there times when your partner's teasing hurts your feelings?
4. Does your partner make fun of you in front of your friends or family?
5. Do you decide together what to do when together?
6. Do you ever feel pressured to do something?
7. Has your partner ever hit or slapped you?
8. Do you feel free to say "No" without having to explain your reasons?
9. Does your partner help you feel good about yourself?

If you answered yes to any questions but 5, 8 and 9 there are abusive elements to your relationship. Abuse often starts or gets worse during pregnancy. Talk to someone you trust.

Where to get help

If you are an abused woman, call one of the 24-hours Crisis Lines listed below:

- **Assaulted Women's Help Line**
1-866-863-0511
- **Gillian's Place**
905-684-8331
- **Niagara Region Sexual Assault Centre**
(Carsa Inc.)
905-682-4584
- **Women's Place of South Niagara, Inc.**
905-788-0113 or 905-356-5800

To find a shelter in your area,
visit: www.shelternet.ca