

**The High Cost of Intimate  
Partner Violence  
and Sexual Assault:  
A Public Health Concern**

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**Faculty**

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**Intimate Partner Violence**

- Also called domestic violence, battering, or spouse abuse
- Is violence committed by a spouse, ex-spouse, or current or former boyfriend or girlfriend
  - It can occur among heterosexual or same-sex couples

**Intimate Partner Violence  
as a Health Concern**

- IPV results in physical injury, psychological trauma, and sometimes death
- The consequences of IPV can last a lifetime

**Intimate Partner Violence  
as a Health Concern**

- Abused women experience more physical health problems and have a higher occurrence of depression, drug and alcohol abuse, and suicide attempts than do women who are not abused

**Intimate Partner Violence  
as a Health Concern**

- Abused women also use health care services more often

### **Injuries / Losses Related to IPV**

- Based on NVAWS (National Violence Against Women Survey) data, an estimated 5.3 million IPV victimizations occur among U.S. women ages 18 and older each year
- This violence results in nearly 2.0 million injuries, more than 550,000 of which require medical attention

### **Injuries / Losses Related to IPV**

- In addition, IPV victims also lose a total of nearly 8.0 million days of paid work—the equivalent of more than 32,000 full-time jobs—and nearly 5.6 million days of household productivity as a result of the violence

### **Rapes, Physical Assaults, and Injuries**

- The National Violence Against Women's Survey (NVAWS) found that:
  - 36.2% of the women who were raped by an intimate partner sustained an injury (other than the rape itself) during their most recent victimization

### **Rapes, Physical Assaults, and Injuries**

- 41.5% of physical assault victims were injured

### **IPV and Rape: The Medical Response**

- Of the estimated 322,230 intimate partner rapes each year, 116,647 result in injuries (other than the rape itself)
  - 36,161 require medical care

### **IPV and Rape: The Medical Response**

- Of the nearly 4.5 million physical assault victimizations, more than 1.8 million cause injuries
  - 519,031 require medical care
- Nearly 15,000 rape victimizations and more than 240,000 physical assault victimizations result in hospital ED visits

### **IPV and Rape: The Medical Response**

- Multiple medical care visits are often required for each IPV victimization
  - For example, victims of both rape and physical assault averaged 1.9 hospital ED visits per victimization, resulting in an estimated 486,151 visits each year to hospital EDs

### **Monetary Costs of IPV**

- The costs of intimate partner rape, physical assault, and stalking exceed \$5.8 billion each year
  - Nearly \$4.1 billion is for direct medical and mental health care services

### **Monetary Costs of IPV**

- The total costs of IPV also include nearly \$0.9 billion in lost productivity from paid work and household chores for victims of nonfatal IPV
  - \$0.9 billion in lifetime earnings lost by victims of IPV homicide

### **Monetary Costs of IPV**

- The largest proportion of the costs is derived from physical assault victimization because that type of IPV is the most prevalent
- The largest component of IPV-related costs is health care
  - Accounts for more than two-thirds of the total costs

### **Medical Consequences of Abuse**

- Battering is the single most common cause of injury to women
- Up to 35% of women presenting with any complaint to the ED are there because of symptoms related to partner abuse

### **Medical Consequences of Abuse**

- Approximately one-third of pregnant women are abused
  - Battering of pregnant women is thought to cause more birth defects than all diseases combined for which children are immunized
- Battered women account for 14% of women seen in Internal Medicine clinics

### **Medical Consequences of Abuse**

- Medical expenses from IPV total more than \$5 billion annually

### **Clinical Findings in Emergency Rooms**

- Contusions, abrasions, fractures, sprains, burns
- Face, neck, chest, sexual organ, and abdominal injuries
- Multiple sites of injury
- Repeat and chronic injuries

### **Clinical Findings in Emergency Rooms**

- Any injury when the patient's explanation is not consistent with the type of injury presented

### **Mental Health Problems and Abuse**

- Women are drastically more likely to develop a mental disorder at some point in their lives if they have been the victim of rape, sexual assault, stalking, or intimate-partner violence

### **Mental Health Problems and Abuse**

- Experiencing abuse or an attack can lead to serious mental health problems
  - Post-traumatic Stress Disorder
  - Depression
  - Anxiety

### **MH Care Costs and Rape**

- According to NVAWS estimates, one-third (33.0%) of IPV rapes result in the victim's speaking with a psychologist, psychiatrist, or other mental health professional about the incident

### **MH Care Costs and Rape**

- On average, each incident requires 12.4 mental health care visits, for a total of 1.3 million mental health visits per year, at a mean cost of \$78.86 per visit

### **MH Care Costs and Rape**

- The mean mental health care cost per incident of IPV rape is \$323
  - The mean cost per IPV rape among victims who actually receive treatment is \$978

### **MH Care Costs and Rape**

- Victims pay for more than one-third of mental health care services
  - Private health insurers pay only slightly more than victims

### **MH Care and Physical Assault**

- More than one-quarter (26.4%) of IPV physical assaults result in the victim's speaking with a psychologist, psychiatrist, or other mental health professional, according to NVAWS estimates

### **MH Care and Physical Assault**

- On average, each incident requires 12.9 visits, for a total of 15.2 million visits annually, at a mean cost of \$78.86 per visit

### **MH Care and Physical Assault**

- The mean mental health care cost per incident of IPV physical assault, is \$269
  - Among victims who actually receive treatment, the mean cost per incident is \$1,017
- Victims pay for approximately one-third of the costs

**MH Care and Stalking**

- NVAWS estimates indicate that more than half a million women are stalked by intimate partners each year
  - 43% of these victims seek mental health care services, at an average of 9.6 visits per person

**MH Care and Stalking**

- That's a total of nearly 2.1 million mental health care visits related to IPV stalking annually at a mean cost of \$71.87 per visit

**MH Care and Stalking**

- The mean mental health care cost per stalking incident by an intimate partner is \$294
  - The mean cost per stalking incident among victims who actually receive treatment is \$690

**MH Care and Stalking**

- Private insurance pays for 34.7% of this mental health care
  - Victims pay for 32.0%

**Reactions to Trauma**

- Feeling hopeless about the future
- Feeling detached or unconcerned about others
- Having trouble concentrating or making decisions
- Feeling jumpy and getting startled easily at sudden noises

**Reactions to Trauma**

- Feeling on guard and constantly alert
- Having disturbing dreams and memories or flashbacks
- Having work or school problems

### **Physical Reactions to Trauma**

- Stomach upset and trouble eating
- Trouble sleeping and feeling very tired
- Pounding heart, rapid breathing, feeling edgy
- Sweating
- Severe headache if thinking of the event

### **Physical Reactions to Trauma**

- Failure to engage in exercise, diet, safe sex, regular health care
- Excess smoking, alcohol, drugs, food
- Having your ongoing medical problems get worse

### **Emotional Reactions to Trauma**

- Feeling nervous, helpless, fearful, sad
- Feeling shocked, numb, and not able to feel love or joy
- Avoiding people, places, and things related to the event
- Being irritable or having outbursts of anger

### **Emotional Reactions to Trauma**

- Becoming easily upset or agitated
- Blaming yourself or having negative views of oneself or the world
- Distrust of others, getting into conflicts, being over controlling
- Being withdrawn, feeling rejected or abandoned
- Loss of intimacy or feeling detached

### **Abuse and PTSD**

- Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
  - PTSD is a condition that can develop after you have gone through a life-threatening event
  - If you have PTSD, you may have trouble keeping yourself from thinking over and over about what happened to you

### **Abuse and PTSD**

- You may try to avoid people and places that remind you of the trauma
- You may feel numb
- You might find that you have trouble relaxing
- You may startle easily and you may feel on guard most of the time

### **Abuse and Depression**

- Depression involves feeling down or sad more days than not
- If you are depressed, you may lose interest in activities that used to be enjoyable or fun
- You may feel low in energy and be overly tired

### **Abuse and Depression**

- You may feel hopeless or in despair, and you may think that things will never get better
- Depression is more likely when you have had losses such as the death of close friends

### **Abuse and Depression**

- If you are depressed, at times you might think about hurting or killing yourself
  - For this reason, getting help for depression is very important

### **Abuse and Suicide**

- Suicidal thoughts
  - Trauma and personal loss can lead a depressed person to think about hurting or killing themselves

### **The Impact of IPV / Assault on Children**

- Statistics show that more than three million children each year witness violence in their homes
- Domestic Violence / IPV affects every member of the family, including children

### **The Impact of IPV / Assault on Children**

- Family violence creates a home environment where children live in constant fear
- Children who witness are affected in ways similar to children who are physically abused
- Often, they are unable to establish nurturing bonds with either parent



### **Emotional Impact**

- **Grief for family and personal losses**
- **Shame, guilt, and self blame**
- **Confusion about conflicting feelings toward parents**
- **Fear of abandonment, or expressing emotions, the unknown or personal injury**

### **Emotional Impact**

- **Anger**
- **Depression and feelings of helplessness**
- **Powerlessness**
- **Embarrassment**

### **Physical Impact**

- **Somatic complaints, headaches, and stomach aches**
- **Nervous, anxious, short attention span**
- **Tired and lethargic**
- **Frequently ill**
- **Poor personal hygiene**

### **Physical Impact**

- **Regression in development**
- **High risk play**
- **Self abuse**