



Wake Forest University School of Medicine
**Women's Health Center of Excellence for Research,
Leadership, Education**
Fact Sheet

Facts on Domestic Violence

- ▶ Nearly half of American women will be beaten or abused by a current or former partner, spouse, or lover at some point in their lives.
- ▶ Nearly one third of the serious injuries to women treated at hospital emergency rooms are due to domestic violence, the leading cause of injury in women.
- ▶ One in 12 pregnant women in the U.S. is beaten by a partner, spouse or lover.

Domestic violence is a term used to describe abusive behavior that occurs in intimate relationships. Domestic violence happens when one person continually uses force to control and break the will of another person. Domestic violence occurs among all age groups, all races, and all religions - it doesn't matter how much money or education people have or what type of work they do to earn a living. In most cases, the person who is hurt is a woman. However, domestic violence is NOT limited to intimate relationships between men and women; it also happens in same-sex relationships.

Domestic violence is a behavior that is chosen by a batterer in order to exercise power and control over another person. The batterer, and only the batterer, decides to use abusive and violent behavior. A battered woman cannot make her abuser stop being violent and/or abusive. She does not ask for, invite or provoke her abuser to be violent toward her. The batterer does not become violent because of the use or abuse of alcohol or drugs.

If you are being abused or know someone who is being abused, please contact Family Services toll free at 1-800-316-5513 or the crisis line at (336)723-8125. If you are outside the Triad area, please contact 911 or your local Family Services office.

This information is general. If your doctor tells you something different, follow his or her instructions.

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For more information about women's health issues, stop by our Resource Center at 2000 West First Street, Piedmont Plaza II, 1st Floor, Winston Salem, NC 27104, visit our website at wfubmc.edu/whcoe or contact us at (336) 713-4220.