

I'm in an abusive relationship... what should I do?

If you recognise any of the warning signs then you may be in a dangerous situation. You can call the Domestic Violence Prevention Centre, Gold Coast on 07 5532 9000 for free confidential support, counselling and referrals to local resources (you don't have to give your name or any identifying information). You may also be able to talk about emergency strategies you can use if you decide to leave or if you find yourself in an emergency situation. Also let your doctor or healthcare provider know your situation so you can get all the help and support you need.

Call 000 immediately if you ever fear that your partner is about to hurt you.

How can I approach a pregnant friend who I think is in an abusive relationship?

Share your concerns with her and ask how you can help. Encourage her to reach out for support and counselling. No one deserves to be abused. Remind your friend that the abuse is not her fault but her partner's problem and his alone.

Encourage her to talk to a domestic violence counsellor and to confide in her healthcare

provider. Let her know that she is not alone, and try to remain non-judgmental and supportive.

IN AN EMERGENCY DIAL: 000



Domestic Violence Prevention Centre Gold Coast Inc.

Contact us on: 07 5532 9000
or 07 5591 4222

info@domesticviolence.com.au

PO Box 1075, Southport
Queensland 4215

www.domesticviolence.com.au

Other useful phone numbers

DVconnect - Womensline

(24 hours, 7 days) 1800 811 811

Women's Legal Service

1800 677 278 or (07) 3392 0670

Legal Aid & Women's Legal Aid Queensland

1300 651 188

Multicultural Families Organisation (MFO)

(07) 5571 0381

Police Prosecutions

(07) 5571 4383

Queensland Law Society

(07) 3842 5842

Southport Magistrates Court

1300 516 700

Coolangatta Magistrates Court

(07) 5569 3040



DVPC is located on Kombumerri Country on the traditional lands of the Kombumerri Saltwater people. We acknowledge and pay respects to the Kombumerri traditional custodians and their Elders, past and present.



This brochure is funded by the Department of
Child Safety, Youth and Women.

Domestic violence and pregnancy



Produced by the Domestic Violence Prevention
Centre Gold Coast Inc. (GCDVPC Inc.)
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Understanding domestic violence

Women's safety is at greater risk in the home than on the street or in public. Most violence in the home is committed by men. Women and children are most often the victims.

Domestic violence is any behaviour used by one partner in an intimate relationship against the other which causes physical, sexual or psychological damage or causes the other to live in fear. Threats are a form of violence.

It is estimated approximately one in four women will be affected by domestic violence at some time in their lives.

Domestic violence and pregnancy

Pregnancy is supposed to be a time of peace and safety. A time where the family turns its thoughts towards raising the next generation and growing a healthy baby. Unfortunately, for many women pregnancy can also be the beginning of domestic violence in their lives.



Can pregnancy change an abusive partner?

It's unlikely. Experts say that pregnancy is more likely to have the opposite effect on an abusive partner. One out of 5 abused women report her partner first abused her during pregnancy. Between 5% and 8% of pregnant women report suffering abuse during pregnancy.

Even if your partner seems to react positively to the news that you're pregnant, there is no guarantee that he won't become violent again at some point. If a man strikes his partner once, he's likely to do so again. Pregnancy can cause stress in any relationship, and it's a common trigger of domestic violence.

What are the chances that my partner will harm my baby?

Abuse is dangerous not only to you but also to your baby, especially if you sustain a blow to the abdomen. Studies show that intimate partner violence during pregnancy is associated with an increased risk of miscarriage, low birth weight babies, and fetal injury or even death.

Unfortunately, the situation isn't likely to get better once your baby is born. Babies and toddlers react to fear and aggression in their environment; this is displayed as excessive irritability, clinginess, sleeping and feeding problems.

Warning signs you may be in danger

- Does your partner act like he is jealous of the baby?
- Does your partner threaten to take your baby when it is born?
- Does your partner try to harm your baby by striking, pushing, poking, or twisting your stomach?
- Does your partner prevent you from seeing your doctor or obstetrician?
- Does your partner question the paternity of the baby saying he is not the father?
- Does your partner call you names such as 'stupid', 'bitch', 'fat', 'ugly'?
- Does your partner check up on you by calling, driving by, or getting someone else to?
- Does your partner blame you for his problems or his bad mood?
- Does your partner get angry so easily that you feel like you're 'walking on egg-shells'?
- Does your partner hit walls, drive dangerously, or do other things to scare you?
- Have you lost friends or no longer see some of your family because of your partner?
- Does your partner accuse you of being interested in someone else?
- Does your partner threaten to kill you or himself if you leave?