

# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE INCIDENCE

Within a physician practice, it is estimated that 0.3-4% of patients are likely to have suffered severe violence while 8-22% have suffered any form of violence at the hands of an abuser. In the same practice, up to 22% of patients might be perpetrators of violence. Eighty-five percent (85%) of this violence is directed towards women. (Journal of American Medical Women's Association, Vol 51, 3, 1996, 77-82)



According to the Protective Order Project, 5 to 6 patients in a 1,000 patient practice are likely to have suffered domestic violence. However, this number is dependent on a number of factors, not the least of which is the number of patients seen by a practice. It is important to remember that victims and perpetrators can be of any sex, age, socioeconomic background or religion. So "having a practice in a well to do area" is no guarantee that a practitioner will not treat individuals in domestic violence situations.

Up to 90% of women do not report the problem to their physician. Asian and Pacific Island women are less likely to report abuse than other groups and Hispanic women are less likely to report rape. The rate of abuse of black women is 4.5 times that of white women.

Therefore, while many physicians overlook the necessity of screening their patients, it is vital to routinely include this assessment.

To obtain more information, go to <http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/domesticviolence/> or <http://toolkit.ncjrs.org/>. Copies of Domestic Violence Brochures and additional material can be obtained at <http://www.fcadv.org/>.