DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT

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Statistics on Violence Against Women

• 1 out of every 2 women in Canada has been physically or sexually assaulted at least once (from the age of 16). This figure represents 51% of 10 million women.
• 1 in 3 women experience physical assault, from threats of assault to attacks causing serious injury.
• 39% of women in Canada experience sexual
Statistics on Violence Against Women, #2

- assault, from unwanted sexual touching (15%) to sexual violence involving wounding, maiming or life endangerment
- Children witness violence in 4 out of 10 marriages where violence is reported
- More than 1 in 4 women have experienced violence in a current or past marriage
- 45% of victims know their attackers
Statistics on Violence Against Women, #3

- 29% of women have experienced violence at the hands of a present or former partner
- 15% of women experience violence by the men they still live with
- 21% of women are assaulted while pregnant
- 63% of women attacked by their male partner are attacked more than once; 32% are assaulted more than 10 times
Statistics on Violence Against Women, #4

• Only 14% of violent incidents against women are reported to the police
• 39% of violent marriages have children who have witnessed the violence (i.e. more than 1 million children in Canada have witnessed violence in their own homes)
• In 1996, 80% of the victims of criminal harassment were female
Statistics on Violence Against Women, #5

- 88% of those charged were male
- Women were most frequently stalked by ex-partners, while men were stalked by strangers or acquaintances
- Between 1977 and 1996, in Canada, 1,525 wives were killed by their husbands, while 513 husbands were killed by their wives
- In Ontario, between 3 to 6 women were
Statistics on Violence Against Women, #6

• murdered each month by their former or current male partner
• 1 in 8 women are abused by their intimate partner
• Abuse also occurs in same sex relationships
• SOURCE: 1993 Stats Canada Survey of 12,300 Canadian Women.
Sexual Assault Statistics

• 1 in 4 women will be sexually assaulted during her lifetime. Half of these will be women under age 16 (Ontario Women’s Directorate)

• 1 in 2 women have experienced some form of sexual violence (Stats Canada Survey, 1993)

• 1 in 3 women have experienced some form
Sexual Assault Statistics, #2

• of sexual violence that can be legally defined as sexual assault (Stats Canada Survey, 1993)

• According to the Solicitor General, a sexual assault is reported in Canada every 25 minutes

• It is estimated that 80 to 90 % of women will experience sexual harassment at some
Sexual Assault Statistics, #3

- time in their working lives
- 57% of rapes happen while on dates (Ontario Women’s Directorate)
- 60% of sexual assaults occur in private homes (Ontario Women’s Directorate)
- 1 in 3 assailants is a total stranger; 2 out of 3 are friends, acquaintances, boyfriends, etc (Ontario Women’s Directorate)
83% of women with disabilities will be sexually assaulted during their lifetime (Ontario Women’s Directorate).

Majority of date and acquaintance rape victims are women aged 16 to 24 (Ontario Women’s Directorate).

It is estimated that only 1% of all date rapes
Sexual Assault Statistics, #5

- are reported to the police (Ontario Women’s Directorate)
- According to Statistics Canada, only 6% of all sexual assaults are reported to the police
- Nearly 90% of sexually assaulted women do not consult with any health professional after the assault
Sexual Assault Statistics, #6

• A study found that 60% of Canadian college-aged males said that they would commit sexual assault if they were certain they would not get caught (Ontario Women’s Directorate)

• CREDIT: Peel Committee Against Woman Abuse
Counselling Patients for Short-Term Safety--Things to Consider

- In crisis situation...call 911
- Get to know neighbours....let supportive ones know to call police if they hear fighting
- Agree on code word to use with neighbours, friends, children....alerts them to call police
- Keep emergency numbers handy
Things to Consider when Counselling for Safety, #2

- Become familiar with local resources, such as police and shelters. Memorize the number of at least one local shelter.
- Try to save a little emergency money. Open a bank account in your own name if at all possible.
- Before you leave, plan a safe place to go to and how you will get there.
Things to Consider when Counselling for Safety, #3

- Keep enough money in a safe place for cab fare and a pay phone
- Keep a bag hidden in a safe place with money, car keys, copies of important documents such as court orders, passports, birth certificates, health cards, driver’s licence, etc.
- Talk to your children about what they should do in an emergency
Local Support Agencies

- Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Care Centre, HHS
- Sexual Assault Centre
- Women’s Shelters (Interval House, Inasmuch House, Martha House, Mary’s Place, Native Women’s Centre)
- Distress/Crisis Lines
Local Support Agencies, #2

- Counselling Services (Hospital Social Workers, Family Services, Catholic Family Services, etc.)
- Child Welfare Agencies (Children’s Aid Society, Catholic Children’s Aid Society)
- Legal and Related Services (Legal Aid, Family Crisis Unit, Victim’s Services, etc.)
Tips for Working with Assault Survivors

• Listen
• Believe
• Comfort
• Reassure
• Provide support and help
• Remain available
• Accept the survivor’s feelings
Tips for working with Assault Survivors, #2

- Let the survivor make decisions
Common Emotional Reactions

- Shock and Disbelief
- Confusion and Disorganization
- Fear
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Shame & Loss of Self-Esteem
Common Emotional Reactions, #2

- Guilt
- Anger

Case Examples: What Should the Physician Be Thinking About?

• Suzy is an 18 year old young woman, G1, who comes in to hospital in labour at 38 weeks gestation. Her Mother is her main support person...she has told nursing staff that the babe’s father is “not involved”. She is very apprehensive about being examined, requesting only female caregivers.
Case Example #2

• Jeanette is a 36 year old woman, G4T3L3 being seen in the 4F Outpatient Clinic due to gestational diabetes. She is frequently missing or late to appointments, blaming this on transportation difficulties. When she does come in, her partner is with her, and does most of the talking for her. At her last appointment the nursing staff noticed fresh bruises on her arms and back.