

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month



One in three women in the United States has been a victim of domestic violence, regardless of age, economic status, race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. Violence and trauma can lead to chronic health problems, including high blood pressure, heart disease, depression, and cancer.

If you know a friend or loved one who is being abused, there are things you can do to help:

- **Set up a time to talk.** Try to make sure you have privacy and won't be distracted or interrupted. Let her know you're concerned about her safety.
- **Be supportive.** Listen to her. It may be very hard for her to talk about the abuse. Tell her that she is not alone and that people want to help.
- **Offer specific help.** You might say you are willing to just listen, to help her with child care, or to provide transportation, for example.
- **Keep in mind that you can't "rescue" your friend.** She has to be the one to decide it's time to get help. Support her no matter what her decision.
- **Let your friend know that you will always be there no matter what.**

More Information

- Know the different [warning signs of abuse](#).
- Learn more ways to [help a friend or loved one who is being abused](#).
- Call the [National Domestic Violence Hotline](#) at 800-799-7233 or 800-787-3224 (TDD).
- Use hashtags #DVAM, #DVAM16, #DVAM2016, and #DomesticViolence in social media messages to join the conversation.

Stay connected with us!

- Womenshealth.gov
- OWH Helpline: 800-994-9662 | womenshealth@hhs.gov