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## **Women's Medical Costs Due to Domestic Violence Twice that of Men's: CDC More than 32 million Victims Annually**

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<http://usgovinfo.about.com/od/healthcare/a/femhealthcost.htm>

Largely due to the costs and impact of domestic violence, the average cost of health care services for women exceeds twice the average cost for men, according to a new study conducted by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

Also called spousal abuse or battering, or intimate partner violence (IPV), domestic violence affects more than 32 million Americans each year; with more than 2 million injuries and claims and approximately 1300 deaths. Domestic violence includes physical, sexual, or psychological harm to another by a current or former partner or spouse.

There were almost 700,000 incidents of domestic violence reported in America during 2001 alone. About one-third of all women murdered each year are killed by their husbands for former husbands.

According to the CDC report, health care costs associated with each incident of IPV were \$948 in cases where women were the victims and \$387 in cases where men were the victims. The study also found that domestic violence against women results in more emergency room visits and inpatient hospitalizations, including greater use of physician services than domestic violence where men are the victims.

Health care costs examined in study included; mental health services, emergency room visits, inpatient hospital care, lost productivity at work and childcare or household duties due to injury. The average combined costs of medical treatment for female victims of domestic violence was \$483 per incident compared to \$83 for male victims. Mental health services costs for women was \$207 compared to \$80 for men; while productivity losses were similar at \$257 for women and \$224 for men.

CDC studies published in 2003 – but based on data collected in 1995 – placed the annual estimated direct health care costs associated with domestic violence to be around

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\$4.1 billion, with another \$1.8 billion in productivity losses associated with injuries and death.

“Unfortunately, we believe the estimates using 1995 data are conservative because many cases of domestic violence are not reported,” said Phaedra Corso, PhD, a CDC economist. “In today’s dollars, the health care and productivity costs are likely to be much greater. Ultimately, the economic burden of domestic violence impacts all of society. Hospitals, workplaces, and communities must devote and be able to provide resources to treating and assisting victims, while the criminal justice system, mental health providers, employers and the community must bear a variety of other costs.”

*For more information on Domestic Violence/IPV you can visit  
<http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/factsheets/ipvfacts.htm>.*

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