

0 — **RADAR: A DOMESTIC VIOLENCE INTERVENTION** — 0

1 — **R = ROUTINELY SCREEN ALL PATIENTS** — 1

Although many victims of domestic violence will not volunteer any information, they will discuss it if asked simple, direct questions in a non-judgmental way and in a confidential setting. **INTERVIEW THE PATIENT ALONE.**

2 — **A = ASK DIRECT QUESTIONS** — 3

“Because abuse is so common, I’ve begun to ask about it routinely.” “Are you in a relationship in which you have been emotionally hurt or threatened?” If no, “Have you ever been?” “Have you ever been hit, kicked, or punched by your partner?” “Do you feel safe at home?” “I noticed you have a number of bruises; did someone do this to you?”

IF PATIENT ANSWERS YES, SEE OTHER SIDE FOR RESPONSES AND CONTINUE WITH THE FOLLOWING STEPS:

3 — **D = DOCUMENT YOUR FINDINGS** — 7

Record a description of the abuse as described to you. Use statements such as “the patient states they were...” If given the specific name of the abuser use it in your record. “Patient says their partner (name) struck them...” Record all pertinent physical findings. Use a body map to supplement the written record. Offer to photograph injuries. When serious injury or sexual abuse is detected, preserve all physical evidence. Document an opinion if the injuries were inconsistent with the patient’s explanation.

4 — **A = ASSESS PATIENT SAFETY** — 11

Before leaving the medical setting, find out if the patient is afraid to go home. Has there been an increase in the frequency or severity of violence? Have there been threats of homicide or suicide? Have children in the home been threatened? Is there a gun or other weapon present?

5 — **R = REVIEW OPTIONS & REFERRALS** — 13

If the patient is in immediate danger, find out if they have a safe place to go. Is immediate access to a shelter needed? Offer the opportunity of a private phone to make a call. Offer information about hotlines and resources in the community (see other side). Remember that it may be dangerous to have resource material in their possession; do not insist that they take them. **Make a follow-up appointment.**

6 — **NEVADA NETWORK AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE** — 17

IF THE PATIENT ANSWERS YES:

- **Encourage discussion of the situation.**

"Would you like to talk about what has happened to you?" "How do you feel about it?" "What would you like to do about this?"

- **Listen non-judgmentally.**

This serves both to begin the healing process for the patient and to give you an idea of what kind of referrals may be needed.

- **Validate the experience.**

"You are not alone." "No one has to live with violence." "You do not deserve to be treated this way." "You are not to blame." "What happened to you is a crime." "Help is available to you."

IF THE PATIENT ANSWERS NO, OR WILL NOT DISCUSS THE TOPIC AT THIS TIME:

- **Be aware of any clinical signs that may indicate abuse:**

Injury to the head, neck, torso, chest, abdomen, or genitals; bilateral or multiple injuries; delay between onset of injury and seeking treatment; explanation by the patient which is inconsistent with the type of injury; any injury during pregnancy, especially to abdomen or breasts; prior history of trauma; chronic pain symptoms for which no etiology is apparent; psychological distress such as depression, suicidal ideation, anxiety, and/or sleep disorders; a partner who seems overly protective or who will not leave the patient's side.

- **If any of these clinical signs are present, ask more specific questions.**

Make sure the patient is alone!

"It looks as though someone may have hurt you. Can you tell me how it happened?" "Sometimes when people feel the way you do, it may be because they are being hurt at home. Is this happening to you?"

- **If the patient denies abuse, but you strongly suspect it, document your opinions, and let the patient know that there are resources available to them should they choose to pursue such options in the future.**

MAKE A FOLLOW-UP APPOINTMENT.

RESOURCES

1.800.799.SAFE	National Domestic Violence Hotline www.thehotline.org
1.800.656.HOPE	National Sexual Assault Hotline www.rainn.org
1.866.331.9474	National Dating Abuse Helpline www.loveisrespect.org

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