

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) recommends that health care providers use the following screen:

*Step 1: ASK*

The most critical intervention is to ask, when the woman is alone, questions about domestic violence. Pregnant women should be screened each trimester and postpartum. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) recommends that health care providers use the following screen:

*Because violence is so common in many women's lives and because there is help available for women being abused, I now ask every patient about domestic violence:*

*Within the past year or since you have been pregnant have you been hit, slapped, kicked or otherwise physically hurt by someone?*

*Are you in a relationship with a person who threatens or physically hurts you?*

*Has anyone forced you to have sexual activities that made you feel uncomfortable?*

*Step 2: ASSURE SAFETY IF VIOLENCE IS DISCLOSED*

Acknowledge the discloser

Be supportive

Explain confidentiality of records

Assure safety by asking:

Is your partner here?

Is it safe to leave the office?

Are you safe to go home?

*Step 3: REFER*

If violence is disclosed, refer the woman to an appropriate resource as part of a safety plan.