

10 WARNING SIGNS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

One in four women (and one in seven men) in the United States will be victims of domestic violence at some time in their lives. Domestic violence isn't just physical – it's a pattern of physical, verbal, sexual and psychological violence used by one partner in a relationship to gain power or control over another partner. The effects can be devastating.

It's important to understand the signs of domestic violence so that you can take action to help yourself or a loved one. Here are 10 of the most common indications that a relationship is abusive:

1. Physical abuse

Any use of force or physical harm.

2. Mental or emotional abuse

A regular pattern of verbal offense, threatening, bullying and constant criticism, as well as more subtle tactics like intimidation, shaming and manipulation.

3. Controlling money

Your partner should not have financial secrets, keep money from you or control how you spend your money.

4. Checking phone, email or social media without your permission

Looking through your email, phone or internet history without your knowledge or permission.

5. Isolation

Keeping you from seeing friends or loved ones.

6. Cruelty to animals or children

Violent behavior toward animals or children.

7. Threats or intimidation

This may include your partner breaking things on purpose that are sentimental or valuable to you.

8. Threats of suicide

Using threats of suicide as a way to control a partner and/or keep them from leaving.

9. Drug or alcohol abuse

This can lead to other abusive behaviors. One partner insisting the other drink or take drugs is also a form of abuse.

10. Extreme jealousy or possessiveness

Calling or checking up on you excessively or insisting on knowing where you are at every

moment. This also includes possessive behavior, such as criticizing or dictating what you wear.

These behaviors are not acceptable in any relationship. If you or a loved one is experiencing any of these signs of abuse, tell a trusted friend immediately and talk with a health professional or contact a local domestic violence awareness group.

Visit www.domesticshelters.org to find a shelter and other domestic violence help in your area. GreenHouse17 Inc., formerly the Bluegrass Domestic Violence Prevention Program, an advocacy group for victims of intimate partner violence, has locations in Lexington. Reach their toll-free hotline at 800-544-2022.

In other areas, the National Domestic Violence Hotline can be reached by phone at 800-799-7233 or on the web at www.ncadv.org.