

Health status and health care use of Massachusetts women reporting partner abuse.

Hathaway JE, Mucci LA, Silverman JG, Brooks DR, Mathews R, Pavlos CA. *Am J Prev Med* 2000 Nov;19(4):302-7.

BACKGROUND: Studies indicate that women abused by their intimate partners are at increased risk for a number of health problems and have increased rates of health care utilization. However, these findings are based mainly on studies using clinic or health plan populations. In this study, we examined the association between intimate partner abuse (IPA) and health concerns and health care utilization in a population-based sample of adult women. **METHODS:** We analyzed data on 2043 women aged 18 to 59 who participated in the 1998 Massachusetts Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), a population-based health survey that included questions on IPA. IPA was defined as experiencing physical violence by, fear of, or control by an intimate partner. Consequences of IPA and self-rated health status and health care utilization of women experiencing IPA were examined. **RESULTS:** A total of 6.3% of Massachusetts women aged 18 to 59 reported IPA during the past year. Women experiencing IPA were more likely than other women to report depression, anxiety, sleep problems, suicidal ideation, disabilities, smoking, unwanted pregnancy, HIV testing, and condom use. Women experiencing IPA were less likely to have health insurance, but received routine health care at similar rates as other women. **CONCLUSIONS:** These results indicate that women in the general population experiencing IPA are at increased risk for several serious emotional and physical health concerns. Most of these women are in routine contact with health care providers. These findings also suggest that the BRFSS may provide a valuable mechanism for tracking state-based IPA prevalence rates over time.

For complete article, go to: *Am J Prev Med* 2000 Nov;19(4):302-7.