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Recognizing intimate partner violence

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Domestic violence screening is a required element of emergency nursing care. Research has been conducted revealing that only 15% of patients cared for in the emergency departments are actually screened for this violence by nurses. The studied nurses identify patient presentation as a determining factor of whether or not screening will be completed and site time constraints and privacy issues as barriers to completion. Opportunities exist to save lives by screening all patients for potential domestic abuse. There is no typical victim, and many will be seen multiple times before domestic abuse is unveiled. It is important for providers to know how to assess for violence and what to do if it is disclosed.

Biography

Terri Sullivan is a staff nurse in the emergency department at Emory University Hospital in Atlanta, Georgia. Since graduating from Castleton State College in Castleton, Vermont she has been a nurse for over 25 years including 15 in various intensive care units. A certified emergency nurse since 2007, she has served on several state and national committees with the Emergency Nurses Association and remains active in the Metro Atlanta chapter. She is currently continuing her education with Villanova University in Villanova, Pennsylvania. Her interest in domestic violence began upon learning of an assaulted pregnant patient who had been seen many times prior at the facility she worked at who had been thought of as a "frequent flier." The situation left her committed to preventing something like this from happening again. She has sought experts in the field to learn from and has published her findings in the November 2015 *Journal of Emergency Nursing*.

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