

Effects of Domestic Violence

Long-term effects of domestic violence on women who have been abused may include:

- anxiety
- chronic depression
- chronic pain
- death
- dehydration
- dissociative states
- drug and alcohol dependence
- eating disorders
- emotional "over-reactions" to stimuli
- general emotional numbing
- health problems
- malnutrition
- panic attacks
- poor adherence to medical recommendations
- poverty
- repeated self-injury
- self neglect
- sexual dysfunction
- sleep disorders
- somatization disorders
- strained family relationships
- suicide attempts
- an inability to adequately respond to the needs of their children.

In a 1999 study from Johns Hopkins, it was reported that abused women are at higher risk of miscarriages, stillbirths, and infant deaths, and are more likely to give birth to low birth weight children, a risk factor for neonatal and infant deaths. In addition, children of abused women were more likely to be malnourished and were more likely to have had a recent untreated case of diarrhea and less likely to have been immunized against childhood diseases. [10](#)

Domestic violence can severely impair a parent's ability to nurture the development of their children. Mothers who are abused may be depressed or preoccupied with the violence. They may be emotionally withdrawn or numb, irritable or have feelings of hopelessness. The result can be a parent who is less emotionally available to their children or unable to care for their children's basic needs. Battering fathers are less affectionate, less available, and less rational in dealing with their children. Studies even suggest that "battered women may use more punitive child-rearing strategies or exhibit aggression toward their children." [4](#)

When children cannot depend on their parents or caregivers - for emotional support and for practical support - their development can be seriously delayed or, in severe cases, permanently distorted. Children without an emotionally available parent may withdraw from relationships and social activities. Since childhood is the time when social skills and attitudes are learned, domestic violence can affect their ability to form relationships for the rest of their lives.

Parents who have been traumatized by violence must cope with their own trauma before they are able to help their children.

<http://www.findcounseling.com/journal/domestic-violence/domestic-violence-effects.html>