

# Guide on how to act quickly in cases of Gender Violence



igualtat  
CONCEJALIA DE IGUALDAD DE ALCANTE  
REGIDORIA D'IGUALTAT D'ALACANT  
igualdad



GOBIERNO  
DE ESPAÑA

MINISTERIO  
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# INDEX

What does violence against women mean?	5
Be alert	6
How do abusers operate?	8
What you must know	9
You are not alone!	11
Go to your health centre or hospital emergency unit if you are physically injured	12
If you are being psychologically abused	13
How to detect a situation of violence	14
How can you help a woman who is being abused?	16
Resources in your Municipality	18
Do you know of a case of Gender Violence?	22

# What does violence against women mean?

“Violence against women is understood as a violation of human rights and a form of discrimination against women and shall mean all acts of gender violence that result in, or are likely to result in, physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.”

Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. (Article 3 Istanbul Convention)

# BE ALERT

## You are being subject to Physical Violence if...

He pushes, grabs, kicks, punches, pushes, hits, scratches, pricks or bites you, leading to bruises, fractures, wounds, cuts, ruptured eardrums, internal organ injuries and/or irreversible injuries. Assaults can be more or less serious, but they are all considered as violence.

## You are suffering Psychological Violence if...

—→ **He controls you:** he constantly calls you, sends you SMS, emails; he controls you via WhatsApp, or goes through your social media profiles, demands explanations about where you are going and with whom or what you do or say, controls how you act, dress, do your makeup, talk or behave and asks you to change your clothes when he doesn't like them, justifies his controlling attitude by saying that he loves you very much, that he knows what is right for you.

—→ **He isolates you:** he doesn't like you having friends, he prefers you to always stay alone, he doesn't want you to see your family, or he belittles you in front of other people, he constantly yells at you and criticises you, he tells you that you're always wrong, he makes you feel guilty to obtain what he wants.

—→ **He intimidates you:** you're afraid of him, he insults you or humiliates you, he threatens he will commit suicide or will keep the children, he tells you "there is nothing he wouldn't do" if you left him, he withholds important documents such as passports or chequebooks, coerces you or blackmails you.

—→ **He makes fun of you:** he makes you feel inferior, clumsy or useless.

## You are suffering Sexual Violence if...

He forces you to have sex against your will, using threats, blackmail, pressure or anger.

## You are suffering from Economic Violence if...

He controls your money and/or prevents you from disposing of it, he makes decisions without consulting you, blocks accounts and cancels common credit cards, withdraws your signature from bank accounts.

## How does an abuser operate?

### He justifies:

He reasons out his motives so that it seems that what he did is okay. He looks for arguments that justify his behaviour.

### He deflects the problem:

He often blames his behaviour on work problems, alcohol, arguments, etc. This mechanism allows him to fend off his responsibility.

### He rationalises:

He explains his behaviour and the facts, from his own perspective, while assuring that the social environment validates these behaviours as legitimate, so that you also accept them.

### He projects:

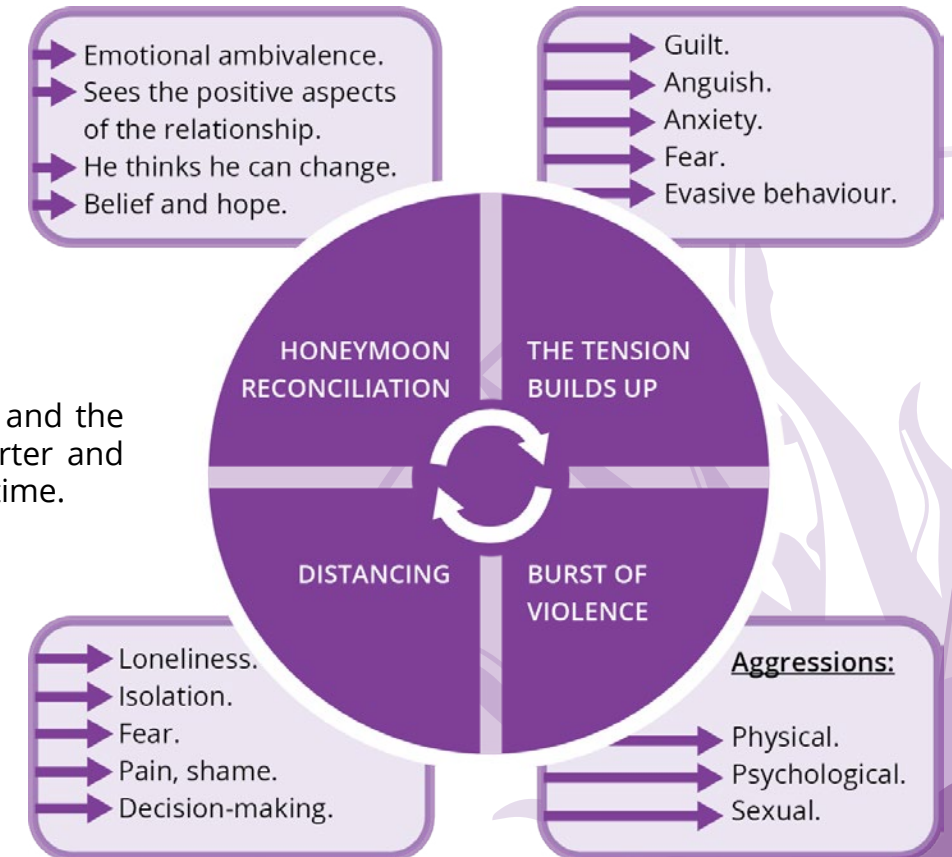
He makes the victim responsible for his violent behaviours, "he puts the blame on you".

### He forgets / denies:

He says he doesn't remember, that he's not aware of what he's being criticised for. He may openly deny attacks to discredit the victim's story.

# WHAT YOU MUST KNOW

Violence is cyclical, and the cycles become shorter and more intense over time.



## REMEMBER...

The violence always escalates.



## ASK FOR HELP TO STOP IT

### IN A SITUATION OF ABUSE, YOU ARE NOT ALONE!

- ➔ Tell a person you trust what is happening. Seek support from a friend, a family member or professionals you feel comfortable with and you believe understand you. It's a good way to move forward and you mustn't be scared or ashamed to seek support.
- ➔ Breaking away from violence is not an easy journey. You may need to try several times, but don't be discouraged because you will become stronger at each attempt. You have to take your life into your own hands, and value positively any progress you experience, no matter how little it may seem.
- ➔ Your municipality provides resources to help, including specialised professionals you can go to.

## GO TO YOUR HEALTH CENTRE OR A HOSPITAL EMERGENCY UNIT IF YOU ARE PHYSICALLY INJURED...

- > Whether the injuries are due to physical or sexual assaults.
- > If possible, get a trusted person to accompany you.
- > In case of sexual assault do not change your clothes or wash. Go as soon as possible.
- > Try to tell everything that's happened, where it hurts and who did this to you.
- > After your medical examination, request a copy of the INJURY REPORT, it will be used during proceedings if a complaint is filed.
- > The injury report will then be sent to the corresponding court.
- > If your physical integrity is in danger, request the presence of the Police.

## IF YOU ARE SUBJECT TO PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE...

1.- **GO** to the counselling and psychological support Service for women victims of gender violence of the **Department of Equality**. Specialised professionals will help you to heal the emotional wounds of violence, gain inner strength and feel empowered to break the cycle of abuse.

2.- **GO** to your **Health Centre** and try to describe everything that is happening to you, how you feel and why, since when you have been in this situation and how you are physically affected by those ill-treatments (headaches and muscle pain, insomnia, weight loss, anxiety, stress, fear, etc.).

Request that this situation be recorded in your clinical history, and that a psychological report be drawn up, as well an assessment of imminent risks presented by the aggressor, the consequences and possible aftermath.

# HOW TO DETECT A CASE OF VIOLENCE:

## Signs and symptoms of Gender Violence:

- ◆ Feeling of sadness and dismay.
- ◆ Eating or sleeping disorders.
- ◆ Social isolation with respect to family members and friends.
- ◆ Ongoing episodes of anxiety or depression.
- ◆ Chronic abdominal pain, back pain or headaches.
- ◆ Improper use of alcohol or other substances.
- ◆ Frequent use of health services.
- ◆ Frequent use of strong medication.
- ◆ Unexplained hearing loss.
- ◆ Suicidal thoughts or attempts.

## Obstacles faced by women victims of Gender Violence:

- ◆ Shame, guilt and feeling responsible for what's happening.
- ◆ Fear of reprisals by the aggressor.
- ◆ Fear of stigma and social exclusion by family members and those around her.
- ◆ Low self-esteem and low self-confidence.
- ◆ Fear of losing the custody of her children.
- ◆ Lack of resources to get ahead (housing, employment or security).
- ◆ Fear of drawing attention to an irregular migration situation or losing a residence permit following a separation or divorce.




## How can you help a woman who is being abused?

### Let her know that:

- There is a way out of abuse.
- She is not guilty or responsible for what is happening to her.
- No one has the right to judge her actions or conduct.
- It is important for her to calm down and regain composure to make certain decisions.
- She will not be alone, she will always going to be accompanied.
- She must make her own decisions, at her own pace and under no pressure of any kind.
- It is important to maintain or resume social and family relationships to avoid isolation.
- It is good to externalise her feelings about the abuse and control that her partner is subjecting her to.
- Specialised resources exist providing advice and support to break the cycle of violence.

# RESOURCES IN YOUR MUNICIPALITY

**Department of Equality  
Alicante City Council**

 **Tel. (+34) 965 10 50 86**

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**Unit of Integrated Assistance to Victims of Gender Violence**, composed of a multidisciplinary team that offers the following services:


→ **Legal Advice:** free and specialised service of comprehensive and personalised assistance to women in Alicante city suffering from, or at risk, of gender violence. Other manifestations of violence against women are included, such as: sexual, economic and emotional violence, partner violence, assaults and/or sexual harassment, highly conflictual couple breakups and sexual or gender discrimination.

→ **Psychological Counselling and Accompaniment:** service for women victims of gender violence and their children, coordinated with other support services; accompaniment to heal the emotional wounds of violence, to gain inner strength and feel empowered to leave the cycle of violence.

→ **Social Counselling and Accompaniment:** service for women who are victims of gender violence and their children, coordinated with other services of support, information and management of social, labour, training resources as well as any other kind of resources helping women to recover a normal life, according to their wishes and interests. This accompaniment may also be provided in cases where women are unaware they are being subjected to violence.

→ **Mobile Teleassistance Service:** following a professional assessment, this service provides the woman with a mobile phone equipped with a communication and location system offering security and immediate support in case of any emergency. This service also includes information, support and expert professional advice on gender violence, guaranteeing person-to-person communication in case of any unforeseen or urgent need, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, wherever the user may be.

**Department of Equality and Inclusive Policies.  
Generalitat Valenciana.**

 **Tel. (+34) 900 58 08 88**

**Women's Centre 24 hours:**

Residential centres specialising in assistance to women victims of gender violence.

**Courts.**

→ **Office of Assistance to Victims of Crime.**  
Tel. (+34) 965 93 57 14

→ **Juzgado de Guardia (Duty Court).**  
Tel. (+34) 965 93 58 16 /  
(+34) 965 93 58 74

**Security Bodies and Forces.**

→ **National Police.**  
Tel. (+34) 965 14 88 95  
UFAM. Family and Women Assistance Units.

→ **Guardia Civil (Civil Guard).**  
Tel. (+34) 965 14 56 60 Ext: 414  
EMUME. Teams for Women and Minors.

→ **Alicante Local Police.**  
Tel. (+34) 965 14 95 01 /  
(+34) 965 14 95 00  
GAVID. Office of Assistance to Victims of Domestic Violence.

**Government Delegation for Gender Violence.**

 **016-online@igualdad.gob.es**

 **016**

This toll-free telephone number of the Government Delegation for Gender Violence ensures call confidentiality. To avoid problems, the phone leaves no trace on the bill, and not even on mobile phones. So once you dial the number, 016 will never appear in the "calls history" log on your phone.



**If you are aware of a case of gender-based violence:**

**Act,**  
don't look  
the other way.  
Gender violence  
is not a  
private issue, it is a  
social problem and  
a crime.



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**Pacto de Estado**  
contra la violencia de género