



Victimization of Persons with Traumatic Brain Injury or Other Disabilities:

A Fact Sheet for Friends and Families

What is victimization?

Victimization is harm caused on purpose. It is not an “accident” and can happen anywhere. While anyone can be victimized, people with disabilities are at greater risk for victimization than people without disabilities. This fact sheet provides a general overview of victimization and the risks to people with traumatic brain injury (TBI) and other disabilities.

What does victimization include?

- Physical violence with or without a weapon
- Sexual violence of any kind including rape
- Emotional abuse, including verbal attacks or being humiliated
- Neglect of personal needs for daily life, including medical care or equipment

How often does victimization occur?

- In the United States, people with disabilities are 4 to 10 times more likely to be victimized than people without them.
- Children with disabilities are more than twice as likely to be victimized as children without them.

What is known about victimization?

- The two most common places for victimization are hospitals and at home.
- Victims usually know the person who harms them. They can be health care workers, intimate partners, or family members. More men than women cause harm to people with disabilities.

Why are people with a TBI at risk for victimization?

A TBI may cause problems that can increase risk. Known problems include:

- Difficulty understanding risky situations or avoiding risky persons



- Difficulty controlling one's temper which causes others to get angry
- Behavioral problems, such as drinking too much

What can be done to help a friend or family member who is being victimized?

- Don't be afraid to voice your concern for their safety
- Acknowledge that they are in a very difficult and scary situation
- Be supportive
- Don't be judgmental
- Encourage them to talk to people who can provide help and guidance
- Help them plan safety steps so that they will know what to do and how to reduce their risk of harm when they are being victimized
- Remember that you cannot "rescue" them

Getting Help:

- **Dial 911 if you need immediate assistance.**
- **Call the National Domestic Violence Hotline at:**
1-800-799-SAFE or
TTY 1-800-787-3224
 This hotline is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Confidential services include crisis intervention, safety planning, and referrals to local service providers. Assistance is available in English and Spanish, and in other languages.



More Information:

CDC's National Center for Injury Prevention and Control

This site provides an overview and fact sheet regarding intimate partner violence.

www.cdc.gov/ncipc/factsheets/ipvoverview.htm

This site includes a list of organizations working to prevent victimization.

www.cdc.gov/ncipc/factsheets/ipvlinks.htm

The National Domestic Violence Hotline

This site provides a wide range of information and links to many prevention and support groups.

www.ndvh.org/educate/online.html