

Clinical Summary: Screening for Intimate Partner Violence, Elder Abuse, and Abuse of Vulnerable Adults

Population	Women of reproductive age	Older or vulnerable adults
Recommendation	<p>Screen for intimate partner violence (IPV) and provide or refer screen-positive women to ongoing support services.</p> <p>Grade: B</p>	<p>No recommendation.</p> <p>Grade: I (insufficient evidence)</p>

Risk Assessment	<p>All women of reproductive age are at potential risk for IPV and should be screened. There are a variety of factors that increase risk of IPV, such as exposure to violence as a child, young age, unemployment, substance abuse, marital difficulties, and economic hardships.</p> <p>Risk factors for elder abuse include isolation and lack of social support, functional impairment, and poor physical health. For older adults, lower income and living in a shared living environment with a large number of household members (other than a spouse) are associated with an increased risk of financial and physical abuse.</p>
Screening Tests	<p>Several screening instruments can be used to screen women for IPV in the past year, such as the following: Humiliation, Afraid, Rape, Kick (HARK); Hurt/Insult/Threaten/Scream (HITS); Extended Hurt/Insult/Threaten/Scream (E-HITS); Partner Violence Screen (PVS); and Woman Abuse Screening Tool (WAST).</p> <p>The USPSTF found no valid, reliable screening tools in the primary care setting to identify abuse of older or vulnerable adults without recognized signs and symptoms of abuse.</p>
Treatments and Interventions	<p>Effective interventions generally included ongoing support services that focused on counseling and home visits, addressed multiple risk factors (not just IPV), or included parenting support for new mothers. Studies that only included brief interventions and provided information about referral options were generally ineffective.</p> <p>The USPSTF found inadequate evidence that screening or early detection of elder abuse or abuse of vulnerable adults reduces exposure to abuse, physical or mental harms, or mortality in older or vulnerable adults.</p>
Relevant USPSTF Recommendations	<p>The USPSTF has made recommendations on primary care interventions for child maltreatment; screening for depression in adolescents, adults, and pregnant women; screening for alcohol misuse; and screening for drug misuse.</p>

For a summary of the evidence systematically reviewed in making this recommendation, the full recommendation statement, and supporting documents, please go to <https://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org>.