

PHYSICAL ABUSE CONTINUUM

Abuser uses physical threats or force to control, coerce or frighten the victim.

<i>Probability of lethality increases</i>	┌	A pinch / squeeze
	┌	A push / shove / restrain
	┌	A jerk / pull / shake
	┌	A shake / bite / pull hair
	┌	A slap / leave bruises
	┌	A hit / punch / kick
	┌	A choke / throw objects
	┌	A not meeting physical needs
	┌	A hitting pregnant victim
	┌	A increase frequency of above behaviors
	┌	A targeting hitting of previous injuries
	┌	A restraining and hitting or punching
	┌	A medical attention required
	┌	A lacerations that require stitches
	┌	A throwing victim
	┌	A broken bones and/or internal injuries
┌	A miscarriage or forced abortion	
┌	A use of objects as weapons (household items)	
┌	A denial of medical treatment	
┌	A use of weapons (gun, knife, etc.)	
┌	A disabling or disfiguring injuries	
┌	A homicide	

Throughout the Continuum, the abuser is not out of control, but rather makes choices to use various levels of violence to establish and maintain control over the victim.

LETHALITY: Lethal violence is always a possibility. It is difficult, if not impossible, to predict if/when the abuser's use of violence will escalate to the point of homicide or suicide. Serious injuries (intentional or accidental) are more probable as the abuser uses more and more dangerous types of abusive behaviors.

POSSIBLE OUTCOMES

1. Continued abuse; progressive in frequency and severity.
2. Separation or divorce; leaving the abusive partner.
3. Death by murder or accident.
4. Change within the abuser. This requires that the abuser take complete responsibility for use of violence. They must want to change, and be willing to invest time/energy/resources to work toward change. It is NOT sufficient for abuser to only address drug or alcohol problems, communication problems, or other problems without specific intervention to address violent behaviors.