

What do I do?

This is going to be a very delicate and personal question. No one can tell you exactly what will work or be best for your situation. One of the hardest parts may be simply opening up to friends/family or doctors/professionals about what is happening. If you can't be honest with them they won't know how best to help. There is no shame in what you are going through, **it is not your fault!**

It is always best to speak with your local domestic violence agency to develop a safety plan that is tailored to your situation. Safety planning can involve many different actions. It can involve planning for the safest room to be in if you feel an abusive episode is about to happen to having pre-packed bags if your abuser locates your new residence. Depending on where you are in terms of still being in the relationship or residing in a shelter or being established on our own the safety plan will vary.

Information and Resources

When searching the internet please remember to use a public computer or a device your abuser does not nor has never had access to.

National Domestic Violence Hotline

1-800-799-7233

<http://www.thehotline.org/>

National Coalition Against Domestic Violence

1-800-799-SAFE (7233)

<https://ncadv.org/>

Love is Respect

1-866-331-9474

<http://www.loveisrespect.org/>

Albany County Crime Victim and Sexual Violence Center

(518) 447-7100

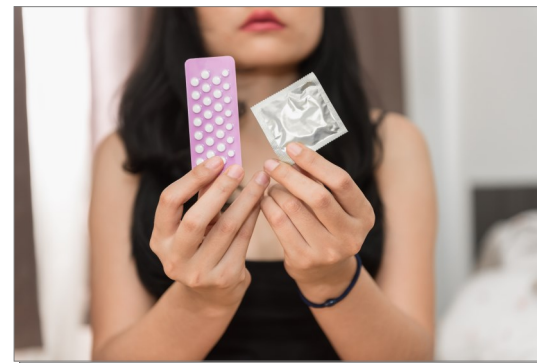
www.albanycounty.com/cvsvc

Equinox Domestic Violence Services

(518) 434-6135

<http://www.equinoxinc.org/>

What is Reproductive Abuse?



The **mission** of the Albany County Crime Victim and Sexual Violence Center is to “provide direct and comprehensive services to all victims of sexual assault and other crimes of personal violence and to change, through community and prevention education and bystander engagement, societal conditions that allow oppression, especially interpersonal violence, to exist”. The Center also assists other victims of personal violence, particularly adults and children abused within domestic relationships.



Daniel P. McCoy
Albany County Executive

ALBANY COUNTY
Cares about our community

No person in the United States shall, on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity (as defined in paragraph 249(c)(4) of title 18, United States Code), sexual orientation, or disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity funded in whole or in part with funds made available under [VAWA], and any other program or activity funded in whole or in part with funds appropriated for grants, cooperative agreements, and other assistance administered by the Office on Violence Against Women.



Albany County Crime Victim and Sexual Violence Center
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Albany, NY 12207
Phone: (518) 447-7100
Sexual Assault Hotline: (518) 447-7716
Fax: (518) 447-7102
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What is Reproductive Abuse?

Most people are familiar with the terms physical abuse, emotional or verbal abuse, and financial abuse. If you haven't been in an abusive relationship, you may still be able to imagine what those things could look like. But what about reproductive abuse?



This form of abuse may also be referred to as '**Reproductive Coercion**'. These are terms that refer to one party using **Power and Control** to take away the reproductive choices of another. If this sounds abusive to you that is because it is. The abuser is essentially stripping away the victim's ability to control their own reproductive health.

Sex in an abusive relationship is often used as another tactic for control. For those thinking this can only happen during the course of a forced unprotected sexual act or rape, you would be wrong. Fear and doubt can be just as powerful as fists.

What does Reproductive Abuse/Coercion look like?

Below you will find examples of how reproductive abuse/coercion may look:

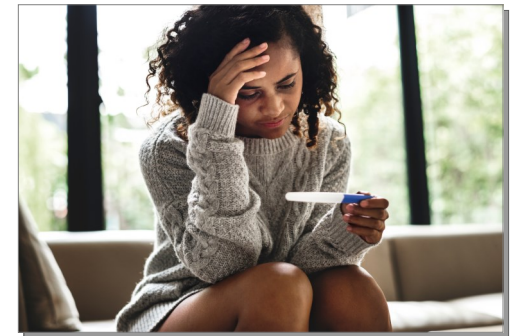
- Refusing to use any form of birth control including condoms
- Removing the condom during sex without partners knowledge or consent often referred to as 'stealthing'
- Sabotaging methods of birth control, for example: poking holes in condoms, or tampering with birth control pills
- Knowingly attempting to pass on a sexually transmitted disease
- Using violence or other abusive tactics if a partner does not want to get pregnant and/or an abortion
- Making the partner get an abortion
- Keeping the partner from getting proper birth control or medical treatment by withholding funds or preventing them from seeing a health care professional

Keep in mind that these tactics are not always the result of violence. Most abusers are able to manipulate their partners using guilt or by exploiting their feelings. However, all of these tactics no matter how benign they may look, are all about **Power and Control**.

Why can pregnancy be so dangerous?

Pregnancy is typically looked upon with joy and hope. This may not be the case for those in an abusive relationship. Whether the pregnancy was planned or the result of unwanted sexual violence, this can be a very dangerous time.

Abuse often will escalate during pregnancy. The abusive partner may become jealous of the time and attention the pregnancy takes away from them. They can become resentful of the unborn child, causing them to seek ways to keep the pregnancy from reaching full term.



Physical violence during pregnancy can cause trauma not only to the victim but the unborn as well, it may also increase the chances of hemorrhaging, pre-term birth, or loss of the child.

If you are concerned that your partner may be trying to force a pregnancy, talk to your doctor about a birth control option that can't be interfered with. Remember you have the right to make decisions about your own body.