

are devoted to enforcing such orders.<sup>5</sup> Women who have not been injured or do not have proof of injury, who depend on the perpetrator for financial support, and who fear retaliation or for other reasons do not press criminal charges may find it in their best interest to file for a civil order of protection. However, knowledge of the local law and enforcement system would be helpful in making this decision. Clinicians can advocate in their own communities for enactment and enforcement of laws that protect women from attack, for justice systems that give clear messages and provide supervision to perpetrators of domestic violence, and for support services for abused women and children. We can struggle against racism, economic inequality, and all forms of oppression that perpetuate ill health.<sup>11</sup> Ultimately, we, along with the rest of society, will need to develop routines for primary, rather than secondary, prevention of family violence.

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### The Family Doc Answers

#### Early Detection of Domestic Abuse

**E**ARLY DETECTION of the batterer is as important as early detection of cancer. Undiagnosed, both cancer and the batterer do not improve; cancer invades the body and, in the case of the batterer, his battering escalates.

Batterers can be easily identified by the type of behavior they use to dominate and victimize their families. I use the following mnemonic (PISTOL, a symbol of violence) to help anyone easily identify the batterer and warn his potential victims.

P	Physically	He hurts you physically.
I	Isolates	He isolates you from family and friends.
S	Sex	He forces you to have sex.
T	Threatens	He threatens and yells at you.
O	Zero	He makes you feel worthless and powerless.
L	Lovable	He sometimes acts bad, but other times he is so lovable and sweet.

I care for battered women and their children in my office and at several battered-family shelters that include shelters in prime locations, eg, next to a luxurious four-diamond-five-star resort, in an abandoned motel that is fenced and has a guard gate to keep out the prostitutes and drug dealers, and even one in the "barrio" that shelters only battered Latin American women and their children.

As a physician, what I am seeing is very terrifying and sad. This battering, wife abuse, and child abuse is affecting the entire human race. It is pandemic. No one ever deserves to be battered, and as a physician I will not sit idly by and be a cobatterer. We must all work together to eliminate this violence.

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