

b. Violence against Women during Pregnancy

MODULE 3

Violence against women often begins during the first pregnancy. All forms of violence can be harmful and must be taken seriously.



There are different types of violence. The following table may help you to recognize the different types.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF VIOLENCE	
Types of violence	Examples
Psychological violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You humiliate her by using words such as "silly", "stupid", "good for nothing", etc.• You swear at her.• You show jealousy.• You prevent her from seeing her friend and/or family.• You prevent her from working outside the home or participating in activities.• You have a violent behaviour (ex.: break things, bang on the walls or on objects) or you threaten her in order to scare her.
Physical violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You push her, pinch her, squeeze her arms, throw her to the floor, hit her, or inflict bodily harm.
Sexual violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You insult her about her sexuality "not good in bed", "not sexually attractive", etc.• You say hurtful comments about her body "fat", "skinny", "ugly", etc.• You force her to perform sexual acts she does not want.

A female victim of violence may feel anxious and depressed, have no self-esteem, take drugs and alcohol, have difficulty sleeping, and may lose her appetite.

Physical aggression during pregnancy can cause serious injuries to the mother and may cause a premature birth or an insufficient birthweight. Aggression could also lead to broken bones or haemorrhage in the fetus. Some mothers have lost their babies following physical violence.

If you are violent with your partner during her pregnancy, you need help immediately.

Nobody deserves to be treated badly; certainly not your baby. Talk to someone about your feelings and concerns. Inquire about organizations which offer help to violent men. Persons with special training will help you find solutions to end this violence.