

Getting out

It's good to plan ahead before you leave. Call **311** for the New York City Domestic Violence Hotline to talk to an advocate. This person can help you decide on your next steps.

If you have time, gather items you will need and keep them in a bag in a safe place. Make sure your abuser will not be able to find the bag. You could keep it in a locked drawer at work. Or maybe it could be at a friend's house.

Don't choose a next-door neighbor or any other place where your abuser is likely to go.

Your bag could include:

- A change of clothes for you and your children
- Passports, birth certificates, Social Security cards, and immigration papers
- Your checkbook, credit cards, and cash
- An extra set of keys to your car and your home
- Any medicine you or your children take
- A copy of your order of protection, if you have one

If it is an emergency, leave now. Don't worry about packing a bag. Your safety comes first.



Where you can go

Once you leave, there are places you can get help. Domestic violence shelters are often a good first stop. New York City has programs to help you and your children be safe and get a fresh start.

Shelters sometimes offer more than a place to stay. They may offer counseling or job training. They also can tell you where to get help with other problems.

To protect victims, shelter locations are not publicized.

Call 311 to be connected to available services for victims and children of victims, including shelter options. Help is available.

The information contained in this publication should not be used as a substitute for the medical care and advice of your doctor. There may be variations in treatment that your doctor may recommend based on individual facts about you.

MetroPlus Health Plan

160 Water St. 3rd Fl, New York, NY 10038
MetroPlus Medicaid: 1.800.475.METRO (6387)
(TTY 1.800.881.2812)

MetroPlus Medicare: 1.866.986.0356 TTY: 711
MetroPlus MLTC: 1.855.355.MLTC (6582)
(TTY: 1.800.881.2812)

Hours of operation: Monday–Saturday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Domestic abuse How to get help



 **MetroPlus**
Health Plan
1-800-475-METRO

WWW.METROPLUS.ORG



Abuse is never OK

Domestic abuse comes in many forms. Maybe your boyfriend hits you. Or, a girlfriend or family member forces you to turn over your money.

No matter how it happens, abuse is not OK.

These are common types of abuse:

- **Physical abuse.** If your partner hurts you, that's physical abuse. This includes hitting, choking, shoving, or using a weapon.
- **Sexual abuse.** Being forced to have sex when you don't want to is abuse. It's also abuse if you aren't able to say no to sex because you are ill, disabled, or have used alcohol or drugs.
- **Emotional abuse.** This can be harder to spot. Your partner may yell at you or insult you. Your partner could cut you off from your friends and family. He or she could also limit the places you go.
- **Financial abuse.** Your partner may control all the money in the household. You could be forced to hand over your pay or benefits. He or she might even steal from you.

How to get help

Leaving an abuser can be hard. Your abuser may threaten or try to harm you or your children. This is a good reason to get expert help before you leave. **Don't try to do this alone.** If you call 311 for the New York City Domestic Violence Hotline, you will have someone on your side. An advocate can help you make a safety plan and stop the abuse in a safe way.

If you don't speak English, you can still get help. You do not need to be a U.S. citizen. **The police do not ask if you are a citizen when you are a crime victim.**

Who to ask

Your doctor. Doctors can help you even when you aren't sick. Talk with your doctor about abuse. What you say to your doctor is private. The doctor can give you good advice.

The police. You can call the police to report abuse. Don't forget—abuse is a crime.



Friends and family. If you can, talk to your friends and family about what's going on. You can even have a secret code to let them know if you're in trouble.

311. Call 311 for the 24-hour New York City Domestic Violence Hotline. The Hotline has advocates you can talk to in over 150 languages. Advocates can help with your situation. The Hotline provides safety planning, referrals, and connections to emergency housing for victims of domestic violence.

National Domestic Abuse Hotline. Call this hotline 24 hours a day to find help near you. They can find a safe place for you to stay. The number is 1.800.799.SAFE (7233) or 1.800.787.3224 (TDD).

New York City Family Justice Centers. These centers are set up so victims can get help from many people all in one visit. You can meet with a prosecutor. You can also talk to a trained counselor. You can even apply for housing and financial help. All this is done in your language. You can get help while your children play safely in the next room.

Online resources. There are several websites you can go to for help and information. They include:

- Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence, www.nyc.gov/domesticviolence
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention
- Violence Against Women, www.womenshealth.gov/violence-against-women
- WomensLaw.org, www.WomensLaw.org
- Safe Horizon, www.safehorizon.org