

Lethality Indicators

- History of Domestic Violence
 - History of Violence is present in 70-80% of DV homicides
 - Therefore, 20% of DV Homicides had no known history of violence
 - In these cases, other lethality indicators become even more relevant, especially Extreme Jealousy, Drug Use and Suicidal Threats
 - Also, violence OUTSIDE the home
- Violence increases in severity or frequency
 - ½ of DV V's killed and
 - ¾ of women murderers
 - had violence w/in 30 days of death
- Threats of homicide or suicide (15X more likely to be murdered)
- Fantasies of homicide or suicide
- Threatened with Weapon
 - 20x more likely
- Access to Weapons
 - 6x more likely
- Isolation of the victim
- Sexual Abuse
- Destruction of victim's property
- Pet abuse
- Obsessed about partner (Extreme Jealousy)
- Stalking
- Hostage Taking
- Rage
- Strangulation
- Depression
- Drug/Alcohol Consumption
- Access to Victim or Family
- SEPARATION!
- Unemployment
- Pregnancy
- Natural Disasters

Lethality indicators are factors that, when present in a domestic relationship, indicate an increased likelihood of murder. The greater the number, the greater the danger; however, no known indicators does not mean safety for the victim. Murders may occur in the absence of these factors.

- Do they own guns?
- Where does he keep them if he owns them?
- Where does he go in his free time?
- Does he have a locker at work?

Isolation of the victim

- Who are your friends?
- Is there anyone I can call for you?
- Who would you turn to for help if you needed it?
- Where do your mom and dad live?
- How is your relationship with them?
- Do you have a cell phone? A home phone?
- Do you have a car? Where? Does it run?
- Who pays the bills?
- Do you work outside the home?
- Where does your money go?
- Do you have a check book?

Sexual Abuse

- Does he use pornography?
- Does he ask you or force you to do things that are painful or make you uncomfortable?
- Does he frequently use bondage items?
- Does he threaten you before or during sex?

Destruction of Victim's Property

- Is property damaged during your arguments?
- Who damaged the property?
- What property got damaged?
- How did the property get damaged?
- Where you present when it was damaged?
- What did he say when he was damaging it?

Pet Abuse

- Do you have pets?
- What kinds of pets?
- Whose pets are they?
- Who tends to their needs?
- Has he ever hurt your pet?
- How did he hurt the animal?
- Where you present the pet was hurt?
- What did he say when he was hurting the pet?

- How would you define his anger on a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 being calm and 10 being a rage?

Depression

- Does he get depressed?
- How often?
- How do you know he is depressed?
- What does he say when he is depressed?
- What does he do when he is depressed?

[Beware: the victim may not realize the abuser is depressed, so listen for the depression clues]

Drug/Alcohol Consumption

- Does he use drugs?
- What kind of drugs?
- How often does he use them?
- How does he act when using them?
- Does he use alcohol?
- How often does he use alcohol?
- How does he act when using alcohol?
- Does he use drugs and alcohol together?
- When was the last time he used drugs or alcohol?

Access to Victim or Family

- Where are you going after we finishing meeting? Where will you be staying between now and your court date?
- Do you have a safe place to stay?
- Does he know where you will be staying?
- Does he have a car?
- Does he have a license?
- Does he drive?
- How does he travel?
- Who are your family?
- Do you have children?
- Where will they be staying between now and the court date?
- Does he know where your family lives?
- Does he know how to get there?
- Has he ever threatened you family?
- Has he threatened them personally, by letter, by phone, e-mail, voicemail, etc?
- Who did he tell the threat to?
- How has he threatened to harm them?
- Are you in fear for your family?

- Who makes the most money?
- How long has he been unemployed?
- How are your finances?
- How is he handling it?

Pregnancy

- Are you pregnant?
- How long?
- When did the abuse start?
- Where does he focus the abuse?
- Have you ever been pregnant before?
- How did he treat you then?
- Was this a planned pregnancy?
- Whose idea was it?
- Are you concerned about your baby's safety?

Natural Disasters

- Is there an ongoing disaster?

Are there any changes you would like to make in your situation? (Most victims don't know what their options are)