



SOUTHWESTERN MICHIGAN HUMAN TRAFFICKING TASK FORCE

HUMAN TRAFFICKING HEALTH & MEDICAL SCREENING

24-HR NATIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING HOTLINE
1-888-3737-888

Health service providers play an important role in helping to identify and assist human trafficking victims. Victims of both labor and sex trafficking may seek medical assistance at some point, due to the dangerous, unsafe and risky nature of their environment. Proper training and having competent screening measures can help better prepare for appropriate responses that may help victims out of their trafficking situation and/or cope with their post-trafficking recovery process.

MAY SEEK MEDICAL HELP FOR:

Pregnancy, Untreated STD, Vaginal Pain,
Physical injuries

- 54% have signs of depression
- 48% have signs of anxiety
- 77% have signs of PTSD
- 93% have signs of sexual violence
- 78% have signs of physical violence

Stat Source: Hossain & Zimmerman 2010, "The Relationship of Trauma to Mental Disorders Among Trafficked and Sexually Exploited Girls and Women"

WHAT TO LOOK FOR:

False appearance of relationship. Victims may be accompanied by their trafficker and indicate they are a family member, friend or romantic partner. Foreign victims may be especially vulnerable if there is a language barrier or other challenges to communication. Take note of:

- Controlling behavior
- The person accompanying the patient doing most or all of the talking

Fear. Victims have a difficult time trusting people, as it is not uncommon for victims to have known their trafficker before the trafficking situation. Fear can stem from:

- Not knowing who is "in" on the crime
- Misconception of legal consequences or not being aware of victims' rights
- Real or perceived retaliation or threats

Mental health. Anxiety, tension, depression, PTSD

Physical health. Malnourishment, fatigue, dehydration, sleep deprivation, dental damage

Embarrassment. Victims may feel shame/fear of being judged.

Body language. Cold sweat, not looking at a person, dry mouth, trembling, voice tremor, muscle tension

Signs of physical abuse. Bruises, cigarette burn marks, fractures, suspicious injuries indicating torture

Tattoo branding. Markings indicating gang affiliation, pimp name, ownership/property.

swmihumantrafficking.org

IFYOU SUSPECT HUMAN TRAFFICKING...

- Separate the victim from the potential trafficker for a full or partial examination
- Provide a trained language interpreter whenever possible
- Have a female nurse/doctor conduct exams for suspected sex trafficking, sexual trauma, sexual exploitation of females
- Call the National Human Trafficking Resource Center Hotline: 1.888.3737.888
- Ask human trafficking-related questions, such as:
 - *Where do you work? Sleep?*
 - *Do you know what city/state you're in?*
 - *Do you owe money? Are you paying off a debt to someone you work for?*
 - *Do you have permission for everything? Are you free to go anywhere alone?*
 - *Have you or your family been threatened?*
 - *Where is your ID? (drivers license/passport) Who holds your ID?*
 - *When was the last time you saw a doctor/dentist?*
- Ask victim-centered trauma-informed questions, such as:
 - *Are you afraid of someone or something?*
 - *Do you have problems going to sleep?*
 - *Did someone hurt you?*
 - *When was the last time you had something to eat?*

physical & mental symptoms

Constitutional	Neurological	Gastro-intestinal	Urogenital	Musculoskeletal
Easily tired Weight loss Loss of appetite	Headaches Dizzy spells Memory difficulty Fainting	Stomach pain Upset stomach Diarrhea Constipation	Painful urination Pelvic pain Vaginal discharge Vaginal bleeding Gynecological infection	Back pain Fractures/Sprains Join/Muscle pain Toothache Facial injuries

Depression		Anxiety	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lacks interest in things • Hopelessness about future • Feeling worthless 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loneliness • Extreme sadness • Suicidal thoughts/ comments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fearful • Tense/Tensed up • Terror or panic spells 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restlessness • Scared abruptly • Nervousness/shakiness

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)		
Re-experiencing event	Avoidance	Increased Arousal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flashbacks/feelings of reliving the event • Intense distress when reminded of event • Nightmares • Physical responses to memory of event (e.g., sweating, trembling, heart pounding) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoiding thoughts/places/people that remind of trauma • Detached and withdrawn from others • Emotionally numb • Loss of interest in once-enjoyed activities • Loss of memories associated with event • Sense of limited future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult breathing • Feeling jumpy • Hyper-vigilance, state of being constantly on alert of danger • Insomnia • Irritability, hostility, anger