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


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

- **Embarassment.** 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.

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IF YOU 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

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

### Depression
- Lacks interest in things
- Hopelessness about future
- Feeling worthless
- Loneliness
- Extreme sadness
- Suicidal thoughts/comments

### Anxiety
- Fearful
- Tense/Tensed up
- Terror or panic spells
- Restlessness
- Scared abruptly
- Nervousness/shakiness

### Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Re-experiencing event</th>
<th>Avoidance</th>
<th>Increased Arousal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flashbacks/feelings</td>
<td>Avoiding</td>
<td>Difficult breathing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intense distress</td>
<td>thoughts/ places/people</td>
<td>Feeling jumpy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>when reminded of event</td>
<td>that remind of trauma</td>
<td>Hyper-vigilant, state of being constantly on alert of danger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nightmares</td>
<td>Detached and withdrawn from others</td>
<td>Insomnia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical responses to</td>
<td>Emotionally numb</td>
<td>Irritability, hostility, anger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>memory of event</td>
<td>Loss of interest in once-enjoyed activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e.g., sweating,</td>
<td>Loss of memories associated with event</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trembling, heart</td>
<td>Sense of limited future</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pounding)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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RESOURCES: Orange County, CA, Human Trafficking Task Force (OCHTTF), US Dept of Education