

# What is domestic violence?

Domestic violence refers to violence within the family or partnership. It inflicts both physical and emotional injuries. There are different forms of domestic violence. Domestic violence is prohibited in Switzerland.

## What is domestic violence?

Domestic violence includes physical, psychological, sexual and economic forms of violence. Domestic violence may occur within the family or partnership: between married people or people who are or were in a relationship in the past. It does not matter whether or not they live together. Violence between parents and children or between other relatives such as siblings, uncles and aunts is also domestic violence.

There are different forms of domestic violence. Often, different forms of violence occur at the same time.

Examples include: hitting, making threats, insulting, bullying, strangling, locking inside the home, pulling by the hair, controlling behaviours, stopping someone from making calls, forcing someone to have sex, forcing someone into marriage, taking away someone's money and neglect.

Domestic violence often occurs in a cycle. It evolves into a spiral that continues to escalate. In the beginning, tension builds in a relationship. This is followed by an outbreak of violence, and then by calm, reconciliation and remorse. After that, tensions build up again and violence reoccurs. Breaking out of a cycle of violence is difficult and almost impossible without support. It's important to get help.

Separation violence is a particular form of domestic violence. Separations are dramatic life events. Before, during and after a separation, the risk of experiencing domestic violence increases significantly. Even in relationships that are not characterised by serious relationship conflicts and domestic violence, violence can occur during separations. Conflicts associated with separation can escalate and lead to serious or fatal violence. It's important for those affected to seek support in separation situations.

## Who is affected?

A lot of people in Switzerland suffer from violence in their families or partnerships. It's important for victims to get help.

**Anyone** can be affected by domestic violence, regardless of age group, social situation or other factors.

Experiencing violence can have a negative impact on a person's health and lead to psychological or psychosomatic illnesses.

Domestic violence is a burden on children. It can have severe consequences for their development. Children suffer not only when they experience violence directly, but also when they witness violence between their parents. For this reason, children affected by violence need support.

Violence is never the answer.

## Additional information (links, addresses, information sheets, brochures)

[www.hallo-aargau.ch/en/haeusliche-gewalt/domestic-violence](http://www.hallo-aargau.ch/en/haeusliche-gewalt/domestic-violence)