

Intimate Partner Violence, Alcohol Abuse, and Serious Psychological Distress

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Intimate Partner Violence

- Intimate partner violence (IPV) is a serious public health problem
- It is estimated that **one-third** of emergency room visits made by women are the result of injury committed by an intimate partner
- Almost **one-quarter** of women in the US will be affected by IPV at some point in their lifetime.
- **41%** of those physically assaulted sustained an injury from the most recent assault.

Immediate and Long-term Outcomes of IPV

- Immediate outcomes
 - injuries
 - displacement from home
- Long-term outcomes
 - physical health outcomes
 - mental health outcomes

Effects on Child Witnesses to IPV

- Internalizing and externalizing behaviors common
- Developmental regression
- Problems with peer relationships and school

Research on IPV outcomes

- Use of clinical samples
- Much remains hidden
- Most cross-sectional, little longitudinal

CDC's Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)

- Annual random-digit-dialed telephone survey conducted by state health departments with assistance from the CDC
- Monitors health risk behaviors among adult, non-institutionalized persons aged 18 and older

IPV Surveillance on the BRFSS

- 2005
16 states and 2 territories
([MMWR, Feb. 8, 2008/57\(05\); 113-117](#))

n = 70,156

- 2007
Hawaii
Nebraska
Virginia

n = 15,170

BRFSS IPV Questions

- 1) Has an intimate partner ever **threatened** you with physical violence? This includes threatening to hit, slap, push, kick, or otherwise hurt you in any way.

BRFSS IPV Questions

2) Has an intimate partner ever attempted physical violence against you? This includes times when they tried to hit, slap, push, kick, or otherwise hurt you, but they were not able to.

BRFSS IPV Questions

- 3) Has an intimate partner **ever** hit, slapped, pushed, kicked, or hurt you in any way?

- 4) Have you **ever** experienced any unwanted sex by a current or former intimate partner?

Acceptability of IPV questions

- Low refusal rates found across two telephone surveys (0.8% on sexual violence item)
- Strong agreement (>95%) that questions about IPV should be included in health surveys
- Agreement did not differ by disclosed victim status

(Black et al., 2006)

Alcohol questions

- Heavy Drinking

Males – 2 or more drinks per day

Females – 1 or more drink per day

- Binge Drinking

Males – 5 or more drinks on one occasion

Females – 4 or more drinks on one occasion

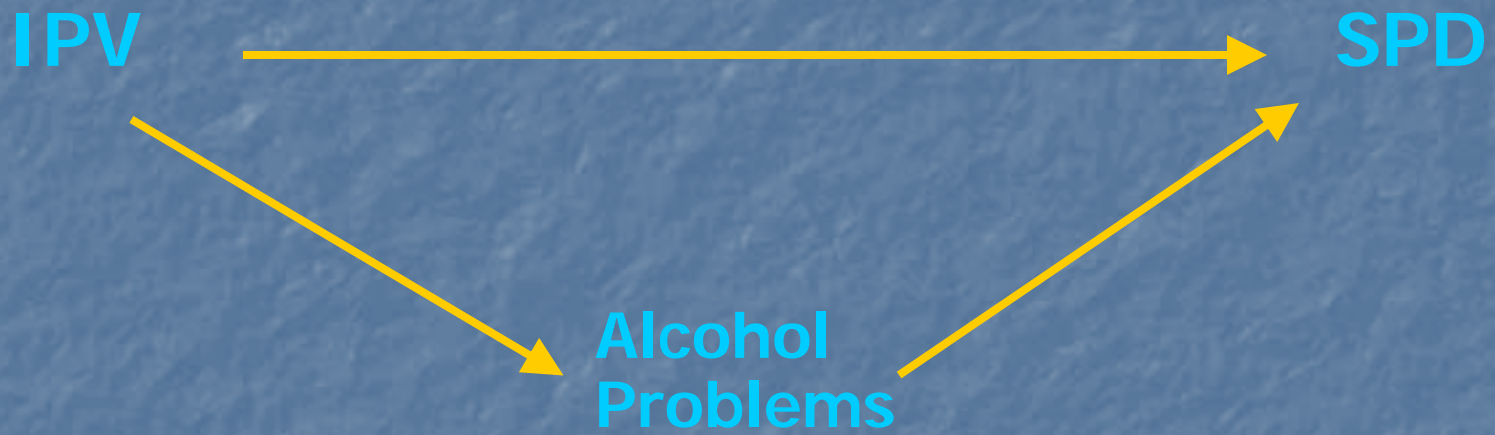
Serious Psychological Distress (Kessler-6)

During the last 30 days, about how much of the time did you feel:

- 1) nervous?
- 2) hopeless?
- 3) restless or fidgety?
- 4) so depressed that nothing could cheer you up?
- 5) that everything was an effort?
- 6) worthless?

Response categories: **All, most, some, a little, none of the time**

Model



IPV Results – 2007 BRFSS

IPV Status	Hawaii Percentage (95%CI)	Nebraska Percentage (95%CI)	Virginia Percentage (95%CI)	Total Percentage (95%CI)
Threatened/ attempted	1.9 (1.4 – 2.5)	2.5 (1.7 – 3.7)	2.0 (1.6 – 2.6)	2.1 (1.7 – .5)
IPV only	9.3 (8.4 – 10.4)	9.0 (7.3 – 11.0)	8.4 (7.1 – 9.9)	8.6 (7.7 – 9.7)
SV only	1.3 (0.9 - 1.7)	1.3 (0.8 – 2.0)	1.8 (1.3 – 2.4)	1.6 (1.3 – 2.1)
IPV + SV	2.6 (2.2 – 3.2)	4.3 (3.3 – 5.6)	3.0 (2.4 – 3.7)	3.2 (2.7 – 3.7)
ANY IPV	15.1 (13.9 – 16.4)	17.0 (14.8 – 19.5)	15.2 (13.7 – 16.9)	15.5 (14.3 – 16.7)

Serious Psychological Distress (SPD) 2007 BRFSS

Mean K-6 score: 3.41 (se = 0.02)

Males: 3.25 (se = 0.03)

Females: 3.56 (se = 0.02)

SPD Prevalence: 3.9% (3.8% – 4.1%)

Males: 3.5% (3.2% - 3.9%)

Females: 4.3% (4.1% - 4.6%)

Alcohol Problems – 2007 BRFSS

Heavy Drinking Prevalence: 5.3% (5.1% - 5.5%)

Males: 6.2% (5.9% - 6.6%)

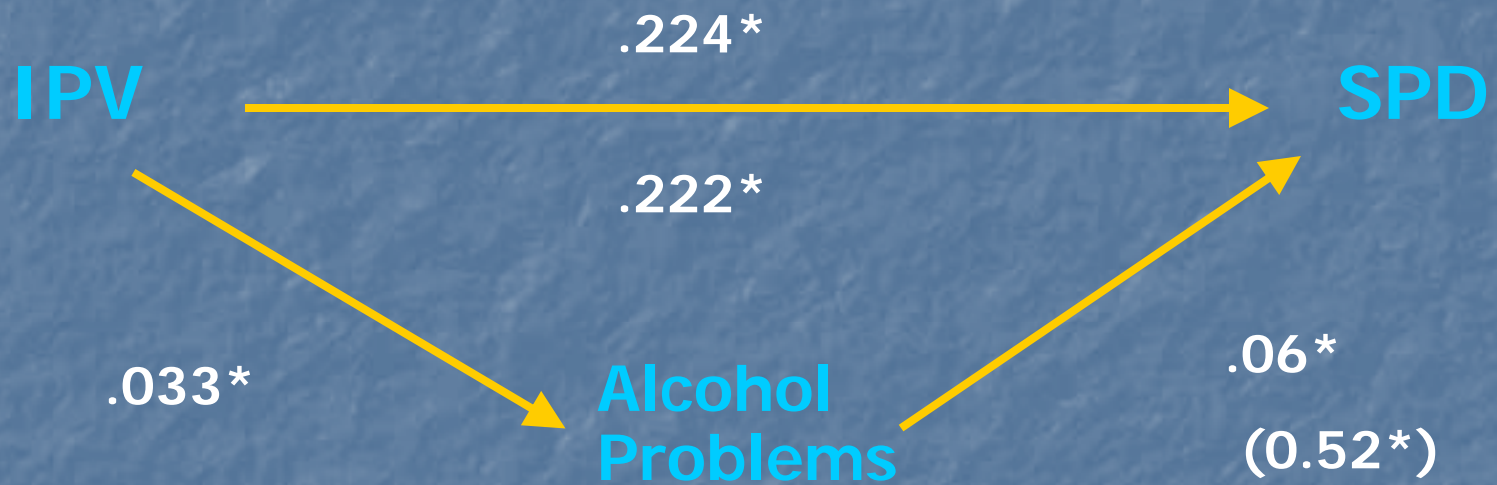
Females: 4.4% (4.2% - 4.6%)

Binge Drinking Prevalence: 16.1% (15.7% - 16.5%)

Males: 22.4% (21.7% - 23.1%)

Females: 10.1% (9.8% - 10.5%)

Model



Partial Mediation indicated

* $p < .05$

Limitations

- BRFSS limited to U.S. adults who have land-line telephone service
- State-wide data cannot be generalized to the U.S. as a whole
- Cross-sectional design limits understanding of causality, can only test associations

Implications and Recommendations

- Physicians should consider screening for IPV when signs of serious psychological stress are present
- Although alcohol only partially mediated the relationship between IPV and SPD, more research is needed to understand the role substance abuse plays in the genesis and continuation of violent spousal interaction
- State health departments should consider including surveillance for IPV in future BRFSS questionnaires

CDC Resources

- <http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/dvp/IPV/default.htm>

Thank you!

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