



Primary Health Care Gender-Based Violence

World Health Organization Physical Exam Guidance and Job Aid

Do a head-to-toe examination, including genito-anal exam

The main reason for the physical examination is to determine what medical care is needed. It is also used to complete any legal documentation.

Communicate

- Assure the survivor that they are in control. They can ask questions, can stop the exam at any time and can refuse any part of the exam.
- Look at the person before you touch them and pay attention to their appearance and emotional state.
- At each step of the exam, tell the survivor what you are going to do, and ask their permission first.
- Ask often if they have any questions and if you can proceed.

Examine

- Make sure equipment and supplies are prepared.
- Take the patient's vital signs—pulse, blood pressure, respiratory rate and temperature.
- Work systematically.
- Be unhurried. Give time to the examination.
- Record all your findings and observations clearly and fully on a standard exam form.
- Document carefully and fully any injury or other mark as this can be important evidence.

Do genito-anal examination

In cases of sexual assault, a genito-anal examination is necessary. This is a sensitive examination, particularly the speculum exam.

- Help the woman feel as comfortable as possible.
- Let her know when and where you will touch her.
- Help the woman to lie on her back with her legs bent, knees comfortably apart.
- Place a sheet over her body. It should be drawn up at the time of the examination.
- Work systematically. Have a good light source to view injuries.
- Record all your findings and observations clearly and fully on a standard exam form.

<p style="text-align: center;">Remember:</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Being sexually assaulted is a traumatic event. Women may be very sensitive to being examined or touched, particularly by a male provider. Proceed slowly. Ask often if she is okay and if you can proceed.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">There is no place for virginity (or 'two-finger') testing; it has no scientific validity. Be very careful not to increase her distress.</p>



Primary Health Care Gender-Based Violence

World Health Organization Physical Exam Guidance and Job Aid

Job Aid

Physical Exam Checklist

Look at all the following	Look for and record
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• General appearance• Hands and wrists, forearms, inner surfaces of upper arms, armpits• Face, including inside of mouth• Ears, including inside and behind ears• Head• Neck• Chest, including breasts• Abdomen• Buttocks, thighs, including inner thighs, legs and feet	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Active bleeding• Bruising• Redness or swelling• Cuts or abrasions• Evidence that hair has been pulled out, and recent evidence of missing teeth• Injuries such as bite marks or gunshot wounds• Evidence of internal traumatic injuries in the abdomen• Ruptured ear drum

Genito-anal examination	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Genitals (external)• Genitals (internal examination, using a speculum)• Anal region (external)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Active bleeding• Bruising• Redness or swelling• Cuts or abrasions• Foreign body presence

Excerpted from World Health Organization, Health care for woman subjected to intimate partner violence or sexual violence: A Clinical Handbook, field-testing version, 2014. Pp 45-47.