Intimate partner violence is common.

1 in 4 Australian women have experienced physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner since age 15.1

1 in 3 Australian women have experienced physical or sexual violence and/or emotional abuse by an intimate partner since age 15.2

This includes violence or abuse by a partner they currently or have previously lived with, as well as violence perpetrated by a non-cohabiting partner.

It has serious impacts on women’s health.3

This includes injuries and homicide, poor mental health, reproductive health problems and problems with alcohol and drug use.

Intimate partner violence is preventable.

Preventing it should be a high priority for preventing poor health among Australian women.

Many factors contribute to intimate partner violence and we all have a part to play in addressing them. All sectors of society need to work together to create an environment in which women and their children are valued, respected and can live free from violence.

Commonwealth, state and territory governments have developed policies, plans and conducted commissions and inquiries to identify the actions to achieve this. A coordinated national approach is also supported through:

- The National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and Their Children 2010-2022. A plan of all Australian governments to support and coordinate prevention and early detection of violence as well as responses to it.
- Change the Story: A Shared Framework for the Primary Prevention of Violence Against Women and Their Children in Australia, focusing on preventing violence from occurring in the first place.

Intimate partner violence has other negative consequences.

It violates the human rights of women and their children.

Affects access to housing and employment and increases gender inequality.

Is costly to women and the economy.

Impairs children’s health and development now and in future generations.

Increases social and economic inequalities.

Intimate partner violence is preventable.

Preventing it should be a high priority for preventing poor health among Australian women.

The best way to reduce the health burden is to stop violence occurring in the first place. Many factors contribute to intimate partner violence and we all have a part to play in addressing them. All sectors of society need to work together to create an environment in which women and their children are valued, respected and can live free from violence.

Top 8 risk factors contributing to disease burden in Australian women aged 18-44 years4 (% estimate)

1. INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE 5.1%
2. ALCOHOL USE 4.1%
3. TOBACCO USE 2.3%
4. WORKPLACE HAZARDS 2.2%
5. OVERWEIGHT/OBESITY 1.8%
6. ILLICIT DRUG USE 1.8%
7. PHYSICAL INACTIVITY 1.8%
8. CHILDHOOD SEXUAL ABUSE 1.2%

As there are interactions between risk factors, it is not correct to add them together.

Among all women it contributes an estimated 2.2% to the burden and is the seventh largest risk factor.

4 As there are interactions between risk factors, it is not correct to add them together.
The estimated impact of 200 diseases among women across Australia are measured by:

- Birth
- Healthy life
- Years of ill-health
- Years of life lost
- Death

Together these are called the “total disease burden”.

### Estimating the overall disease burden among Australian women

The estimated impact of 200 diseases among women across Australia are measured by:

- Years of ill-health that women live with as a result of suffering those diseases; and
- The numbers of years lost among women who die earlier than they would have if they had not suffered from those diseases.

### Estimating the disease burden of intimate partner violence

This takes into account the prevalence of violence, diseases caused and the years of ill-health and premature death.

#### Anxious Disorders

- 33%

#### Depressive Disorders

- 36%

#### Alcohol Use Disorders

- <1%

#### Suicide and Self-Inflicted Injuries

- 20%

#### Early Pregnancy Loss

- 8.1%

#### Homicide and Violence

- 2.3%

#### Early Pregnancy Loss

- 9.7%

#### Depressive and anxiety disorders and suicide and self-harm are among the top 10 leading causes of the overall burden in women aged 18–44 age group.

A large part of this is contributed by intimate partner violence.

#### Total disease burden women aged 18–44 years

**Estimated contribution of intimate partner violence**

- 5.1%

Reducing intimate partner violence will help to reduce the burden of disease among Australian women.

Source: Data courtesy of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2016.
Intimate partner violence is common. An estimated 3 in 5 Indigenous women have experienced physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner since age 15.¹

It contributes an estimated 10.9% to disease burden in Indigenous women aged 18–44 years. This is more than any other risk factor.

Top 8 risk factors contributing to disease burden²

1. INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE 10.9%
2. ALCOHOL USE 7%
3. OVERWEIGHT/OBESITY 6.2%
4. TOBACCO USE 5.9%
5. CHILDHOOD SEXUAL ABUSE 4.7%
6. PHYSICAL INACTIVITY 4.2%
7. ILLICIT DRUG USE 3.7%
8. HIGH PLASMA GLUCOSE* 3.4%

² As there are interactions between risk factors, it is not correct to add them together.  * A risk factor for diabetes and other chronic diseases.

There is a gap in the burden between Indigenous and non-Indigenous women.

Among all Indigenous women it contributes 6.4% to the burden and is the third largest risk factor.

Estimated rates of burden for each disease due to intimate partner violence are higher among Indigenous women aged 18–44 years than non-Indigenous women of the same age.

INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE 5 X higher
ALCOHOL USE 5 X higher
OVERWEIGHT/OBESITY 15 X higher
Tobacco use 11 X higher
EARLY PREGNANCY LOSS 7 X higher
SUICIDE AND SELF-INFLICTED INJURIES 13 X higher
HOMICIDE AND VIOLENCE

Intimate partner violence contributes more than any other risk factor to the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous women aged 18–44 years.

Estimated contribution made by the top 8 risk factors to the gap in rate of total burden of disease between Indigenous and non-Indigenous women³

1 INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE 15.3%
2 OVERWEIGHT/OBESITY 10.5%
3 TOBACCO USE 9.9%
4 ALCOHOL USE 9.4%
5 CHILDHOOD SEXUAL ABUSE 7.8%
6 PHYSICAL INACTIVITY 6.8%
7 HIGH PLASMA GLUCOSE* 5.7%
8 ILLICIT DRUG USE 5.6%

³ As there are interactions between risk factors, it is not correct to add them together.  * A risk factor for diabetes and other chronic diseases.

Eliminating intimate partner violence will help to close the health gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

Source: Data courtesy of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2016.