



Additional Scripts for Clinic Assessment

- **Example for EC Visit:** “So you are in for the morning-after pill. I’m glad you knew about it...Can you tell me about the first day of your last period and any unprotected sex you had after that, including the most recent time?”

I ask all patients when they come in for EC is if the sex you had was something you wanted to have happen? (*Pause*) Or if you think your partner was trying to get you pregnant when you didn’t want to be?”

- **Example for Pregnancy Test Visit:** “While we wait for your pregnancy test results, I wanted to talk with you about what I’ve been learning about women and pregnancy. There are a lot of studies showing that women worry about getting pregnant when they don’t want to be because of a partner—like he won’t use a condom when he says he will. Or he messes with your birth control because he wants to have a baby with you. Can you tell me a little about the sex that led up to you needing a pregnancy test today?”

- **Example of Multiple Recent Pregnancy Tests:** “Hi, I was looking back in your file and saw that you have come in for a number of pregnancy tests recently and I’m so glad you know you can come here. I also noticed that you wrote on your form that you didn’t want to be pregnant right now. Some women I see have partners who try to get them pregnant when they don’t want to be, either through pushing them to have sex when they don’t want to or aren’t protected or by messing with their birth control. How often is something like this happening in your relationship?”

- **Example of STI/HIV Visit:** “Hi, so glad you knew that we could do STD testing here, so the way this works is you leave a urine sample and we send it to the lab and we will call you if there is a problem so make sure I have good complete phone numbers to contact you just in case.

One of things I’m talking to clients coming in for this service is something I recently learned at a training—that 1/3 of girls coming in just to get tested for STDs have problems in their relationship. Like they have been hurt by a partner--or had to do sexual stuff they don’t want to. So I’m checking with everyone I see for this kind of visit—how often is something like this coming up with your partner?”

- **Annual Exams:** “Since the last time you came in, have there been any changes in your sexual partner(s) or have there been any additional partners? (Repeat what the client says here, in this example she says no.) Ok, no changes. And how about your birth control method, is that still working for you? Ok, you like the pill. Do you feel like you can talk with your partner about birth control? Does he

know you are on the pill? When he gets mad does he ever take them away from you in any way?"

- **Initial Exams:** "So this is your first time here? Glad you knew about us. We are going to talk about methods of birth control today, do an exam, test for STDs and do a Pap smear. One of things I talk with all women about who come here for care is about healthy relationships— and whether they have any worries about being able to control when they have sex, get pregnant, or if they have difficulty talking to partners about condoms, or they worry they will get an STD. That kind of stuff. I want to make sure that all patients know their rights around sexual relationships just like they know how to use condoms. How often do you feel like sex isn't under your control?"
- **Abortion Clients:** "Does your partner know you're here today for an abortion?" (If client tells you 'no'). "I know that a lot of times women can't tell their partners about the abortion because they are afraid what he will do or say, is that something you are worried about? What do you think would happen if he found out, what would that look like?"
- **Partner Notification of Positive STI** "I'm really glad you came in to get tested. And we are going to treat your infection with a single dose medication. I know it can be hard to talk about this stuff—especially if you are worried your partner will blame you for the STD. What do you think will happen when you tell him? Are you worried that he will hurt you? Would it help for us to tell him here and for you to bring him here to talk about it? What can we do to help?"
- **Sexual Decision Making** "I'm glad you knew to come into Planned Parenthood for an exam (or insert other visit type here). One of the things that we talk about like explaining that a pap smear is a screening for HPV a virus that can cause abnormal cells on you cervix. We also talk about healthy sexual relationships. I know that might seem funny-- but we have learned that a lot of young and older women don't always get to decide when they have sex. Their partners decide for them. And that can make you feel uncomfortable or upset. Does anything like that ever happen with your partners?"
- **Condom Negotiation** "Ok, so we've talked about how important using condoms are for preventing STDs. And I've learned that giving someone a bag of condoms doesn't mean they feel comfortable asking their partners to use them. Maybe it's embarrassing or maybe it doesn't feel safe. What do you think your partner would say about your asking him to use them? Would you feel comfortable asking him to use them? Do you think he would accuse you of stepping out of the relationship or not loving him?"
- **Changing Birth Control Method** "Ok, so you want to switch birth control methods—can you tell me about what you didn't like about the most recent method you were using? Did your partner support the method you were using most recently? What will he think about the change? Or is this change something he was encouraging? "I want to make sure that we

come up with the best method for you—and one of the things we know is that sometimes partners mess with women’s birth control so she is more likely to get pregnant. Is there ever a situation where you worry about anything like that with him?”

- **Lifetime Exposure to Violence** “So we are going to talk about birth control and your exam in just a minute. First, I’m going to talk about something that may be out of left field. I am talking to all patients about their histories with family and partner violence. Because we know that some people never would get to talk about it otherwise and there are great resources in the community if you or anyone you know has had that happen to them. The other reason we bring this up is that sometimes women who have been hurt they have more difficulty in their sexual relationships—including being able to talk with partners about controlling when they will be pregnant or being safe in that relationship. Is this something that is an issue for you in your relationships?”

Providing a “Scripted Response”

No matter what response your patient gives to screening questions on violence, you have an opportunity to educate and provide support. Scripted responses help you clearly and succinctly communicate all the information that you need to give to a patient. In addition to general good counseling practice such as using non-judgmental active listening skills, providing supportive messages, and maintaining cultural specificity, a scripted response on violence should also provide information, respond to immediate safety issues, and make referrals as needed.

If She Says No

Many women may indicate that violence is not an issue in their lives. “I’m glad to hear that isn’t happening to you. Here is a card about healthy relationships. I give it to all my patients in case they have a friend or a family member who you are worried about so you know how to help.”

If She Says Yes—Violence is a Current Issue

If your patient discloses that she is currently in a violent situation, there are some additional considerations that must be addressed. After validating her disclosure, address any immediate safety concerns.

- “I am worried about your safety since you told me about your partner hurting you. Is the person you told me about in the clinic today? Are you in immediate danger? Are there weapons in the house? Have you ever been afraid for your life?”
- “Is there anyone you would consider talking to about this or who would be supportive of you if you were hurt? We know that connecting with supportive people that are safe really helps women emotionally and physically too. Sometimes even calling a hotline number can help so you always have a place to turn...” (Provide domestic violence resource information)

If She Says Yes to Birth Control Sabotage

- “There are some methods of birth control that your partner doesn’t have to know about so you don’t have to be worried that you will be pregnant when you don’t want to be. And, there are really good people to talk to if you are ever in a situation with him where you feel afraid or threatened...here is a card to take with you today that has phone numbers and information about where to go if you need help or someone to talk to...”
- “I’m glad you shared that with me. It happens a lot and it isn’t right. There are some methods of birth control that your partner can’t mess with, like Depo, the IUD and some others that we can talk about in a minute.”
- “What you told me makes me wonder if your partner is making you afraid or hurting you in other ways?” “I want to thank you for sharing that with me. You didn’t deserve that. I have phone numbers for really good people to talk to who can really help. I also want talk about methods that are less easy to forget taking and less easy for your partner to know about so you don’t have to worry you’ll get pregnant.”

Partner Notification of Positive STI

- “I’m really glad you came in to get tested. And we are going to treat your infection with a single dose medication. I know it can be hard to talk about this stuff—especially if you are worried your partner will blame you for the STD. What do you think will happen when he is told? Are you worried that he will hurt you? Would it help for us to tell him here and for you to bring him here to talk it? What can we do to help?”

If she says yes to relationship problems but doesn’t disclose more than something vague:

- “I’m glad you came in today and thanks for talking to me. You mentioned things are sometimes complicated in your relationship. I just want you to know that sometimes things can get worse. I hope this is never the case, but if you are ever in trouble you can come here for help. I am also going to give you a card with a hotline number on it. You can call the number anytime 24/7. They really get how complicated it can be when you love someone and sometimes it feels unhealthy or scary. The hotline is full of women who have experienced this stuff or know about it in a personal way.”