

CASE:

Barbara Smith

PATIENT

Name:

Barbara Smith

Age:

38 years old

Occupation:

Housewife

Family situation:

Married to Rob - Lawyer
2 children - Adam aged 8, Anne aged 6
Non smoker, <2 drinks of alcohol per day

Past history:

Nil significant

Medications:

OC Pill

Allergies:

Nil

Brief Statement of the Situation

You are 38 years old with two children under 10 years. You are married to a lawyer. You come to see the doctor, who you have seen for the past four to five years. You have been feeling extremely tired and have been suffering from headaches lately

The other issue is that your husband is often violent towards you. A few days ago he hit and punched you several times in the back and chest. You thought he was going to kill you. This physical violence has escalated over the past year. He is particularly bad when he has been drinking, but it can happen when he is sober. He is under increasing stress at work.

He has been emotionally abusive since you became pregnant with your first child, "You're useless at everything." "You fat, ugly bitch."

He has threatened that if you leave he will 'make sure' he has custody of the children. He is often violent towards you in front of the children.

How to play the role

Timid, worn out. Ashamed of the bruises. Try to make excuses for the bruising, "clumsiness." If the doctor asks you directly you reluctantly admit that your husband did it.

Do not volunteer the information easily, only do so if you feel supported and listened to by the doctor.

Only admit to domestic violence if you feel comfortable. The doctor will need to ask you directly.