WHO Says Violence Against Women Is a ’Global Health Epidemic’

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More than a third of all women globally are attacked or abused by their hustands or boyfriends, according to a new international study by the World Health Organization (WHO) and reported by the Huffington Post. Translated into statistics, this suggests that almost two out of five women who were murder victims worldwide were killed by their closest intimate partners.

“This happens to all women,” said Charlotte Watts, a health policy expert at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine and one of the report’s authors. “It’s not just poor women, or women in a certain country. This really is a global issue.”

The report stated that violence against women is a root cause for a vast range of acute and chronic health problems in the world today. What’s more, immediate injuries, such as broken bones, bruises and cuts, often lead to long-term health problems including depression, stress, and alcohol-related disorders among battered women.

Experts involved with the study also said that international abuse contributes to increased pregnancy risks and complications, sexually transmitted infections and HIV.

In response to the startling statistics, the WHO is issuing international guidelines for health workers on how to recognize and help women suffering from domestic or sexual abuse. This includes ensuring that women have access to confidential consultation rooms, adequate and safe referral systems and guaranteeing they not be sent back home if it’s determined they might be harmed by their partners.

Physical and sexual abuse during youth can also create a slew of negative health effects that show up during adulthood. Click here to read more.

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