

SPOTTING THE SIGNS IN A CLINICAL SETTING



There are common physical, behavioral, and emotional signs of sex or labor victimization.

Remember: *Not all signs have to be present* for someone to be a trafficking victim but any combination of these in adults or minors should trigger the suspicions of staff or practitioners.

Waiting Room

THE PATIENT:

- Does not complete their own forms (especially if an adult)
- Seems dependent on/controlled by the person they're with
- Doesn't speak much or at all
- Seems timid or scared
- Doesn't have possession/control of personal documentation

Intake Form

HISTORY AND REASON FOR VISIT SUGGEST:

- Multiple or recurrent STIs, pregnancies, abortions; multiple sexual partners
- Frequent ER or hospital visits
- Lack of routine healthcare (no primary care physician, no insurance)
- Violence-related injuries
- Job-related injuries
- Substance abuse or addiction

Clinical assessment or exam

COMMON SIGNS SEEN IN VICTIMS:

- Conflicting, confusing, or vague explanations for injuries
- Patient doesn't speak for themselves (language barrier and/or allows others to speak for them)
- Untreated health issue that has progressed (e.g., untreated broken bones or skin issues)
- Physical abuse signs (e.g., kicked, punched, burned, trauma to genitals or rectum)
- Poor general health and hygiene (e.g., malnutrition, dehydration, stress, fatigue, excessively dirty/worn clothes)
- Psychological signs (e.g., depression, anxiety, fear, paranoia, low self-esteem)



Additional **labor** trafficking victim signs:

- Dirty/excessively worn clothes
- Extreme exhaustion or fatigue
- Reports working long or unusual hours
- Respiratory or systemic illnesses like fevers, bodily injury, and/or pain
- Avoids eye contact with employers and outsiders
- Appears fearful of or controlled by employer
- Lacks vehicle or access to transportation
- Unaware of surroundings
- Owes a large debt to a person or business
- Unpaid or paid very little
- Unusual restrictions at work



Additional **sex** trafficking victim signs:

- Branding tattoos or use of slang terms (e.g., "Daddy")
- Not wearing weather-appropriate clothing
- Seeming to adhere to scripted or rehearsed responses
- Reasons away bruises or ligature marks
- Trauma to vagina or rectum; impacted tampon
- Reproductive health or urinary tract/bladder issues
- Detachment or disassociation disorder signs
- Depersonalization or derealization signs (e.g., dulled emotions or affect)
- Hostility
- Suicidal ideation
- Resistant to care and assistance
- Engaged in commercial sex activity



Important: If you are not the practitioner examining and providing treatment and you notice these signs, share your concerns with the practitioner immediately. Always follow the best practice guidelines for working with a potential victim and adhere to state and federal laws as well as your organization's policies.