Ask the Sexpert

Sexologist Rachael L. Ross, MD, PhD, a.k.a. Dr. Rachael answers your questions.

March 12, 2012 By Rachael L. Ross, MD, PhD

Q: What exactly is reproductive coercion?

A: On television, this is a popular image: The materialistic gold-digging woman gets pregnant by an unsuspecting man to trap him in the relationship or stake a claim on his money. But in real life, this happens far less than imagined. Instead it's more common for men to pressure their partners—directly or indirectly—to become pregnant, which is what reproductive coercion is.

In reproductive coercion, a man might threaten to leave unless his partner gets pregnant; he might hide birth control pills or poke holes in condoms or refuse to use them; he might even rape her.

Reproductive coercion is perhaps the least discussed form of intimate partner violence, and most women I've spoken to seem unaware it exists.

Still, despite these misperceptions and the lack of awareness, a recent survey of callers to the National Domestic Violence Hotline indicated that 25 percent of them were victims of reproductive coercion.

Editor's note: for the National Domestic Violence Hotline, call 800.799.SAFE, 800.799.7233.

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http://beta.docker.realhealthmag.com/article/Sexpert-reproductive-coercion-22039-5056