Reproductive Coercion

There are many forms of abuse discussed such as physical, emotional, sexual, financial, and even digital. One not as prevalently discussed is reproductive coercion. This is a form of power and control where one partner strips the other of the ability to control their own reproductive system. It is sometimes difficult to identify this coercion because many forms of abuse are often occurring simultaneously. Reproductive coercion can be exerted in many ways:
- Refusing to use a condom or other type of birth control
- Breaking or removing a condom during intercourse
- Lying about their methods of birth control (ex. lying about having a vasectomy, lying about being on the pill)
- Refusing to “pull out” if that is the agreed upon method of birth control
- Forcing you to not use any birth control (ex. the pill, condom, birth control shot, ring, etc.)
- Removing birth control methods (ex. rings, IUDs, contraceptive patches)
- Sabotaging birth control methods (ex. poking holes in condoms, tampering with pills or flushing them down the toilet)
- Withholding finances needed to purchase birth control
- Monitoring your menstrual cycles
- Forcing pregnancy and not supporting your decision about whether or not you want to have a child
- Forcing you to get an abortion, or preventing you from getting one
- Threatening you or acting violent if you don’t comply with their wishes to either end or continue a pregnancy
- Continually keeping you pregnant (aborting your pregnancy again shortly after you give birth)

Reproductive coercion can also come in the form of pressure, guilt, and shame from an abusive partner. Some examples if your abusive partner is constantly talking about having children or making you feel guilty for not having or wanting children with them — especially if you already have kids with someone else.

Experiencing even one or two of these behaviors in a relationship is a red flag that abuse may be present. Remember, each type of abuse is serious, and no one deserves to experience abuse of any kind, for any reason. To reach out for help, schedule an appointment with a YWCA or DV counselor at www.millersville.edu/dvhp or with the counseling center on campus at http://www.millersville.edu/counsel/services.php.

Source: http://www.thetoteline.org/tho-abuse/abuse-defned/