# A screen shot of a computer  Description automatically generatedworkplace violence in healthcare

Violence in the workplace has become a recognized hazard in the healthcare industry. It can affect and involve workers, clients, customers, and visitors and ranges from threats and verbal abuse to physical assaults and even homicide.

Studies have indicated that mealtimes, visiting hours and patient transfers are the primary times that acts of violence typically occur. Assaults may arise when a patient is involuntarily admitted, under the influence of medications or substances or denied service.

*Tips to identify imminent violence:*

* Verbal expressions of anger or frustration.
* Body language such as threatening gestures.
* Signs of drugs, alcohol, or medication usage.
* Presence of a weapon.

*Behaviors to assist with diffusing anger:*

* Present a calm, caring attitude.
* Do not match threats.
* Do not give orders or demands, ask the patient politely.
* Acknowledge the person’s feelings (i.e., “I can tell this frustrates you”).
* Avoid any behaviors that could be mistaken as aggressive.

Remain alert throughout your shift:

* Evaluate each situation for potential violence when you enter a room or begin to relate to a patient or visitor.
* Be vigilant throughout the encounter.
* Do not isolate yourself with a potentially violent person.
* Always keep an open path for exiting; do not let a potentially violent person stand between you and the door.

If you find yourself in a potentially violent situation that cannot be de-escalated quickly, remove yourself from the scene and contact security or your supervisor. All cases of workplace violence should be reported immediately to supervisors or management.

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