

# Personal Health Portfolio



## Chapter 16 How Safe Are You?

Violence is a serious health problem on many college and university campuses. Many students who survive violent encounters are left with permanent physical and emotional scars. The purpose of this activity is to help you assess how well you protect yourself from becoming a victim of violence. Self-defense includes knowing the factors in your environment that may place you at risk for being a victim of violence. Consider the following statements and decide whether each one is always, sometimes, or never true for you.

General safety considerations	Always	Sometimes	Never
I am aware of my surroundings.			
I tell someone where I'm going whenever I leave home.			
I'm careful about giving personal information or my daily schedule to people I don't know.			
I vary my daily routine and walking patterns.			
If I walk at night, I walk with others.			
Auto safety	Always	Sometimes	Never
I look in the backseat before I get in my car.			
I look around before parking, stopping, or getting into or out of my car.			
I keep my car doors locked at all times.			
I have a plan of action in case my car breaks down.			
I scan ahead of me and behind me, with my mirrors, for potential dangers.			
I avoid dangerous, high-risk places whenever possible.			
If hit from behind, I drive to the nearest police station or well-lit, populated area, motioning for the person who hit me to follow.			
If I notice anyone loitering near my car, I go straight to a safe place and call the police.			
I never hitchhike.			
ATM safety	Always	Sometimes	Never
I avoid using ATMs at night.			
I try to take someone with me when I use an ATM.			
I look for suspicious people or activity before entering or driving into an ATM area.			
I do not write my personal identification number on any paper I carry with me.			
I take all my ATM and credit card receipts with me to avoid leaving behind personal information.			

Violence, rape, and homicide	Always	Sometimes	Never
I limit my alcohol or drug use intake so I am aware of my surroundings.			
I monitor my drinks at parties.			
I refuse to be with anyone who seems violent.			
I do not allow partners to threaten or intimidate me.			
I don't stay around anyone who has a gun and is drinking alcohol or using other drugs.			
If a partner is physically or verbally abusive, I have a safety plan to end the relationship.			
Ramps and parking lots	Always	Sometimes	Never
I park in well-lit areas.			
I avoid walking down ramps in parking lots if there are other options.			
I keep my arms as free as possible when walking to my car.			
I check the backseat of my car before getting in.			
Public transportation	Always	Sometimes	Never
While waiting for transportation, I am aware of my immediate surroundings.			
While waiting for transportation, I place myself so that I am protected from behind.			
I hold items under my arm so that they will be difficult to grab.			
While riding on buses or trains, I look aware and alert.			

## SCORING

Give yourself 3 points for each “Always” answer, 2 points for each “Sometimes,” and 0 points for each “Never.”

Score: \_\_\_\_\_

**90–99** You are probably safe as long as you continue to follow these precautions.

**80–89** You may need to reexamine some of your habits and make changes to improve your safety.

**79 or less** You may need to make significant changes in your habits to improve your safety.

*Source:* Adapted from *Wellness: Concepts and Applications*, 5th ed., by D. J. Ansbaugh, M. H. Hamrick, and F. D. Rosato. Copyright © 2005 The McGraw-Hill Companies. Reprinted by permission of The McGraw-Hill Companies.

## CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS

- Based on your responses to the questions, what is your risk level? Where are there areas for improvement? What are key changes that you can make to lower your risk in these areas?
- What is your overall perception of the safety of your college campus? What are a few ways your campus and overall community can improve on safety?