OBJECTIVE: To investigate and compare self-esteem, coping methods and general health in women who have experienced partner violence living in the Northeast region of Thailand.

Methodology: The study was carried out at two sites: a primary care unit, and a drug treatment center. Women who showed abuse indicators based on the abuse indicator screening questionnaire received counseling from a nurse who was trained on the assessment of and care for women who had experienced intimate partner violence. Evaluations of abused women’s self-esteem, coping, and general health were carried out before and after counseling.

Results: Seventeen women reported having experienced partner violence and had displayed at one time or another indicator symptoms such as headaches, stomach pain, weakness, anxiety and depression. After receiving counseling, abused women showed better self-esteem (t = -4.80, p<0.001) and improved health status according to the General Health Questionnaire (z = -3.09, p<0.01). In addition, they felt the need to use less avoidance coping strategies (z = 9.19, p<0.01) with a better approach to coping styles (z = -2.59, p<0.01).

Conclusions: Nurses trained in counseling can help improve the health of abused women, raise their self-esteem and encourage them to use the proper coping strategies.

Key words: Coping, counseling, general health, intimate partner violence, self-esteem.