

# Safety For Seniors Elder Abuse



*Elder abuse is any harm done to an older person caused by a relative, friend, caregiver or person on whom the older person relies for their basic needs.*

Abuse may take one or more of the following forms:

## Physical

- Assault
- Sexual assault
- Unnecessary physical restraint
- Burns, cuts, bruises, rope marks or welts

## Neglect

- Abandonment
- failing to provide adequate food, medical services or basic needs

## Financial

- Theft or misuse of pension cheques, money or property
- forcing an older person to change a will or sell personal property
- Misuse of Power of Attorney
- Fraud, forgery or extortion

## Psychological

- Threatening, yelling, insulting, ignoring or frightening
- treating an older person as a

child

## Who are the abused?

- They generally know and trust their abusers.
- Most victims are mentally competent and able to make decisions for themselves.
- Older persons who depend on others for daily care may be more at risk.

## Who are the Abusers?

- Usually someone who has control or influence over the older person.
- Abusers are frequently dependent on the older person for money or a place to live.
- Individuals with a history of drug or alcohol abuse, or family violence.

## What are the signs?

- Unexplained physical injuries
- Poor hygiene, bedsores
- Anxiety, depression, fearful
- Malnutrition or dehydration
- Over-sedation
- Unpaid bills or missing

property without explanation

## Why the silence?

- Fear or retaliation or punishment
- Afraid of being placed in an institution
- Shame, if the abuser is a family member

## What can be done?

If you are being abused, know someone who might be abused, or are an abuser, it is important to seek help from a public health nurse, social worker, doctor, lawyer or the police.

**For More Information on this subject, please contact:**

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