

Elder Abuse



UHN

Facts

- **No older person should ever be mistreated or abused.**
- Most victims of abuse are able to make their own decisions.
- An older person can be abused once or many times. Even once is too often.
- An older person can experience one or many types of abuse.

What Is Elder Abuse?

Elder Abuse is any type of harm towards an older person. Abuse usually happens when the older person needs help from the abuser. Abuse can also happen from a stranger.

Ways an Older Person Can Be Abused:

➤ **Emotionally**

The abuser may, for example, threaten, scream, frighten, insult or ignore the older person.

➤ **Neglect**

The abuser may not give food, medicine or health services to the older person. The abuser also may leave the older person alone for hours knowing that the person is unsafe or needs help.

➤ **Physical**

There are many examples of physical abuse: hitting, pushing, grabbing, shaking, hair pulling, throwing objects etc. The abuser can also lock the older person in their room or keep them in bed or in a chair.

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➤ **Financial**

The abuser may take the older person's money (for example, cash, pension cheques, savings) or force the older person to sell the home.

➤ **Sexual**

The abuser may force any type of sex on an older person (such as touching, kissing, hugging or intercourse etc.).

Where Does Abuse Happen?

Abuse usually happens in the home. It can also happen in hospitals, retirement homes, boarding homes and nursing homes.

Who Abuses Older People?

- family or relatives
- anyone who has contact or a relationship with the older person

Signs and Symptoms of Abuse

- bruises, cuts, skin sores or broken bones
- weight loss
- dirty clothes, hair, teeth and body
- pills not given regularly
- the older person may feel depressed, sad or very afraid of talking about the abuse

Why an Abused Older Person may not Ask for Help

The older person may:

- be afraid of what the abuser will do to them
- worry they will be put in a nursing home
- feel embarrassed
- feel no one will believe them
- not be able to tell someone about the abuse (for example, difficulty speaking, not speaking the language, confused etc.)

If you are being abused, there is help.

Talk to your doctor, nurse, counsellor or anyone else you feel you can trust.

You Can Also Call

Victim Support Line

(8 a.m. - 10 p.m., open 7 days a week)

Toronto office:

416-314-2447

Toll free:

1-888-579-2888

Family Service Association

416-755-5565

(Ask to speak with a Social Worker in the Elder Abuse Department. You do not need to give your name unless you want to.)

Circle of Care

416-635-2860

(Ask to speak with a Social Worker in the Elder Abuse Department. You do not need to give your name unless you want to.)

Advocacy Centre for the Elderly

416-598-2656

(Free and private legal advice)

Toronto Police – Elder Abuse Coordinator

416-808-7040