



RESOURCES

Understanding and Preventing Elder Abuse

What is Elder Abuse?

Elder abuse is harm, neglect, or mistreatment of an older adult by someone they trust. It can happen once or repeatedly and includes physical harm, emotional harm, neglect, or financial exploitation.

Abuse is never the victim's fault and is a violation of dignity and human rights.

Types of Elder Abuse

Type	Plain Definition	Examples
Financial Abuse	Taking or controlling a senior's money or property without permission.	Stealing cash; Pressuring for signatures; Blocking bank access; Scams.
Physical Abuse	Using physical force to cause harm or intimidation.	Hitting, slapping, restraining, choking.
Sexual Abuse	Any unwanted sexual contact or behavior.	Touching or kissing without consent; Sexual acts during care.
Psychological (Emotional) Abuse	Words or actions that cause fear, shame, or isolation.	Threats, insults, isolation, controlling behavior.
Neglect/Abandonment	Failing to meet a senior's basic needs (food, shelter, care).	Leaving someone alone, no medication, unsafe living conditions.

Key Statistics

- 1 in 6 seniors experience abuse every year.
- 80% of abusers are caregivers.
- Victims of abuse are 2× more likely to die prematurely.
- Neglect is the most common caregiver abuse.

Warning Signs

- Unexplained injuries or "accidents".
- Sudden withdrawal, depression, or fear of a person.
- Missing money or valuables; unpaid bills.
- Poor hygiene or unsafe living conditions.
- No access to medication, glasses, or aids.
- Neglect (lack of hygiene, food, clothing)
- Learn more about the warning signs by visiting the link at the bottom of this resource.

5 Steps to Stay Safe

1. Speak to Someone You Trust – Friend, family member, or caregiver support.
2. Stay Connected – Regular calls and visits reduce isolation.
3. Secure Your Documents – Bank cards, PINs, IDs.
4. Create a safety plan – See the link below this resource for how to create a safety plan.
5. Know Your Rights – You have the right to safety, dignity, and respect.
6. Ask for Help – Use the resource numbers below or contact CHATS Team.

If You Suspect Abuse (Action Plan)

- Call the police if you have immediate concerns about an older adult's safety. You must report abuse when the victim lives in a retirement home or a long-term care home in Ontario.
- Find a safe person or place (friend, family, shelter).
- Document injuries or incidents (photos, journal).
- Call Seniors Safety Line (1-866-299-1011) or CHATS (1-877-452-4287).
- Contact Legal Aid Ontario or Law Society Referral Service for legal support.
- Visit the link at the bottom of this resource to view specific questions you can ask an elderly person who you suspect may be being abused.

Key Resources

Resource	Contact
Police (Emergency)	911
CHATS Caregiver Support Team	1-877-452-4287
Seniors Safety Line	1-866-299-1011
Women's Support Network (24/7)	1-800-263-6734
Elder Abuse Prevention Ontario	www.eapon.ca / 416-916-6728
Legal Aid Ontario	1-800-668-8258
Law Society Referral Service	1-855-947-5255
Ontario Crime Stoppers	1-800-222-8477

Learn more by visiting: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/information-about-elder-abuse>