

Elder Care and Safety



Older people often depend on family members and other caregivers. People who are close to an older person sometimes mistreat or neglect them. This is called elder abuse. Family members or people outside of the family can abuse older people. Elder abuse can be physical, emotional, sexual or financial. It is often connected to neglect. Neglect is when you do not help another person with their needs.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse can include anything that causes harm or distress:

- slapping, hitting, pushing, shaking, shoving or restraining
- using physical restraints when they don't need them
- giving someone too much medication or not giving the medication they need
- not giving food or giving the wrong kind of food
- using force to give food or medication

Emotional or Psychological Abuse

Emotional or psychological abuse can include:

- using threats or fear to control someone
- keeping friends or family members away from someone
- treating someone like a child by not allowing them to make decisions
- telling someone they have to leave their home or move to a nursing home
- controlling someone who has memory loss or dementia

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is also a type of elder abuse. Sexual abuse includes any type of sexual behaviour that the other person does not want. Older people in nursing homes cannot legally agree to sexual activity with workers in a nursing home.



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Financial Abuse

Financial abuse is one of the most common types of elder abuse. This can include:

- taking away an older person's control of their own money
- controlling or tricking an older person so they give you money
- selling an older person's things when you don't have permission
- keeping money or not correctly using money that you manage for an older person
- using threats or intimidation to force someone to change their will
- falsely signing documents by pretending to be someone else

Neglect

Neglect is a common form of elder abuse. Neglect includes acts of physical and emotional abuse. It is elder abuse when caregivers do not meet the physical, medical or emotional needs of older people. Older people depend on their family and caregivers. This can make them afraid to report abuse.

Seeking Help

■ If you are a victim of elder abuse, the Senior Safety Line can help:

Call 1-888-896-7183

<https://www.gov.mb.ca/seniors/safety.html>

Important Note: If you think you see elder abuse, you can report it to the police. The police will investigate and offer help to the victim. Victims of elder abuse can refuse help. The law says you must report elder abuse if the victim lives in a nursing home or other health care facility.