

ELDER ABUSE

INFORMATION FOR OLDER ADULTS, FAMILIES,
AND CAREGIVERS



READ THIS PAMPHLET TO LEARN:

- What is Elder Abuse.
- The Different Types of Elder Abuse.
- Who to Call for Help.



**Sinai
Health**

Healthy Ageing
and Geriatrics

WHAT IS ELDER ABUSE?

Elder Abuse occurs when an older adult is mistreated or harmed, typically by a person or persons they should be able to trust. It can happen once, or it may be repeated over time.



HOW COMMON IS ELDER ABUSE?

It is estimated that as many as 1 in 10 older adults in Canada will experience one or more forms of abuse at some point during their later years.



WHO ABUSES OLDER PEOPLE?

- Family members, relatives and care providers are the most common perpetrators.
- However, anyone who has contact or a relationship with an older person could become an abuser.
- Strangers can often target vulnerable or isolated older adults living in the community.



WHERE DOES IT HAPPEN?

Elder abuse can happen anywhere and usually happens in the home. It can also happen in hospitals, retirement homes and nursing homes.



WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF ELDER ABUSE?

Emotional

The abuser may threaten, scream at, frighten, insult or purposefully ignore the older person.



Neglect

The abuser may withhold food, medications or health services from the older person.



Physical

There are many examples of physical abuse:

- Hitting or pushing
- Grabbing or shaking
- Pulling hair
- Throwing objects at the person



The abuser could also lock the older person in their room or keep them in bed or in a chair.

Financial

The abuser may take the older person's money (cash, pension cheques, and savings) or force the older person to sell their home or other assets/valuables.



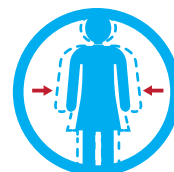
Sexual

The abuse may force any type of unwanted sexual act on the older person (sexual touching, kissing, hugging or intercourse).

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS THAT ELDER ABUSE COULD BE HAPPENING?

The older person:

- Has bruises, cuts, skin sores or broken bones
- Has lost weight
- Has dirty clothes, hair, teeth and skin
- Has not been given their pills regularly
- May feel sad or depressed or very afraid to talk about the abuse
- May act very uncomfortable or withdrawn in the presence of certain people



WHY WOULD AN ABUSED OLDER PERSON 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
- They may have difficulty speaking, speak a different language or be confused
- They may not recognize what is happening as abuse
- They may try to rationalize the abuse as being justified or better than an alternative action



WHO CAN I CALL FOR HELP?

EMERGENCY REPORTING TO POLICE:

If you are in immediate danger dial 911 for emergency services.



911

NON-EMERGENCY REPORTING AND ASSISTANCE:

SENIORS SAFETY LINE

The Seniors Safety Line provides information, referrals, and 24/7 support in over 150 languages. This hotline is a toll-free, confidential resource for seniors suffering abuse, including financial, physical, sexual, mental abuse and neglect.



Toll Free: 1-866-299-1011 or Simply Call 211

ELDER ABUSE ONTARIO

Elder Abuse Ontario is a provincial, charitable, non-profit organization focused on supporting the implementation of The Ontario Strategy to Combat Elder Abuse. For information on elder abuse, visit their website.



<http://www.eapon.ca/>

VICTIM SUPPORT LINE:

The Victim Support Line (VSL) is a multilingual telephone service that provides information for all victims of crime. This toll-free hotline offers information and referrals to support services available in your area.



Toll Free: 1-888-579-2888



Toronto: 416-314-2447

RESOURCES AND SERVICES:

CIRCLE OF CARE

Circle of Care provides counselling, assistance in developing a safety plan, and information on referrals to legal, financial, housing and community resources.



416-635-2860

7 days a week,
7:00 a.m. – 8:30 p.m

CRISIS OUTREACH SERVICE FOR SENIORS (COSS)

The COSS Team is an on-call mobile crisis intervention and outreach service for seniors that provides short-term response 365 days a year, 7 days a week.

Area: From Yonge Street to Warden Avenue, this service operates between Bloor Street/Danforth Avenue and Lake Ontario. Between Yonge Street and Jane Street, this service operates between Eglinton Avenue W. and Lake Ontario.



416-640-1459

7 Days a Week,
9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

FAMILY SERVICE TORONTO - PAT'S PLACE - A SAFE HAVEN FOR OLDER PEOPLE EXPERIENCING ABUSE

Pat's Place is a temporary safe haven for older adults 60 + who are experiencing abuse. Pat's Place offers a one bedroom apartment in a secure location providing counselling, crisis intervention, safety planning and referral to community resources. There is no charge for rent at Pat's Place. People are asked to contribute to the day-to-day costs (i.e. buying food, clothing, medications, laundry etc.).



416-595-9618



www.familyserVICEToronto.org/our-services/programs-and-services/pats-place

RESOURCES AND SERVICES

TORONTO POLICE SERVICE

If you need more information about investigating a criminal case of elder abuse, the Toronto Police Service will investigate all occurrences of abuse wherever possible.



Distress Centre:

416-808-4357 (HELP)

- For Immediate Assistance



Elder Abuse Coordinator:

416-808-0130

ADVOCACY CENTRE FOR THE ELDERLY (ACE)

Community-based legal clinic that provides services to low-income seniors along with public education.



416-598-2656

Hours: Monday – Friday,
9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

RELEVANT RESOURCES IN OUR SERIES

- Managing Caregiver Stress

ADDITIONAL HEALTH RESOURCES IN OUR SERIES:

- Advance Care Planning: How to Start the Conversation
- Alcohol and Your Health
- Calcium, Vitamin D and Bone Health
- General Tips for Memory Problems
- Improving Nutrition as You Age
- Improving Urinary Incontinence
- Living Longer, Living Well: Your Guide to Healthy Ageing
- Managing Chronic Pain
- Managing Common Mental Health Conditions in Older Adults
- Managing Constipation
- Managing Mild Cognitive Impairment, Alzheimer's Disease And Other Dementias
- Managing Multiple Chronic Health Conditions
- Managing Sedative-Hypnotic Use Among Older Adults
- Managing Sleep in Older Adults
- Managing Substance Use and Addictive Disorders As You Age
- Preventing Falls at Home
- Recognizing and Managing Anxiety
- Recognizing and Managing Delirium
- Recognizing and Managing Depression
- Recognizing and Managing Hearing Loss
- Safe Medication Use for Older Adults
- Substitute Decision Makers and Powers of Attorney
- Understanding Your Palliative Care Options

ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY RESOURCES IN OUR SERIES:

- Community Transportation Options
- Driving Assessment Services
- Funding for Mobility and Other Aids from the Assistive Devices Program
- Housing Options for Older Adults
- How to Register for Wheel-Trans
- Meals on Wheels

Visit www.sinaigeriatrics.ca/healtheducation for additional resources for older adults, families and caregivers.

This information is to be used for informational purposes only and is not intended as a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Please consult your health care provider for advice about a specific medical condition. A single copy of these materials may be reprinted for non-commercial personal use only.

We would like to thank the following for their support of our Education Resources to Support Healthy Ageing Initiative:



**The Ben and
Hilda Katz
Foundation**



Mon Sheong Foundation and the Ben and Hilda Katz Foundation have generously provided funding to support printing and translation of our Education Resources to Support Healthy Ageing.

The Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility supported this initiative with funding through its Seniors Community Grant Program.

Adapted from "Elder Abuse" in 2016 with permission from the University Health Network Patient and Family Education Program.

Author: Healthy Ageing and Geriatrics Program, Sinai Health
Modified: 05/2021