

## Identify Signs of Abuse

Abuse can be detected through listening and frequent visiting and checking in on our seniors living in care facilities, community, and alone.

### Some signs of abuse to watch for include:

- Visible sores or injuries that have been left untreated (including burns) common injuries to watch for include fractures, bruises, abrasions, pressure sores, burns, skin tears, smelly wounds
- The unnecessary and improper use of restraints
- Does not seek care for an injury
- They give vague or implausible reasons for injury
- Messy, unclean appearance
- Malnutrition and weight loss
- Dehydration
- Mood or personality changes (anxious, sad, quieter than usual)
- The senior is afraid of a person
- Victims of financial abuse are often widows or widowers and living in the community
- Exploitation (they report being pressured to give money, etc.)

## Self-Neglect

*Self-neglect often accompanies dementia and mental health problems. This makes victims more vulnerable and less able to ward off mistreatment by others who might prey on them.*

*As the capacity for self-care decreases, dependence on others increases. Self-neglect may be a sign that abuse or neglect has been committed by another person because someone who has been victimized may become depressed and lose the desire for self-care.*

## What is Elder Abuse?

*Elder abuse is the lack of respect or acknowledgement of a senior person's dignity.*



## Different Forms of Abuse

- **Physical abuse** is an act of violence that may result in pain, injury, impairment, or disease.
- **Financial abuse** is any improper conduct, done with or without the informed consent of the senior that results in a monetary or personal gain to the abuser and/or monetary or personal loss for the senior.
- **Psychological abuse** is any verbal or non-verbal actions towards another that causes a lessening of their sense of identity, dignity, and/or self-worth.
- **Sexual abuse** is any sexual behaviours directed towards a senior without their full knowledge and consent.
- **Neglect** is the failure to provide the goods or services necessary for proper care or to avoid harm. Withholding basic needs such as food, hygiene, medications, or abandonment.
- **Systemic abuse** is harmful and discriminative rules, regulations, social policies, practices that have been developed for an apparently neutral purpose, but that hurt the person.

# Elder Abuse Awareness

Recognize the signs, know how to advocate for those suffering, and help protect our seniors!



*Compassionate  
Community Care*

*Advice and support,  
confidential and free:*

**1.855.675.8749**



## Advocacy

### **What is an advocate?**

A support person who can help the senior:

- Stand up for their rights
- Obtain and maintain opportunities
- Gain access to supports and services
- Talk with their healthcare providers

**You must keep the person's information**

**CONFIDENTIAL at all times**

### **Why have an advocate?**

Advocates assist when a person has trouble stating their feelings or share about their physical pain, is afraid to speak out, has a lack of understanding of medical terminology, or may be too ill or incapable to speak up and advocate for themselves.



To learn more about being an advocate register for one of Compassionate Community Care's FREE Patient Advocacy Training Seminars through our website

[www.beingwith.org](http://www.beingwith.org)

## Looking for Someone to Connect With?

**If you are a volunteer, a friend, or family member who is concerned about the care of another, here are some tips on who to ask for help:**

1. The Individual: speak to them and/or their loved ones, or those who manage their care.
2. If you are a volunteer, a friend, or family member, speak to the agency manager your loved one is being cared by. This may be a mentor, senior manager, or supervisor.
3. Contact CCC if there is an ethical issue or if you are unsure if elder abuse or neglect is happening, reach us at the helpline below.

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Additional information on Elder Abuse:  
Elder Abuse Prevention Ontario. (n.d). *Prevention*.  
<https://eapon.ca/prevention/#>



## How to Prevent Elder Abuse

*It is important for everyone to be educated about elder abuse, aware of the signs of abuse, and how to safely intervene if you see an elderly person being neglected or abused.*

### **Prevention Tips for Elderly People:**

- Stay active and maintain regular contact with family members or others in your community
- Plan for your future and communicate your wishes with others who share your values
- Establish a Power of Attorney (someone who can make healthcare/financial choices for you if you become unable) - Connect with Compassionate Community Care to learn more
- Voice your concerns if you are not satisfied with the care services you are receiving
- Get educated on your rights and the signs of elder abuse
- Protect your finances/property
- If a senior communicates that they are being abused, believe them and get connected with an organization where you can report it and get them support
- Become educated on how you can be an advocate for others and engage in informational training for advocating for seniors