

# Signs and Symptoms of Abuse

**Recognizing these warning signs of elder abuse can be a very effective tool in early intervention and prevention of further abuse.**

<b>PHYSICAL ABUSE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Unexplained signs of injury such as bruises, welts, or scars, especially if they appear symmetrically on two sides of the body</li><li>• Broken bones, sprains, or dislocations</li><li>• Report of drug overdose or apparent failure to take medication regularly (a prescription has more remaining than it should)</li><li>• Broken eyeglasses or frames</li><li>• Signs of being restrained, such as rope marks on wrists</li><li>• Caregiver's refusal to allow the elder to be seen alone</li></ul>
<b>EMOTIONAL ABUSE</b>	<p><b>In addition to the general signs above, indications of emotional elder abuse include</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Threatening, belittling, or controlling caregiver behavior that is witnessed</li><li>• Behavior from the elder that mimics dementia, such as rocking, sucking, or mumbling to oneself</li></ul>
<b>SEXUAL ABUSE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bruises around breasts or genitals</li><li>• Unexplained venereal disease or genital infections</li><li>• Unexplained vaginal or anal bleeding</li><li>• Torn, stained, or bloody underclothing</li></ul>

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<p><b>NEGLECT BY CAREGIVERS OR SELF-NEGLECT</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Unusual weight loss, malnutrition, dehydration</li><li>• Untreated physical problems, such as bed sores</li><li>• Unsanitary living conditions: dirt, bugs, soiled bedding and clothes</li><li>• Being left dirty or unbathed</li><li>• Unsuitable clothing or covering for the weather</li><li>• Unsafe living conditions (no heat or running water; faulty electrical wiring, other fire hazards)</li><li>• Desertion of the elder at a public place</li></ul>
<p><b>FINANCIAL EXPLOITATION</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Significant withdrawals from the elder's accounts</li><li>• Sudden changes in the elder's financial condition</li><li>• Items or cash missing from the senior's household</li><li>• Suspicious changes in wills, power of attorney, titles, and policies</li><li>• Addition of names to the senior's signature card</li><li>• Unpaid bills or lack of medical care, although the elder has enough money to pay for them</li><li>• Financial activity the senior couldn't have done, such as an ATM withdrawal when the account holder is bedridden</li><li>• Unnecessary services, goods, or subscriptions</li></ul>
<p><b>HEALTHCARE FRAUD AND ABUSE</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Duplicate billings for the same medical service or device</li><li>• Evidence of overmedication or under-medication</li><li>• Evidence of inadequate care when bills are paid in full</li><li>• Problems with the care facility:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Poorly trained, poorly paid, or insufficient staff</li><li>- Crowding</li><li>- Inadequate responses to questions about care</li></ul></li></ul>