

HOME SAFETY

FAMILY CAREGIVERS



National Home Safety Month

Home Safety: Top Tips to Protect Aging Adults from Elder Abuse and Financial Predators

Elder abuse happens to 1 in 10 seniors. Help spot the signs of elder abuse and protect your loved one.

Top Tips to Protect Aging Adults from Elder Abuse and Financial Predators

As individuals age and have less mobility and independence, they are more susceptible to elder abuse and becoming a victim of financial predators.

Elder abuse can include: physical, sexual and emotional abuse, exploitation, neglect and abandonment. Predators can include staff at nursing home or caretaking facilities, children, spouses, family members or even strangers.

Protect your loved one! Look for the warning signs of elder abuse:

- **Physical:** bruises, burns, abrasions, broken bones, pressure marks.
- **Emotional:** unexplained or unusual depression, withdrawal from normal activities, change in alertness, strained relationships. arguments between caregiver and adult.
- **Neglect:** poor hygiene, sudden weight loss, bedsores and other unattended medical needs.
- **Verbal or emotional abuse:** Overhearing or witnessing threats, demeaning comments or power struggles between older adult and caretaker or another individual.

Financial Abuse and Financial Predators

Very few cases of financial abuse are actually reported. It can be heartbreaking for an older individual to work hard their entire life, only to be preyed upon by a stranger or loved one.



1 in 10 Americans

over age 60 have experienced some type of elder abuse. One study estimated that only 1 in 14 incidents of elder abuse are reported.

(source): ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK98802/



Sadly, **financial predators can be friends or family members** that are closest to the aging adult. Strangers, children, caregivers, spouses and other relatives could all be potential predators. Make sure you trust and survey the person who is helping your loved one with their finances.



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7 warning signs that may indicate a senior is a victim of financial abuse:



Bills are going past due or unpaid even though the individual has the resources to pay them.



Items or services are being purchased that the older adult doesn't have a use for such as gym memberships or new technology.



Items are purchased at a time when senior wouldn't be active on the account such as ATM withdrawals late at night.



Money or valuable items are missing from the adult's home.



Sudden changes are made to power of attorney, property titles or wills.



Adult is receiving care at a rate much lower than the quality he/she can afford.

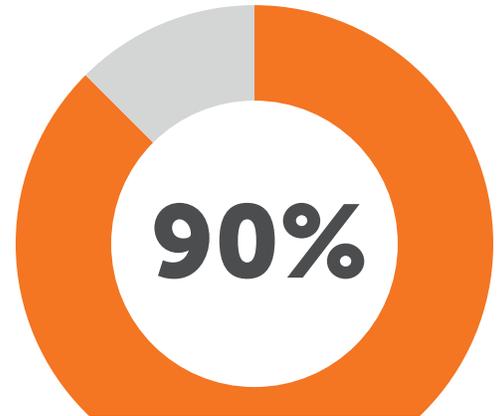


Adult is isolated from family or is afraid to speak in front of family members, caregivers or friends.



If you see any of these signs, report the abuse to proper authorities so they can investigate further.

Seniors who have been abused in some form have a 300% higher risk of death compared to individuals who have not been mistreated. Abuse can also cause depression, isolation and withdraw from normal activities. Watch for the warning signs to protect your loved one.



The [National Center on Elder Abuse](https://www.ncea.aoa.gov/Library/Data/index.aspx) estimates that **90% of elder abuse cases involve family members.**

[ncea.aoa.gov/Library/Data/index.aspx](https://www.ncea.aoa.gov/Library/Data/index.aspx)



Home Care Tip:

When you partner with a home care agency, the caregiver, office staff, and office owner have a fresh set of eyes to detect the early signs of elder abuse. If you're an adult child who is living in a different city or state, having the peace of mind from a home care agency to not only provide the care but to provide a set of eyes to spot elder and financial abuse can be an added peace of mind.