

Physical abuse

Any act of violence – whether or not it results in physical injury. Intentionally inflicting pain or injury that results in either bodily harm or mental distress is abuse. **Physical abuse** may include:

- Beating
- Burning or scalding
- Pushing or shoving
- Hitting or slapping
- Rough handling
- Tripping
- Spitting
- Using or misusing physical restraints
- Excessively restraining them through the use of alcohol, tranquilizers or other medication
- Forcing them to remain in beds or chair
- Forcing them to remain in rooms (including locking them in).
- Failing to facilitate their access to medical or health services .
- Failing to provide medical attention due to age, or conducting a procedure or providing treatment without the informed consent of the patient or their recognized substitute.
- Unnecessary or traumatic medical interventions
- Withholding medication
- Misusing medication, (overmedicating , or incorrect administration of medications.)

(intentionally or unintentionally) meet the needs of older adults who are dependent and cannot meet their own needs.

- Adequate nutrition, clothing and other necessities
- Adequate personal care, e.g. failing to turn a bedridden older adult frequently
- Safe and comfortable conditions
- A clean environment
- Prerequisites for personal cleanliness
- Sufficient bathroom space for privacy
- Sufficient space for personal privacy
- Transportation to necessary appointments
- (occasional) outings.
- Leaving incapacitated older adults alone too long or failing to remain with those who need help
- Abandonment.

Sexual abuse includes behaving in a sexual way toward older adults without their full knowledge and consent. It includes all forms of sexual assault, sexual harassment or sexual exploitation.

Those who are being abused may be unwilling or unable to report it due to:

- Cognitive impairment or disability including dementia or Alzheimer's
- Physical frailty or disability
- Literacy, language or cultural barriers that prevent access to information, resources and support
- Social or geographic isolation
- Dependence on the abuser (emotional, physical or economic)
- Fear of retaliation or abandonment
- Fear of being put in an institution
- Fear of outside intervention (and loss of independence and control)
- Fear of not being believed
- Shame or stigma
- Beliefs about importance of marriage and family
- Pressure to maintain the family/community reputation.

Abuse has serious consequences for older adults, as well as for perpetrators, families and communities.



Elder



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Elder Abuse

Abuse of older adults is sometimes described as a misuse of power and a violation of trust. Abusers may use a number of different tactics to exert power and control over their victims. Abuse may happen once or it may occur in a repeated and escalating pattern over months or years. The abuse may take many different forms, which may change over time.

Almost 2% of older Canadians indicated that they had experienced more than one type of abuse

Some violent or abusive acts violate civic or basic human rights. Some are criminal acts. Older adults' experiences of abuse may be related to their living arrangement. Their experiences may also be linked to their level of reliance on others, including family members or other care providers, for assistance and support in daily living.

There is a widespread agreement that abuse of older adults includes three main categories:

1. Abuse of older adults living either alone or with family members or others in private residences (including older adults receiving home care or community care)
2. Abuse of older adults in institutions
3. Self neglect by older adults.

Psychological Abuse

Includes attempts to dehumanize or intimidate older adults. Any verbal or non-verbal act that reduces their sense of self-worth or dignity and threatens their psychological and emotional integrity is abuse.

This type of abuse may include:

- Threatening to use violence
- Threatening to abandon them
- Intentionally frightening them
- Making them fear that they will not receive the food or care they need
- Lying to them
- Failing to check allegations of abuse against them
- Insulting, swearing, or name calling
- Making derogative or slanderous statements about them to others
- Socially isolating them, or failing to let them have visitors

- Withholding important information that they have a right to know
- Demeaning them because of the language they speak
- Intentionally misinterpreting their traditional practices
- Repeatedly raising the issue of death with them
- Telling them that they are too much trouble
- Ignoring or excessively criticizing them
- Being over-familiar and disrespectful
- Unreasonably ordering them around
- Treating them like servants
- Treating them like children.



Financial Abuse

Includes financial manipulation or exploitation (theft, fraud, forgery or extortion). Anytime someone acts without consent in a way that financially or personally benefits one person at the expense of another it is abuse.

This type of abuse may include:

- Stealing their money, pension cheques or other possessions
- Selling their homes or other property without their permission
- Wrongfully using a Power of Attorney
- Not allowing them to move into long-term care facilities in order to preserve access to their pension income
- Failing to pay back borrowed money when asked
- Opening mail without permission
- Charging excessive prices for goods or services.

This also includes

unduly pressuring older adults to:

- Move from, sell or relinquish their home or other personal property
 - Make or change a will
 - Sign legal documents that they do not fully understand
 - Change or keep their marital status
 - Give money to relatives or caregivers
 - Engage in paid work to bring in extra money
 - Care for children or grandchildren.
- Financial or material abuse against older adults may also include:
- Refusing to move out of their home when asked
 - Sharing their home without paying a fair share of the expenses
 - Unduly pressuring them to buy alcohol or drugs.