

# Elder Abuse Tip Sheet

## Examples of Abuse

### Physical

Hitting, shaking, restraining, pulling hair.

### Emotional

Name calling, not allowing visitors, threatening.

### Financial

Stealing money, misusing power of attorney, forcing the sale of home and belongings.

### Sexual

Any form of unwanted sexual activity.

### Neglect

Denying basic needs of food, shelter, medication, clothing, and not providing a safe environment.

### Spiritual

Restricting access to ceremony or other spiritual practices.



Adapted from: Domestic Abuse Intervention Programs (DAIP).

## Know the Signs:

- Unexplained injuries, cuts bruises
- Poor hygiene
- Unexplained or sudden withdrawal of money from accounts
- Inappropriate clothing for the weather
- Care withheld or denied access to necessary services
- Fearfulness – Nervous around caregiver or other persons

## What if it happened to a friend or family member?

Sometimes we must ask courageous questions in order to start the conversation. If you saw signs of abuse what would you say? What if someone told you they were being abused how would you react? Here are some tips to help you have courageous conversations:

- **Do not blame**~ Remember to stay away from phrases like ‘how did you let this happen’ or ‘why didn’t you stop this earlier?’ People who experience abuse often feel guilty and it is important that we do not further isolate or blame the older adult.
- **Be empathetic**~ Family abuse and violence is confusing, there are often feelings of love for the abuser. This can be difficult to understand but it is important that we listen to these feelings and not judge the decisions of the older adult.
- **Ask how you can help**~ It is important that the person’s self-determination is respected and they are empowered by your involvement. Ask them things like “How can I help” or “Are you comfortable with this plan?”

# Reporting Abuse

The Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee (OPGT) is responsible for protecting mentally incapable people. If you believe an older adult is incapable and is at-risk of abuse, you can contact the OPGT: 1 800 366 0335.

**If you suspect or know abuse is taking place in a Retirement Home or Long Term Care homes, you are required to report the abuse.**

[Ministry of Health and Long Term Care ACTION Line](#): 1 866 434 0144

[Retirement Homes Regulatory Authority](#): 1 855 275 7472

[Ontario Provincial Police](#): 1 888 310 1122     [Crime Stoppers](#): 1 800 222 TIPS (8477)

# Planning For Your Safety

**Tell your friends and family** what is happening and let them know how they can help.

I will ask my neighbour \_\_\_\_\_ to call the police if they hear loud noises coming from the house.

**Memorize important phone numbers** or have them written down and kept in a safe place, so in an emergency you can get help right away.

Once I am in a safe place I will call \_\_\_\_\_.

**Know where all your important documents** are kept and store them together in an emergency bag that has any medical records, medication and other important necessities.

I will keep the emergency bag in \_\_\_\_\_.

**Have a plan** to leave the house if needed, know where you can go if you need to leave; the closest neighbour, drive to a friend's house, or call the police.

If I have to leave the house I will \_\_\_\_\_.

**Access community services** to provide you with services and programs to help keep you connected, including Meals-on-Wheels or friendly-visiting programs.

I will ask \_\_\_\_\_ to check in with me daily.

# Who Do I Call if I Need Help?

<a href="#">Seniors Safety Line</a> .....	1 866 299 1011
<a href="#">Advocacy Centre for the Elderly</a> .....	1-855-598-2656
<a href="#">Assaulted Women's Helpline</a> .....	1 866 863 0511
<a href="#">Elder Abuse Ontario</a> .....	1 416 916 6728
<a href="#">Local Health Integration Networks</a> .....	310 2222
<a href="#">Mental Health Line</a> .....	1 866 531 2600
<a href="#">Law Society Referral Service</a> .....	1 800 268 8326
<a href="#">Talk4Healing</a> .....	1 855 554 4325
<a href="#">Victim Support Line</a> .....	1 888 579 2888