

No one talks much about elder abuse.

Not the victims who are too frightened, too ashamed or too sick to tell someone;

Not the neighbors who may not recognize the problem or don't know who to tell;

And not the perpetrators.

Elder abuse is hidden. It thrives in silence. Elder abuse exists in every community and every neighborhood, rich and poor, even in "nice" families. Elder abuse occurs more often in people's homes than in nursing homes. Adult children and grandchildren are often abusers. Sometimes it's an acquaintance or caregiver.

If you know an older adult who is being harmed in any way,

Call Lifespan
244-8400

or outside Monroe County call
1-800-454-5030

or Protective Services for Adults in your local Department of Social Services.



Shining Light on the Hidden Problem of Elder Abuse

Caring people can help stop elder abuse and mistreatment in their families and community.

Elder Abuse Is:

- Pushing, hitting, punching.
- Shouting at, berating, intimidating, threatening to harm an older adult.
- Taking financial advantage of one who is lonely, vulnerable or has memory lapses.
- Taking money an older adult needs, "borrowing" money with no intention to pay it back, tricking someone to buy something he/she has no use for.
- Neglecting an older adult's physical, medical and emotional needs.
- Allowing an older adult to neglect their personal needs.

What to Look for:

- Unexplained injuries, bruises, burns.
- Excessive fear, withdrawal, agitation.
- Sudden inability to pay bills, buy food or personal items.
- Changes in appetite; unusual weight gain or loss.
- Poor personal hygiene.
- Does not know personal finances.
- Unexplained changes in health.

DOs for families and friends:

- Respect and honor older adults.
- Report suspected abuse/mistreatment or self-neglect.
- Find sources of help and use them.
- Visit regularly; monitor the well-being of older adult neighbors.
- Keep track of medicines and doctors' visits.
- Volunteer to help.
- Realize abuse can happen in your family or neighborhood.
- Speak up when something looks or sounds wrong.

DON'Ts for older adults

- Don't live with a person who has a background of violent behavior or alcohol or drug abuse.
- Don't hesitate to tell others if you are abused, mistreated, neglected — your doctor, the clergy, a friend or family member.
- Don't leave cash, personal information or valuables lying around.
- Don't give friends or family money you need to live on.
- Don't sign a document unless someone you trust reads it first.
- Don't allow anyone to keep details of your finances or property from you.

What Lifespan does:

Investigation and intervention services in cases and suspected cases of elder abuse and mistreatment.
Informational presentations about elder abuse and mistreatment for organizations, agencies, caregivers and others.
Training for professionals and those who work with/have frequent contact with older adults to recognize the signs and symptoms of abuse and mistreatment and to facilitate intervention.