

Elder Abuse – Quick Reference Guide

See It

Injuries

Changes in behaviour (e.g. depressed, more isolated, fearful, anxious)

Changes in living arrangements and/or financial situation

Lack of proper nutrition (weight loss, weakness, changes to skin, lethargic)

Lack of items needed for daily activities (e.g. glasses, dentures, hearing aid, walker, appropriate clothing)

Changes in relationships with family and friends (i.e. more isolated, behaviour changes in presence of another person, more or less frequent contact)

Unsafe living conditions

Controlling behaviour by someone else (i.e. older adult not allowed to freely make decisions)

Risk factors:

Older adult:

Social isolation (few social contacts, limited contact with others)

Shared living situation

Cognitive impairment (ability to safely assess situations/environment and to make sound decisions)

Abusive person:

Dependent on older adult (i.e. for housing and/or financial assistance)

Addictions issues (alcohol, drugs, gambling)

Mental health issues

Name It

Physical abuse – any act of violence or rough handling that causes physical discomfort or pain.

Psychological abuse – any verbal or non-verbal action that lessens an older person's sense of dignity and self worth.

Financial abuse – involves the misuse of money, property or possessions.

Sexual abuse – unwanted sexual behaviour or assault directed toward an older adult without that person's full consent.

Neglect – failure to provide the necessities of life (i.e. food, clothing, shelter, medical attention, personal care). It may be intentional or unintentional.

Check It

*refer to Elder Abuse Decision Tree