

Elder abuse can happen to anyone.

What are the warning signs?

Elder abuse affects seniors across all socio-economic groups, cultures, and races. The abuse of older adults is a serious problem and victims may feel alone or like they have nowhere to go for help. Most offenders are spouses, partners, family members, caregivers and other persons in a relationship where the victim and society expect compassion and caring. Elder abuse can take many forms:

- **Financial Abuse** happens when people (including loved ones) pressure older adults to give them money.
What to look for: irregular bank withdrawals, lack of affordable amenities.
- **Emotional Abuse** happens when older adults are intimidated or scared to do the things they enjoy doing. No one should have to live in fear or feel threatened.
What to look for: changed eating patterns, fear, passivity, isolated from family and friends.
- **Sexual Abuse** is defined as non-consensual sexual contact of any kind with an elderly person. Sexual contact with any person incapable of giving consent is also considered sexual abuse. Forcing someone to watch something of a sexual nature against their will is sexual abuse.
What to look for: torn or stained clothing, reported abdominal pain, emotional distress.
- **Physical Abuse** is when someone causes pain or injury to another person. Older adults deserve to live without violence. Physical abuse can have long lasting effects.
What to look for: unexplained falls or injuries, signs of physical restraint, etc.
- **Neglect** happens when the person that is meant to care for an older adult avoids this responsibility.
What to look for: poor hygiene, lost weight, malnourishment, isolation.

No matter how the abuse of older adults happens, it is wrong. Help is available regardless of immigration status and English proficiency. If you or someone you know is being hurt, you could find ways to get help, even if you cannot prove the abuse. Someone is available by phone around the clock and eager to provide help for everyone, in both Spanish and English. Getting help to end the abuse of older adults is the right thing to do. No one deserves to live in fear!

- If you or someone you know is being abused, the **National Domestic Violence Hotline** has Spanish speaking advocates available around the clock at **1-800-799-SAFE**
- For more information about elder abuse, visit the **National Clearinghouse on Abuse in Later Life (NCALL)** at: www.ncall.us

