

Signs of Elder Abuse

Elder abuse is an intentional act or failure to act that causes or creates a risk of harm to an older adult. Common types of elder mistreatment include physical, sexual, emotional/ psychological, or financial abuse, neglect, or self-neglect. Elder abuse impacts people of all ages, identities, and backgrounds.

What are the signs of mistreatment?

Physical Signs



Dehydration or unusual weight loss



Missing daily living aids (glasses, walker, or medication)



Unexplained injuries, bruises, cuts, or sores



Torn, stained, or bloody underclothing



Unattended medical needs



Unexplained sexually transmitted diseases

Emotional & Behavioral Signs



Increased fear or anxiety



Isolation from friends or family



Unusual changes in behavior or sleep



Withdrawal from normal activities

Financial Signs



Fraudulent signatures on financial documents



Unusual or sudden changes in spending patterns



Unpaid bills

Report known or suspected abuse as soon as possible:

Programs such as your state Adult Protective Services (APS) and the Long-Term Care Ombudsmen are here to help. To report suspected adult abuse, neglect, or exploitation, complete an online report at www.dars.virginia.gov/aps/APSreport.htm or call the 24-hour, toll-free APS hotline at **(888) 832-3858**.

Did you know?

1 in 10 community-dwelling older adults experiences abuse every year.

1 in 3 older adults with cognitive impairment experiences abuse.