

Everyone has a right to be treated with respect, to feel safe, and live without fear. If someone is hurting you or someone you love, there are people who can help.

What is elder abuse?

Elder abuse happens when a caregiver or any other person hurts, neglects, or takes advantage of an older adult.

Who is at risk?

Any older adult can be a victim of elder abuse. It can affect people from all walks of life. Both men and women can be abused.

Abuse is never OK — no one ever deserves to be hurt. It's also important to remember that abuse is never the victim's fault.

What are the types of elder abuse?

Abuse happens in many ways. Some elder abuse is physical. Physical abuse can be hitting, pushing, or kicking. But it can also be forcing someone to eat, keeping a person from moving around freely, and forcing someone to have unwanted sexual contact.

Other kinds of abuse are emotional. Emotional abuse happens when someone says things that are frightening or embarrassing. It can also happen when an older adult is kept away from friends and family.

Taking over an older person's money, home, or other possessions without permission is also a form of abuse. So is neglect, which happens when an older adult doesn't get needed food, clothing, shelter or health care. Another form of abuse happens when someone who has been providing care abandons an older adult.

How can I tell if someone is a victim of elder abuse?

There aren't always clear signs that someone is being abused. And, many older adults may not want to talk about it. Here are some things to look for:

- Bruises, broken bones, and injuries.
- Untreated health problems.
- A caregiver who doesn't allow visitors to be alone with an older adult.
- An older adult who becomes withdrawn or seems nervous or upset for no reason.
- Sudden changes in an older adult's finances.
- Personal possessions disappear or are sold suddenly.
- An older adult who isn't eating or drinking enough, or doesn't seem clean or well cared for.
- An older person who is left alone at a hospital, nursing home, or public area.

Where can I go for help?

Elder abuse is a serious health concern. If you or someone you love is being abused, please talk to a member of your health care team.

For more help, please call:

- Kaiser Permanente Behavioral Health Services
1-888-287-2680
- Kaiser Permanente Consulting Nurse Service
1-800-297-6877
- Washington State Department of Social & Health Services
1-866-363-4276
- Idaho Commission on Aging
1-877-471-2777
- National Domestic Violence Hotline (Interpreter services available)
1-800-799-7233
www.ndvh.org
- Eldercare Locator
1-800-677-1116
www.eldercarelocator.gov

The Kaiser Permanente Resource Line is a free information service available to Kaiser Permanente members. The Resource Line provides written health information materials on various topics, self-care tools, and information about community resources, classes and support groups in your area. Call the Resource Line toll-free 1-800-992-2279.

Elder abuse

How to protect yourself and those that you love

- Types of elder abuse
- How to tell if someone is a victim of elder abuse
- Where to go for help