



Don't be a Victim of Elder Abuse

Elder abuse happens for a variety of reasons and nothing can explain or prevent all elder abuse, however, by identifying the risk factors you will be more likely to spot and prevent elder abuse. What can you do to make sure you don't become a victim of Elder Abuse?

- Avoid isolation, which can lead to loneliness, sadness, and depression and increase the possibility of abuse or neglect.
- Keep in touch with family members.
- Stay social and stay active. Keep in touch with old friends and make new ones.
- Consider volunteering or becoming a surrogate grandparent or mentor to a child.
- Participate in religious and/or community activities.
- Don't live with a person who has a history of violent or abusive behavior.
- Beware of family members or caregivers who might have a need for financial assistance or who have substance abuse issues.
- Be cautious in making financial decisions and monitor your financial affairs.
- Discuss any significant financial decisions or changes to legal documents with someone you trust completely before taking action.
- Beware of people who ask you to change your will or add their names to your bank accounts or titles on property.
- Keep your legal and financial documents in a safe place.
- Consider executing legal documents such as a will, living will, and a durable power of attorney for finances and health care.
- Beware of telephone solicitations and internet or mail scams. Avoid individuals who want you to make immediate purchase decisions.
- Safeguard your personal information and passwords.



Protect Others From Becoming Victims of Elder Abuse

Just as knowing the risk factors will help you avoid becoming a victim of Elder Abuse yourself, there are a number of steps you can take to help others from becoming victims.

What can you do to protect others from becoming victims of Elder Abuse?

- If you're a caregiver, find help with respite care on a regular basis so that you do not become overwhelmed with caregiving responsibilities. Being overburdened can make a caregiver more inclined to abuse a care recipient.
- If your family member is being cared for at home by paid caregivers or in a facility, remain involved and observant to be assured he or she is receiving quality care and that there are no signs of abuse or neglect.
- Watch for changes in your family member's mood or appearance.
- Be especially vigilant for signs of abuse or neglect if your family member has a cognitive problem.
- Provide your family member with tips related to telephone solicitations. Share with him or her information that you read about preventing Elder Abuse such as tips specific to telephone and other types of solicitation or scams.
- Consider counseling or a support group if you're feeling stressed and overwhelmed with caregiving responsibilities.
- Encourage your family member to be cautious in financial matters and seek counsel before making financial decisions.
- Speak with your family member about executing certain documents such a will, trust, living will, or durable power of attorney for health care and finances.

If you suspect an older adult may be a victim of elder abuse discuss your concerns with the person and encourage him or her to be open with you if he or she has concerns now or at any time in the future. Reassure them that you are there to listen and assist in whatever way possible.

If you have any questions, or would like to speak with an attorney about this subject, call us at 607-962-6162. We would be happy to help.