



SENIOR HEALTH

Elder Abuse

THE SIGNS AND HOW TO GET HELP

Elder abuse can consist of physical abuse, psychological abuse, financial exploitation or neglect, any of which can be criminal. Sadly, family members, usually adult children, are the most frequent abusers of older people. Of all the types of domestic violence, elder abuse is the least reported.

WARNING SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF ELDER ABUSE

physical injuries

deteriorating illness

anxiety

increasing depression

confusion

sudden financial problems

constant switching of doctors

telling stories that differ greatly from the caregiver's version

Many elderly people who are abused don't seek help because of feelings of hopelessness, the shame of discussing family secrets and the fear of becoming more dependent. Local adult protective services can be contacted and reports are kept confidential. Doctors, counselors, support groups and social service agencies are contact points, as well.