

WHAT CAN I DO IF I SUSPECT ELDER ABUSE, NEGLECT OR EXPLOITATION?

Observing signs of abuse

Since a victim may not be able to report abuse, it's up to others to observe the signs and intervene.

Physical indicators can suggest abuse is occurring

- Injuries that are inconsistent with the explanation for their cause
- Bruises, welts, cuts, burns
- Dehydration or malnutrition without illness-related cause

Behavioral signs shown by the victim indicating possible abuse

- Fear, anxiety, agitation, anger, depression
- Contradictory statements, implausible explanations for injuries
- Hesitation to talk openly

Patterns seen in caretakers who abuse

- History of substance abuse, mental illness, criminal behavior or family violence
- Anger, indifference, aggressive behavior toward the victim
- Prevents victim from speaking to or seeing visitors
- Flirtation or coyness as possible indicator of inappropriate sexual relationships
- Conflicting accounts of incidents

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Types of abuse	Definition of abuse
Physical abuse	Intentional bodily injury
Sexual abuse	Nonconsensual sexual contact (any unwanted sexual contact).
Emotional abuse	Infliction of mental anguish or pain
Financial abuse/exploitation	Illegal or improper use of funds or other resources
Neglect	Through action or inaction, depriving care necessary to maintain the person's physical or mental health
Self-neglect	Behavior that threatens one's own health or safety
Abandonment	Action or inaction that leaves the vulnerable person without the ability to obtain food, clothing, shelter or care

