

Elder abuse takes many forms

Elder abuse is any action or inaction by self or others that jeopardizes the health or well-being of an older adult.

This includes physical, emotional, psychological, financial, sexual, or medication abuse, as well as passive or active neglect. Below is a list of these types of abuse and some examples.

Physical abuse: Includes any kind of physical assault, such as slapping, pushing, kicking, punching, or injuring with an object or weapon. This also includes threatening to assault or harm the person or their property (including pets). Deliberate exposure to severe weather and unnecessary use of physical restraint are also recognized as abuse.

Sexual abuse: Sexual abuse most commonly includes any forced sexual activity and unwanted sexual suggestions or comments.

Psychological abuse: Includes verbal put downs or name calling, humiliation, isolation, emotional manipulation of senior using grandchildren, or threats and/or intimidation such as pressuring a senior to sign their house over, make changes to their will, or change who they have named on their Enduring Power of Attorney and Personal Directive.

Financial abuse: Includes the misuse of the elderly person's funds or property through fraud, trickery or force.

Medication abuse: This is the misuse of an older person's medications and prescriptions on purpose or by accident. It may include withholding medication, over-medicating or not complying with prescription refills.

Active neglect is the intentional failure to fulfill caregiving obligations; infliction of physical or emotional stress or injury; abandonment; denial of food, medication, personal hygiene etc. **Passive neglect** is the unintentional failure to provide these things. This can be as a result of caregiver burnout, lack of knowledge or supports, or illness of caregiver.

Information provided by the Edmonton Elder Abuse Intervention Team, Alberta Seniors and Community Supports, and the Alberta Elder Abuse Awareness Network. For more information, go to www.albertaelderabuse.ca. To find out more or to discuss a concern of abuse, please call the Elder Abuse Intake Line at 780-477-2929.