



Key Research Findings

Bruising in Older Adults:

Accidental Bruising and
Bruising from Physical Abuse
ENGLISH

I. Key findings from a study of **accidental bruising in older adults**:

- Color of a bruise did not indicate its age. A bruise could have any color from day one.
- 90% of accidental bruises were on the extremities rather than the trunk, neck or head.
- Less than a quarter of older adults with accidental bruises remembered how they got them.
- Older adults taking medications that interfere with coagulation pathways were more likely to have multiple bruises, but the bruises did not last any longer than the bruises of those who didn't take these medications.

II. Key findings from a study of **bruising in older adults who have been physically abused** were:

1. Large. More than half of older adults with bruises who had been physically abused had at least one bruise 5 cm (about 2 inches) in diameter or larger.
2. Could be anywhere, but note especially if they are on face, lateral (same side as the thumb) or anterior (same side as the palm of the hand) surface of the arm, or on the back. Older adults with bruises who had been abused had more bruises in these areas than older adults whose bruises were accidental.

And please,

3. Ask the older adult about bruises – gently and in private. 90% of older adults with bruises who have been physically abused **can** tell you how they got their bruises, and this includes many older adults with memory problems and dementia.