

...ELDER ABUSE.



## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Available online!

Visit our website to:

- » Sign up for our e-newsletter.
- » Listen to podcasts.
- » Download slides for elder abuse trainings.
- » Find links to other helpful organizations, such as National Center on Elder Abuse, National Adult Protective Services Association, National Clearinghouse on Abuse in Late Life, and National Long Term Care Ombudsman Resource Center.

Go to [www.centeronelderabuse.org](http://www.centeronelderabuse.org).



CENTER OF EXCELLENCE  
ON ELDER ABUSE AND NEGLECT  
UNIVERSITY of CALIFORNIA, IRVINE



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*Thank you!*

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IMAGINE A WORLD WITHOUT...





## Why does elder abuse occur?

What we know about elder abuse:

- » Abuse is perpetrated by family members in 90 percent of all cases.
- » Abusers often exhibit risk factors such as substance abuse, mental illness, and financial dependence on the elder.
- » Adult children and spouses are most often in a position to abuse or neglect.
- » Many cases of elder abuse occur behind closed doors.
- » It is estimated that for every one case of elder abuse, neglect, exploitation, or self-neglect reported to authorities, about five more go unreported. (*National Elder Abuse Incidence Study, 1998*)
- » Depending on the type of abuse, 0.5 to 10 percent of older Americans have experienced mistreatment by a caregiver or a close contact (*National Research Council, Bonnie & Wallace, eds., 2003*).
- » Unfavorable attitudes toward older adults, not knowing where to report abuse, and not wanting to get involved all impede calls to Adult Protective Services.



## POSSIBLE SIGNS OF ELDER ABUSE

Things to watch out for!

**GENERAL:** Reluctance to provide access or answer questions; implausible, vague or conflicting explanations for situation; irregular pattern of behavior.

**HOME:** Newspapers/mail accumulating; lack of attention to house; large numbers of people using home; drug activity; odd noises, bad odors.

**FINANCIAL:** Irregular pattern of spending/withdrawals; frequent purchases of inappropriate items; withdrawals made in spite of penalties; bills not paid; utilities turned off; presence of "new best friend."

**PHYSICAL SIGNS:** Bruises; pattern injuries; burns; elder lacks food, water, necessary helping devices.

**ELDER:** Fearfulness toward caregiver; depression; anxiety; isolated by caregiver; elder appears to have dementia; elder is dependent on caregiver.

**CAREGIVER:** Excessive concern about costs; attempts to dominate elder; verbal abuse of elder or you; evidence of substance abuse or mental health problems; financial dependence on elder.

## ELIMINATING AGING IN FEAR...

*The Center of Excellence on Elder Abuse and Neglect believes that a world without elder abuse can exist. Our mission is to promote aging with dignity and to eliminate aging in fear.*

Elder abuse diminishes the very spirit of our society. Elder abuse causes wounds, physical, emotional and financial, that may never heal. It affects millions of older adults in America every year and leads to severe consequences: nursing home placement, depression, and even death.

Through direct service, research, advocacy, public awareness, and education, the **Center of Excellence on Elder Abuse and Neglect** serves victims of abuse, their loved ones and professionals. Based in the Program in Geriatrics at the **University of California, Irvine School of Medicine**, this center was established in 2005 and has already helped thousands of people in the United States.

## What can you do to fight elder abuse?

Every citizen can take action to fight elder abuse! Here's how:

- » **Learn about elder abuse's warning signs.** Know where to call to get help for an abused elder in your area. To find out how to report suspected elder abuse in your area, call 1.800.677.1116.
- » **Stay in touch with older loved ones.** Isolation can make seniors more vulnerable to predators. Calling and visiting often can help to prevent abuse.
- » **Support your local Adult Protective Services and Long-term Care Ombudsman programs.** Adult Protective Services (APS) is the county program that receives and investigates reports of elder abuse. The Ombudsman program receives reports of abuse in licensed facilities like nursing homes. Both programs are chronically underfunded even though they provide life-saving services to some of the most vulnerable in our society.

