

# Elder abuse



**Presented by**

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# Objectives

**By the end of this lecture, the student will be able to:**

- Define the Elder abuse.**
- List the Categories of elderly abuse.**
- Understand Causes and risk factors of elderly abuse.**
- Recognize of Signs and symptoms of elderly abuse.**
- Apply Gerontological nursing intervention for Prevention of elderly abuse**

# Outlines

- ❖ **Definition of elder abuse.**
- ❖ **- Categories of elderly abuse.**
- ❖ **- Causes and risk factors of elderly abuse. -  
Recognize of Signs and symptoms of elderly  
abuse.**
- ❖ **- The role of Gerontological health nurses in  
Prevention of elderly abuse.**



**Introduction:**

- **Around 1 in 6 older people experienced some form of abuse in the past year.**
  - **Rates of abuse may be higher for older people living in institutions than in the community.**
  - **Elder abuse can lead to serious physical injuries and long-term psychological consequences.**
  - **Elder abuse is predicted to increase as many countries are experiencing rapidly ageing populations**

## Definition

**Elder abuse is the infliction of physical, emotional, or psychological harm on an older adult. Elder abuse also can take the form of financial exploitation or unintentional neglect of an older adult by the caregiver.**

**2. WHO defines elder abuse as follows: • Elder abuse is a single or repeated act, or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust, which causes harm or distress to an older person.**



## **Categories of elderly**

### **abuse:**

**-Elder abuse can take various forms such as physical, psychological or emotional, sexual and financial abuse. It can also be the result of intentional or unintentional neglect.**

**-□ Physical abuse - Any act of violence that causes pain, injury, impairment, or disease, including striking, pushing, force-feeding, and improper use of physical restraints or medication.**

**-□ Psychological or emotional abuse - The infliction of mental distress e.g. verbal forms (name-calling, criticizing, blaming) or nonverbal forms (ignoring, silence, or withdrawing love and warmth)**

**Financial abuse** - Misuse of an elderly person's money or assets for personal gain. Acts such as stealing (money, social security checks, possessions) or coercion (changing a will, assuming power of attorney) constitute financial abuse.

□ **Sexual abuse** - Non-consensual (without his or her consent) sexual contact of any kind with the older person e.g. force to participate in sexual activity or the patients unable to give consent (dementia).

□ **Neglect** - Failure of a caretaker to provide for the patient's basic needs.

As in the previous examples of abuse, neglect can be physical, emotional, or financial.



- ❖ □ **Physical neglect** is failure to provide eyeglasses or dentures, preventive health care, safety precautions, or hygiene.
- ❖ □ **Emotional neglect** includes failure to provide social stimulation (leaving an older person alone for extended periods).
- ❖ □ **Financial neglect** involves failure to use the resources available to restore or maintain the well-being of the aging adult.

## **Self-neglect (harm by self):**

**Any person not caring about own health, well-being or safety. E.g. ignore food, water, clothing for climate protection, essential medications, cleanliness or adequate safety. Elder self-neglect can lead to injury, illness, or even death.**

### **□ Other types of abuse:**

**includes all other types of abuse, including violation of personal rights (failing to respect the aging person's dignity and autonomy), medical abuse, and abandonment.**

## **Signs and symptoms:-**

### **1- Physical Abuse**

- **Bruises or grip marks around the arms or neck.**
- **Rope marks or welts on the wrists and/or ankles.**
  - **Repeated unexplained injuries.**
  - **Dismissive attitude or statements about injuries.**
- **Refusal to go to same emergency department for repeated injuries**

## **Emotional/Psychological Abuse**

- **Uncommunicative and unresponsive.**
- **Unreasonably fearful or suspicious.**
- **Lack of interest in social contacts.**
- **Chronic physical or psychiatric health problems**
- **Evasiveness.**

## **Sexual Abuse:**

- **Unexplained vaginal or anal bleeding.**
- **Torn or bloody underwear.**
- **Bruised breasts.**
- **Venereal diseases or vaginal infections**

## **Financial Abuse or Exploitation:**

- **Life circumstances don't match with the size of the estate.**
- **Large withdrawals from bank accounts, switching accounts, unusual ATM activity.**
- **Signatures on checks don't match elder's signature.**

## **5- Neglect:**

- **Sunken eyes or loss of weight.**
- **Extreme thirst.**
- **Bed sores.**

## **Causes and risk factors:**

**Many theories have been developed to explain abusive behavior toward elderly people. Clearly, no single answer exists to explain behavior in an abusive relationship. A number of psychosocial and cultural factors are involved.**

**□ Theories have been divided into 4 major categories, as follows:**

- 1. Physical and mental impairment of the patient.**
- 2. Caregiver stress.**
- 3. Trans-generational violence.**
- 4. Psychopathology in the abuser.**



## **Physical and mental impairment of the patient:-**

- ❖ This theory claims that frailty, Physical) decreasing seniors' ability to defend themselves or to escape, thus increasing vulnerability.**

## **1.2- Caregiver stress:-**

- **This theory claims Caregiver stress (e.g. stresses associated with caring for elderly patient plus stresses from the outside world) make the caregiver to express anger or hate toward the elderly person resulting in violence.**

▪ **Trans generational violence:**

▪ **This theory asserts that family violence is a learned behavior that is passed down from generation to generation. Thus, the child who was once abused by the parent continues the cycle of violence when both are older.**

▪ **4- Psychopathology in the abuser:**

▪ **This theory focuses on a psychological deficiency in the abuser.**

**The caregiver with history of substance abuse, mental health problems or a history of abusing others or criminal history, these risk factors increase the likelihood of elder abuse.**

## **Other risk factors in abuse are:**

- Shared living arrangements between the elder person and the abuser.**
- Dependence of the abuser on the older person for housing, finances, or other needs.**
- Social isolation of the elder person.**
- Loneliness or lack of social support of elder person**



**Prevention of  
elderly abuse:**

**2. Report abuse or suspected abuse to Adult Protective agencies.**

**3. Education:**

- Education is the cornerstone of preventing elder abuse.**
- Most abuse occurs in the home by family members or caregivers, so it is important to educate the public about the special needs and problems of the elderly and about the risk factors for abuse.**

**Also educate caregivers in nursing homes about abusive treatment**

#### **4. Respite care:**

- It is important that another person care for the elder, even for a few hours each week- to reduce caregiver stress especially for caregivers of people suffering from Alzheimer's /dementia or severely disabled**

**Every caregiver needs time alone, free from the worry and responsibility of looking after someone else's needs.**

### **5. Social contact and support:**

- When other people are a part of the social circle to talk with them, this can relieve tensions before reaching unmanageable levels.**
- Families can band together to share solutions and provide informal respite for each other.**
- Isolation of elders increases the probability of abuse, also may be a sign of abuse.**



## **Counseling:**

- Counseling for behavioral or personal problems in the family can be helpful in changing violent behavior or find solutions to problems emerging from current stresses. Example:**
  - If there is a substance abuse problem in the family, treat the problem or move the older person to a different, safer setting (a nursing home) to prevent violence against the older family member.**
  - Also in situations where it is difficult to identify that abuse really occurred, counseling can be helpful in alleviating stress.**

*Thanks for all*

