

# Protection from Elder Abuse and Neglect



Every day in British Columbia, thousands of older adults are subjected to some form of physical, emotional, financial or sexual abuse, and/or experience neglect. Yet too often, elder abuse goes unrecognized. The abuser and the abused may not even recognize the actions as abuse.

Elder abuse can take place in a senior’s home, a care facility and in the community, and most often involves a person in a position of trust or a situation of dependency. Some common examples include intimidation, humiliation, physical assault, sexual assault, frauds, scams, misuse of a power of attorney, over-medicating or withholding needed medication, restricting cultural or spiritual practices, censoring mail, and denying access to visitors.

Elder abuse is a serious issue that undermines the independence, dignity, health, and sense of security of the victim. It is a violation of the basic human rights of seniors and in many instances it may involve a criminal offence. Each of us has a role to play to prevent elder abuse.

## Questions to think about to help protect yourself or someone you know from elder abuse or neglect:

**Do you know how to recognize signs of abuse or neglect? Can you name eight different kinds of abuse and neglect?**

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**Do you know who to contact if you or someone you know is being abused or neglected? Do you know what services are available in your community so that you can access help when you need it?**

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**Do you stay in touch with your friends, family and neighbours?**

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**Have you prepared a will, power of attorney, advance directive and representation agreement to help deal with your financial and personal matters in case you cannot at some time in the future?**

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**Have you created a safety or emergency plan so that you have some options if you feel, or suspect, you are being abused?**

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**Are there indications that an older adult you know is being abused or neglected and do you know what to do in such a situation?**

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- [Protection from Elder Abuse and Neglect](#) (link)
- [Together to Reduce Elder Abuse – B.C.’s Strategy](#) (link)
- [Financial Planning and Protection Brochures](#) (link)
- [Planning for Healthy Aging](#) (link)