



# WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS WEEK

NORTH CENTRAL HEALTH CARE

## Elder Abuse: What You Need to Know

Elder abuse refers to intentional or negligent acts by a caregiver or trusted individual that cause harm or a risk of harm to an older adult. This can occur in various settings, including the elder's home, a family member's house, an assisted living facility, or a nursing home.

### Types of Elder Abuse

**Physical Abuse** Use of physical force that may result in bodily injury, physical pain, or impairment.

**Signs:** Bruises, broken bones, abrasions, and burns.

**Emotional or Psychological Abuse** Inflicting mental pain, anguish, or distress through verbal or nonverbal acts.

**Signs:** Withdrawal, depression, agitation, or unusual behavior.

**Sexual Abuse** Non-consensual sexual contact of any kind.

**Signs:** Bruising around the breasts or genitals, unexplained venereal disease, or torn, stained, or bloody underclothing.

**Neglect** Failure to provide necessary care, assistance, or attention to the elder's needs.

**Signs:** Dehydration, malnutrition, untreated health problems, poor personal hygiene, or unsafe living conditions.

**Financial Abuse or Exploitation** Illegal or improper use of an elder's funds, property, or assets.

**Signs:** Sudden changes in financial situations, unauthorized withdrawals from accounts, or missing personal belongings.

**Abandonment** Desertion of an elderly person by someone who has assumed responsibility for their care.

**Signs:** The elder being left alone in unsafe conditions.

### Who is at Risk?

Elder abuse can happen to any older adult, but certain factors increase the risk:

- **Physical or cognitive impairments**
- **Social isolation**
- **History of domestic violence**
- **Dependence on the caregiver for daily needs**
- **Substance abuse by the elder or caregiver**

### How to Prevent Elder Abuse

**Stay Connected:** Maintain regular contact with older adults through visits, phone calls, or social activities.

**Be Informed:** Educate yourself and others about the signs of elder abuse and the resources available for assistance.

**Plan Ahead:** Encourage older adults to plan for their future through legal documents like wills, powers of attorney, and health directives.

**Support Caregivers:** Offer help and respite to those providing care to alleviate stress and prevent burnout.

## ALWAYS REPORT SUSPECTED ELDER ABUSE

**Adult Protective Services (APS)**  
Marathon, Lincoln & Lantana Counties

715.841.5160 OR 855.487.3338 (toll free)

For additional awareness information & resources visit [NORCEN.ORG/ElderAbuse](https://NORCEN.ORG/ElderAbuse)

