



What is Elder Abuse?

When someone hurts an elderly person physically, emotionally, or through a lack of proper care, it is called Elder Abuse, and it is a *serious* crime.

When individuals become unable to care for themselves, it becomes everyone's responsibility to be their voice and ensure that these valued citizens receive the care and assistance they deserve.

Read on for signs of Elder Abuse and learn what can be done to stop it.

Types of Elder Abuse

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is nonconsensual sexual contact of any kind with an elderly person.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional or psychological abuse is defined as the infliction of anguish, fear, or distress through verbal or nonverbal acts. It includes, but is not limited to, verbal assaults, insults, threats, intimidation, humiliation and harassment. Signs and symptoms include:

- Being emotionally upset or agitated.
- Being extremely withdrawn and non-communicative or nonresponsive.
- Unusual behavior, which may also be attributed to dementia, such as sucking, rocking, and biting.
- An elder's report of emotional abuse.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is the use of physical force that results in bodily injury, physical pain or impairment. It may include acts of violence, such as hitting, kicking, slapping, shoving, pinching and burning, to name a few. Some signs and symptoms are:

- Bruises, black eyes, welts, lacerations and rope marks.



- Bone and skull fractures.
- Open wounds, cuts, punctures, untreated injuries in various stages of healing.
- An elder's report of abuse.
- The caregiver's refusal to allow visitors to see an elder alone.

Neglect

Neglect is the refusal or failure to fulfill any part of a person's obligations or duties to an elder. It may be caused by failure of a person who has financial responsibility to provide care for an elder or caused by an in-home service provider to provide necessary care. This includes failure to provide everything from clean clothes to food, water and medication. Signs and symptoms may include:

- Dehydration, malnutrition, untreated bed sores and poor personal hygiene.
- Unattended or untreated health problems.
- Hazardous or unsafe living conditions such as improper wiring, no air conditioning or no water.
- Unsanitary or unclean living conditions.
- An elder's report of being mistreated.

Financial or Material Exploitation

Simply put, financial exploitation is defined as the illegal or improper use of an elder's funds, property or assets. Signs include:

- Sudden changes in banking such as large withdrawals from an elder's account while accompanied by another individual.
- The addition of names on an elder's signature card.
- Unpaid bills despite the availability of funds.
- An elder's report of financial exploitation.

What to Do

While the above list is not all-inclusive of what to look for in elder abuse, if you notice any of the signs listed or others not listed, contact law enforcement immediately by calling 9-1-1.



The Pima County Sheriff's Department takes elder abuse seriously and participates in the Southern Arizona Elder Abuse Task Force to help ensure a quick and complete response to suspected elder abuse.

We must work together to ensure the eldest citizens of our communities are well cared for, respected and protected.

Contact Us

For more information on elder and vulnerable adult abuse, and other crime prevention issues, contact the Pima County Sheriff's Department's Community Resources Team at (520)741-4615. We'll be happy to talk to you about educational materials, brochures and safety presentations. Call today!



PIMA COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

Clarence W. Dupnik
Sheriff of Pima County

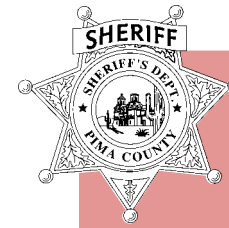
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Crime Prevention Tips From
National Crime Prevention Council
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www.weprevent.org



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Pima County
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STOP Elder Abuse NOW



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