

- ◆ Should you suspect abuse of an adult, 18 years and older, call Elder Abuse hotline number:

**800-490-8505**

**Or**

**800-732-6618**

- ◆ Abuse Hotline answers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- ◆ Callers will remain anonymous.



**ARMSTRONG COUNTY  
AREA AGENCY ON AGING**

Executive Director  
Lisa Shaffer

Protective Services Supervisor:  
Lisa Shaffer

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**ARMSTRONG COUNTY  
AREA AGENCY ON AGING**

**ADULT  
PROTECTIVE  
SERVICES**

Investigations of:  
Abuse,  
Neglect,  
Exploitation or  
Abandonment



Protective Services  
Hotline Number:  
**800-490-8505 or**  
**800-732-6618**  
24 hours/7 days

## What is Elder Abuse?

As many as 1 in 20 older adults are victims of abuse. An older person can be the victim of physical abuse, financial exploitation, neglect, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, abandonment or other mistreatment.

Many times the victim is female, over age 75 and dependent on a spouse, relative or friend to provide care, food and shelter. The abuser is likely to be a spouse or adult child who lives in the same house and is responsible for providing care to the older person.

Abuse may occur when a caregiver fails to meet the needs of the older person or when the older people fail to take care of themselves.

### *What Should I look For?*

Unlike child abuse, elder abuse is not always easy to identify. It can often be hidden or disguised. Such as:

- Bruises and broken bones may be blamed on falls when the real cause is punching or beating.
- Weight loss may be blamed on illness or lack of appetite when the real cause is starvation or neglect.
- Dementia may be blamed on "old age" when the real cause is malnutrition or drug misuse.

Besides physical signs, there are other clues that may indicate elder abuse, such as:

- A neighbor may notice that the older person next door never goes outside or sees visitors.
- A bank teller may find that an older customer or someone claiming to represent the older person is withdrawing large sums from a savings account without apparent reason.
- An attorney might question why an older person would sign over his or her home to a relative.

Although these circumstances do not always mean elder abuse, it's important to be aware that elder abuse can occur at anytime and to anyone.

### *How Do I Report It?*

If you suspect mistreatment of an older person, you should report it to your local Agency on Aging. Even if you are not positive abuse has actually occurred, but feel you have reason to be concerned about the older person's well-being, you should call the elder abuse helpline number in your area. The toll-free 24-hour number for Armstrong County is 800-732-6618.

Unfortunately, many people don't want to become involved when they suspect elder abuse is occurring. Some feel it's "none of their business." Others, including the victim, are afraid of the abuser.

The tragic result is that many cases of suspected elder abuse go unreported and the abuse continues.

### *What Happens When I Call the Agency on Aging?*

When you call the AAA to report a suspected case of elder abuse, a specially trained staff person will investigate the report. The staff person will visit the older person. If abuse has occurred, steps will be taken to protect the victim, stop the abuse and prevent it from occurring again.

The AAA may offer temporary shelter if the victim is in physical danger, or provide other protective services. These may include medical care, daytime or overnight care, in-home services, home-delivered meals, transportation, counseling, financial or legal advice. The type of services depends on the abused person's immediate needs.

If abuse has not occurred, but the older person or family appear to need assistance, the staff person may refer the family to other services available through the AAA.

### *Can I Help Prevent It Before It Happens?*

YES!!

Call the Hotline and let a trained professional assist you and guide you through the process.

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800-732-6618**