

## Places to go for help include: *(continued)*

RCMP	1-800-709-7267
RNC St. John's	709-729-8000
RNC Labrador West	709-944-7602
RNC Corner Brook	709-637-4100
Mental Health Crisis Line	1-888-737-4668
Sexual Assault Crisis Line	1-800-726-2743
Victim Services	709-729-7970, collect
SeniorsNL	709-737-2333
Toll Free (NL)	1-800-563-5599

*SeniorsNL Information Line is answered 8:30-4:30, Monday through Friday, by Peer Support Volunteers who can provide you with information so you can make informed decisions. They will help you to connect with those offering programs and services locally, provincially, and federally.*

**info@seniorsnl.ca**  
**www.seniorsnl.ca**

For more information on elder abuse, please see the NL Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse's website at [www.nlnepea.ca](http://www.nlnepea.ca)

# SeniorsNL

RESOURCES • INFORMATION • CONNECTION

## Elder Abuse

**Can be an act (abuse) or a failure to act (neglect) that harms an older person.**

### Types of Elder Abuse

Emotional  
Material/  
Financial  
Physical  
Sexual  
Neglect



**Elder abuse shatters  
lives and relationships**

## Material/Financial Abuse

Misuse of a senior's money, property, or possessions through theft, scam, or fraud.

### Signs:

- Things/money go missing
- Unusual banking activities
- Older adult has signed “papers” without full understanding or under unusual conditions
- Older adult shows signs of neglect or lack of money for needed items
- Older adult is no longer able to pay bills

### Examples:

- Fraud
- Forgery and theft
- Misuse by a person given the power to act or sign for the senior
- Obtaining money/things by threat

## Places to go for help include:

To contact your Regional Health Authority to report an adult who may be at risk of abuse or neglect and **who does not understand or appreciate that risk**, please call:

1-855-376-4957

(no long distance charges will apply)

A senior can connect with a social worker to find out about available **community supports** by calling:

### Eastern Health

- o Bonavista: 468-1001
- o Clarenville: 466-5700
- o Grand Bank: 832-1602
- o Marystown: 279-7900
- o Rural Avalon: 786-5217
- o St. John's: 752-4835 for over age 65  
(for under age 65 call 752-4717)

Central Health: 651-6503

Western Health: 637-2280

Labrador-Grenfell Health: 1-833-284-4571

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## Sexual Abuse

Unwanted touching of or sexual activity with a senior without his/her consent or full knowledge. Sexual abuse of older persons is often ignored because seniors are not thought of as being sexual.

### Signs:

- Pain, swelling, or bleeding in the genital or anal area
- Other bruising, grip marks, or wounds that point to sexual assault
- Fear of being near or alone with a certain person

### Examples:

- Sexual abuse can range from unwanted kissing or fondling to forced sexual acts
- Unwanted verbal (jokes, rude remarks) or visual acts (showing private parts or pornography)

## Emotional Abuse

Any word or act that decreases an older adult's sense of self-worth.

### Signs:

- Shows fear (around the abuser)
- May be unsettled and upset
- Isolated
- Puts herself/himself down
- Has feelings of guilt and blame
- Shows signs of depression, low energy, changes in sleeping or eating patterns, feeling hopeless

### Examples:

- Jokes about the older person
- Frightens the senior on purpose
- Treats the senior like a child
- Attacks senior's pride/dignity
- Threatens or takes away love and affection or emotional support
- Prevents a senior from practising his/her religion (for example, won't allow him/her to go to church)

## Neglect

Failure to meet the needs of an older adult who cannot meet these needs on his/her own.

**Active Neglect** is refusing to provide for the basic needs and/or care of an older adult.

**Passive Neglect** is the failure to provide care to a senior because of a lack of experience, information, or ability.

**Self Neglect** occurs when a senior does not care for himself/herself due to choice, poor health (mind or body), loss of friends/relatives, depression.

### Signs:

- Dirty clothing, unclean hair, uncut nails, or body odour
- Poorly kept living space
- Lack of food in the cupboards
- Dehydration or malnutrition
- “Invisible” homelessness, such as when a senior sleeps on a couch or in a garage

### Examples:

Neglect is when a caregiver doesn't:

- Provide basic needs like food, water, suitable clothing, or safe and clean shelter
- Attend to personal care like washing
- Provide social contact

## Physical Abuse

Causing injury, pain, or discomfort through violence or rough handling.

### Signs:

- Repeated “accidents”
- Injury for which the reason given does not make sense
- Unexplained injuries such as bruises, burns, cuts, swelling, grip or rope marks

### Examples:

- Slapping, pushing, pinching, or kicking
- Rough handling
- Giving too much or too little medication
- Confining someone to a bed, chair or room