

Protect Against Elder Abuse

Preventing Elder Abuse and Neglect

Preventing elder abuse means doing three things:

- ① **Listening** to seniors and their caregivers.
- ② **Intervening** when there is any suspicion of elder abuse.
- ③ **Educating** others about how to recognize and report elder abuse.

What can concerned friends or family members can do?

- Watch for warning signs that might indicate elder abuse. If abuse is suspected, report it.
- Take a look at the elder's medications. Does the amount in the vial jive with the date of the prescription?
- Watch for possible financial abuse. Ask the elder for permission to scan bank accounts and credit card statements or unauthorized transactions.
- Call and visit often. Be a trusted confidante.
- Offer to stay with the elder so the caregiver can have a break—on a regular basis.
- NEVER let a caregiver have sole access to bank accounts, credit cards or cash that is not accounted for.
- Intervene if a privately hired caregiver seems to be overly "working" his or her way into the family.

How can elders can protect themselves?

- Make sure their financial and legal affairs are in order. If they aren't, enlist professional help to get them in order, with the assistance of a trusted friend or relative if necessary.
- Keep in touch with family and friends and avoid becoming isolated, which increases vulnerability to elder abuse.
- If elders are unhappy with the care they're receiving, whether it's in their own home or in a care facility, they should speak up.

What can you do as a family caregiver to prevent elder abuse?

Be aware of the signs and stages of caregiver burnout...and seek help by contacting Quality Personal Care for respite care.

The three stages of caregiver burnout are:

- ① **Frustration** – disappointment, exasperation, weariness
- ② **Depression** – hopelessness, dejection, lack of energy
- ③ **Despair** – feeling helpless, ineffective, cynical, adrift

Sources: Parkinsons.org and Helpline.org



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