

Am I Being Harmed?

Older adults may be harmed by spouses, partners, adult children, or other family members, caregivers, or others. They may experience physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, abandonment, exploitation, and neglect. Often several forms of abuse may be occurring at the same time.

Signs That Someone May Be Harming You

Does a Spouse, Partner, Family Member, Caregiver, or Other Person:

- Try to limit the amount of time you spend with friends and family or on the phone or Internet?
- Scare you and make you feel fearful?
- Tell you that can never do anything right?
- Yell at you or tell you that you are worthless or no good?
- Make you feel as if you need to tip-toe around to prevent an outburst of anger?
- Make you do things you don't want to do?
- Threaten to put you in a nursing home if you do not do what they want?
- Touched you or forced you to do sexual things you do not want to do?
- Take money or possessions from you without your permission?
- Refuse to provide care or provided care in a way that was hurtful?
- Throw or break items that are important to you?
- Threatened to harm you in anyway?
- Hit, push, pinch, strangle, or slap you?
- Threatened to kill you?

Other Questions:

- Has family or friends expressed their concern about your relationship?
- Are your children, friends, or other family members afraid to visit you?
- Are you concerned that someone may be harming or controlling you but don't know where to get help?

If You Are Being Harmed

- If you are in danger and want law enforcement to respond, call 911. Your safety is most important.
- Talk to someone confidentially for support and information. Call the [National Domestic Violence Hotline](https://www.nvhw.org/) at 1-800-799-7233 or TTY 1-800-787-3224.
- You are not alone. Unfortunately, too many women and men are hurt in later life by spouses, partners, family members, caregivers, and others. You are not the only one who has experienced harm.
- Help is available. Trained professionals can listen and work with you as you decide what you want to do next.
- Create a safety plan. Whether you choose to remain in your current living situation or choose to leave, consider contacting an advocate to create a safety plan. Many domestic violence advocates specialize in safety planning. Advocates can provide information about what you are experiencing and offer information about services and support. For more information about domestic violence programs, contact the National Domestic Violence Hotline.