Elder abuse is abuse against a senior; the abuse takes many different forms:

* **Financial abuse** is any action taken without the older adult’s consent that causes a monetary or personal gain to the abuser and/or monetary or personal loss for the older adult. Financial abuse also includes tricking, threatening or persuading older adults out of their money and or possessions. Misusing a power of attorney is a common form of financial abuse.
* **Emotional abuse** is any action, verbal or non-verbal, that lessens an older adult’s sense of identity, dignity and self-worth. It includes threats, insults, intimidation, humiliation, treating the older adult like a child, and restricting the senior’s contact with family and friends.
* **Physical abuse** is any act of violence or rough handling that may or may not result in physical injury but causes physical discomfort or pain. Giving a person too much or too little medication, or physically restraining a person, are also forms of physical abuse.
* **Sexual abuse** is any sexual behavior directed toward an older adult without that person’s full knowledge and consent, including verbal or suggestive behaviour, not respecting personal privacy, sexual touching, and sexual intercourse.
* **Neglect** is not meeting the basic needs of the older person, such as food, clothing, medical attention, necessary supervision, and shelter. It can be intentional or unintentional. Unintentional neglect usually happens due to the caregiver’s lack of knowledge, experience, or ability.
* **Systemic abuse** (also called institutional abuse) refers to rules, regulations, laws, policies, or social practices that harm or discriminate against older adults. Systemic/institutional abuse includes rules and practices developed for an apparently neutral purpose, but that disproportionately harm older adults. For example, funding long term care homes more than home care disproportionately leads to institutionalization of older adults. Staffing shortages in care facilities can lead to systemic neglect.
* **Overlap among types of abuse – example: home takeover**An older adult can experience more than one type of abuse at the same time. For example, older adults sometimes experience a home takeover in which an older adult is forced to accommodate unwanted guests in their home. A home takeover is a form of financial abuse because the older adult has lost control of their home. However, a home takeover is also a form of emotional abuse because the older adult feels powerless to force the unwanted guests to leave due to threats of harm/intimidation or out of fear that they will lose their relationship with the friend/family member who is the unwanted guest.