

Elder Abuse & Neglect in Dementia Care

Recognizing, Preventing & Addressing a Critical Issue in Dementia Care



Introduction to Elder Abuse and Neglect



- **Definition:** Elder abuse is any intentional or negligent act that causes harm or distress to an older adult.
- **Importance:** Dementia patients are at higher risk due to cognitive impairments and dependency.
- **Types of Abuse:** Physical, emotional, sexual, financial, and neglect.

Prevalence and Risk Factors



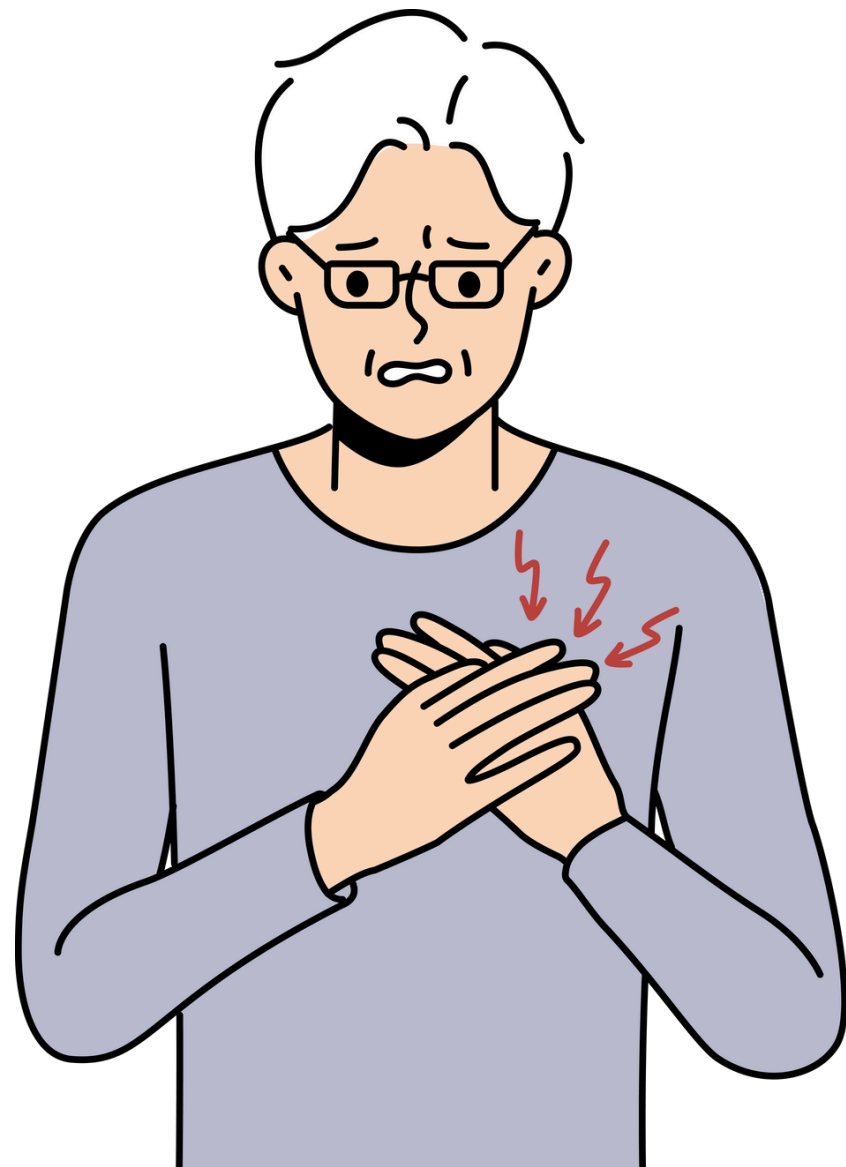
Statistics:

- 1 in 10 older adults experience some form of abuse annually.
- Dementia patients are twice as likely to suffer abuse.

Risk Factors:

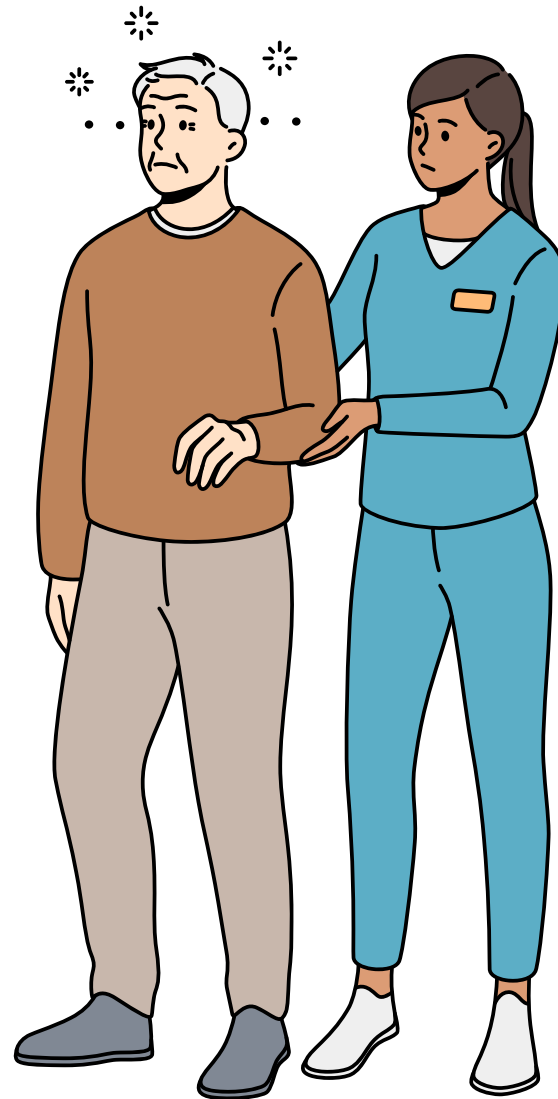
- Cognitive decline and communication barriers.
- Caregiver stress and burnout.
- Social isolation and lack of support systems.

Types of Abuse



- Physical Abuse: Hitting, slapping, or improper use of restraints.
- Emotional Abuse: Verbal insults, threats, or intimidation.
- Sexual Abuse: Any non-consensual sexual contact.
- Financial Exploitation: Misuse of the elder's funds or assets.
- Neglect: Failure to provide basic needs like food, shelter, or medical care.

Signs and Symptoms of Abuse



Physical Signs:

- Unexplained bruises, burns, or fractures.
- Malnutrition or dehydration.

Behavioral Changes:

- Withdrawal, fearfulness, or agitation.
- Sudden changes in mood or behavior.

Financial Indicators:

- Unusual bank withdrawals or unpaid bills.
- Missing belongings or legal documents.

Environmental Clues:

- Unsanitary living conditions.
- Lack of necessary aids like glasses or hearing devices.

Causes of Elder Abuse in Dementia Patients



Cognitive and Behavioral Factors:

- Aggression or resistance to care.
- Memory lapses that may frustrate caregivers.

Caregiver Factors:

- Stress and lack of training.
- Financial dependency on the elder.

Systemic Issues:

- Understaffed facilities.
- Lack of regulatory oversight.

Preventing Elder Abuse and Neglect



Caregiver Support:

- Respite care and stress management resources.
- Education on dementia and behavior management.

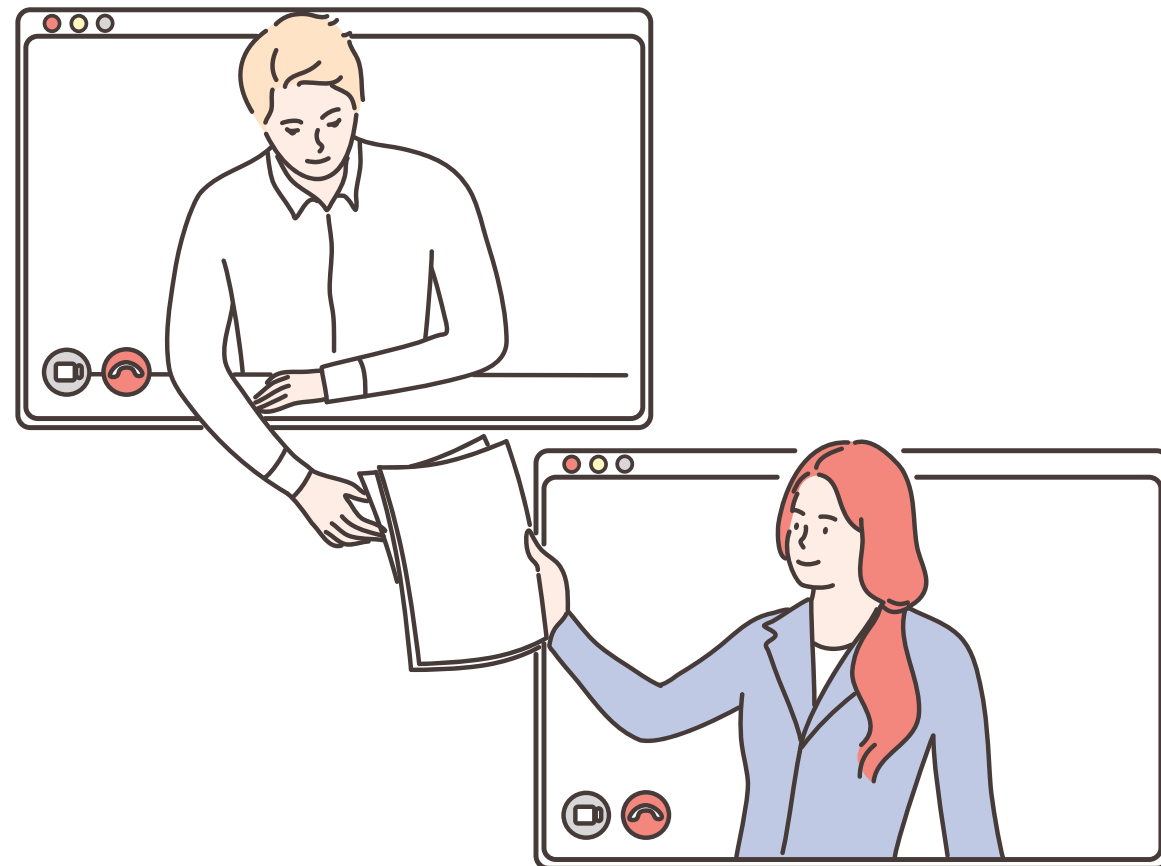
Regular Monitoring:

- Conduct unannounced visits to care facilities.
- Encourage open communication with the elder.

Community Engagement:

- Build strong support networks.
- Promote awareness campaigns.

Reporting and Addressing Abuse



Recognizing Abuse:

- Be vigilant for signs and symptoms.
- Trust your instincts if something feels wrong.

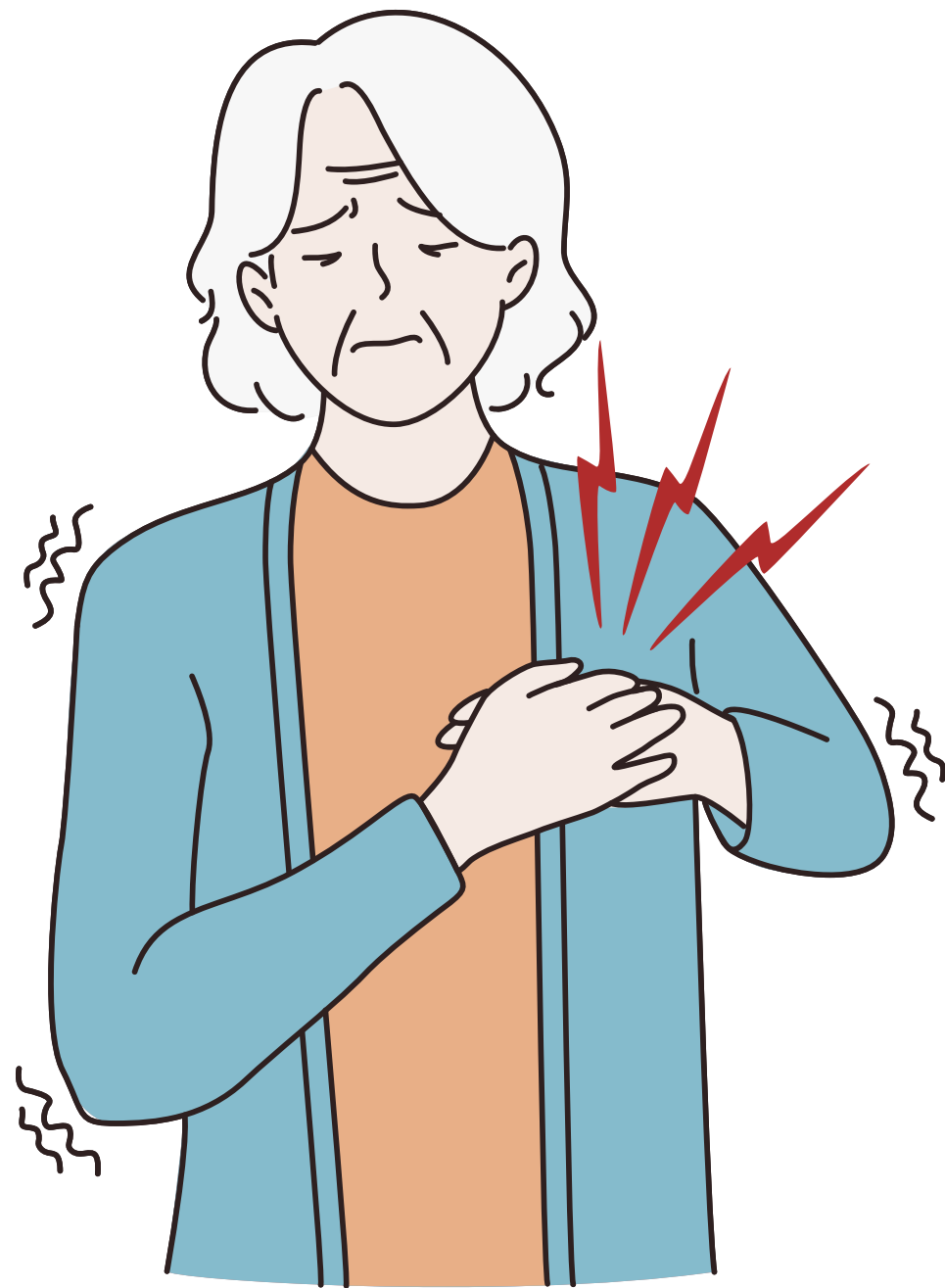
How to Report:

- Contact Adult Protective Services (APS) or local authorities.
- Provide detailed information about the suspected abuse.

Legal Protections:

- Many states have mandatory reporting laws for suspected elder abuse.
- Confidentiality is often ensured for reporters.

Case Study



- **Scenario:** An 80-year-old woman with dementia is found with unexplained bruises and signs of malnutrition.
- **Investigation:**
 - Interviews with caregivers and family reveal neglect.
 - Financial records show unauthorized transactions.
- **Outcome:**
 - Abuse reported to APS; the elder is moved to a safer environment.
 - Legal action taken against the abuser.

Role of Healthcare Professionals



Responsibilities:

- Screen for signs of abuse during routine visits.
- Educate families about risk factors and prevention.
- Collaborate with social services to ensure patient safety.

Training:

- Stay updated on mandatory reporting laws.
- Learn de-escalation techniques and strategies for working with dementia patients.

Resources for Caregivers and Families



Support Services:

- National Elder Abuse Hotline.
- Local caregiver support groups.

Educational Materials:

- Guides on dementia care.
- Online courses on elder abuse prevention.

Financial Assistance:

- Programs to support caregivers financially.

Key Takeaways

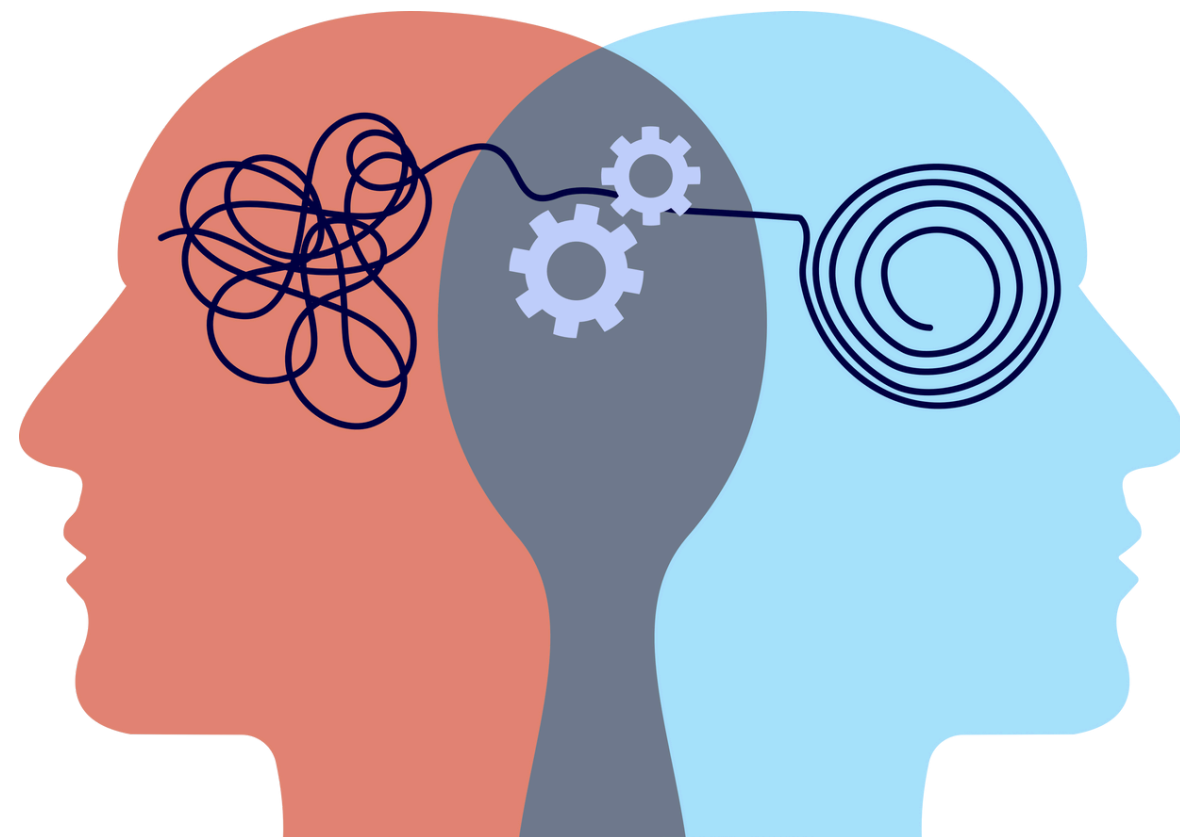


- Elder abuse and neglect are preventable with vigilance and proactive measures.
- Dementia patients are particularly vulnerable and require extra care.
- Awareness, education, and community support are critical in addressing this issue.

Your Mission:

- Advocate for elder abuse prevention.
- Support caregivers and promote safe, respectful environments for all elders.

Certifications & Additional Information



National Council of Certified Dementia Practitioners (NCCDP)

www.nccdp.org

- ADDC Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia Care curriculum
- CDP Certified Dementia Practitioner
- CADDCT Certified Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia Care Trainer
- CDCM Certified Dementia Care Manager
- CDSGF Certified Dementia Support Group Facilitator
- CFRDT Certified First Responder Dementia Trainer

International Council of Certified Dementia Practitioners (ICCDP)

www.iccdp.net

- CMDCP Certified Montessori Dementia Care Professional
- CDP Certified Dementia Practitioner