

The Rising Epidemic of Elder Abuse and Neglect

Elder Abuse

- ◇ Most commonly as a form of spousal abuse where now the victim is over age 60 or 65
- ◇ Many caregivers are unwilling or incapable of caring for the elderly, with little if any training or background.
- ◇ Often elder abuse is a form of retribution abuse, "pay back" for a life of abuse when the child was young and defenseless.

Contributing Factors to Elder Abuse

- ◆ Increasing elder population, especially those over 85.
- ◆ A lower birth rate means fewer children to assist the elderly.
- ◆ Increasing financial concerns for the family.
- ◆ Increasing family mobility can mean the potential for less family support for the elderly.
- ◆ Elder care can last many years longer than child rearing.
- ◆ The elderly become more dependent with age and their care can become more demanding over time.

Possible Signs of Elder Abuse and Neglect

- ⇒ Injuries not treated, or treatment is delayed.
- ⇒ Personal belongings or valuables are missing.
- ⇒ Confinement.
- ⇒ Malnourishment.
- ⇒ Property or savings that are mismanaged or stolen.
- ⇒ Inadequate clothing or personal items when the family's resources seem adequate.