

# Physical abuse

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## What is physical abuse of older people?

The physical abuse of older people is an act that causes physical pain, injury or a combination of both. Physical abuse may appear as a change in appearance, attitude, or behaviour.

It may be:

- Hitting, pushing, or shaking
- Misuse or overuse of medications
- Physical restraint
- Putting an older person in a position they can't get out of, like a chair
- Locking an older person in a room
- Threatened and/or injured with a weapon

2% of older people reported experiencing this form of abuse in the last 12 months.<sup>1</sup>

In the [National Elder Abuse Prevalence Study](#) released in 2021 it was noted that men were slightly more likely to report physical abuse.<sup>2</sup>

The most common form of physical abuse reported by older Australians was threats to harm (60.7%).<sup>3</sup> Almost half (46.6%) of those who reported physical abuse reported being grabbed, pushed or shoved.<sup>4</sup> Just over one in five older people in this group reported being hit, punched, kicked or slapped.<sup>5</sup> Threats with a weapon were reported by (15.73%).<sup>6</sup>

### References

1. [National Elder Abuse Prevalence Study, 2021](#)
2. [National Elder Abuse Prevalence Study, 2021](#)
3. [National Elder Abuse Prevalence Study, 2021](#)
4. [National Elder Abuse Prevalence Study, 2021](#)
5. [National Elder Abuse Prevalence Study, 2021](#)
6. [National Elder Abuse Prevalence Study, 2021](#)