**Fraud and scams on Senior Citizens**

Source: NCOA (National Council of Aging, ncao.org)

[1. Medicare/health insurance scams](https://www.mymedicarematters.org/2015/07/5-steps-for-avoiding-medicare-scams/) (US)

[2. Counterfeit prescription drugs](https://www.ncoa.org/economic-security/money-management/scams-security/top-10-scams-targeting-seniors/#intraPageNav1): seniors looking for better prices online. But harmful products and hurt their bodies

[3. Funeral & cemetery scams](https://www.ncoa.org/economic-security/money-management/scams-security/top-10-scams-targeting-seniors/#intraPageNav2):

* visit the funeral, get info, and then pursue an ‘outstanding debt’
* funeral companies/directors tack on extra cost, push extra costs

[4. Fraudulent anti-aging products](https://www.ncoa.org/economic-security/money-management/scams-security/top-10-scams-targeting-seniors/#intraPageNav3)

[5. Telemarketing/phone scams](https://www.ncoa.org/economic-security/money-management/scams-security/top-10-scams-targeting-seniors/#intraPageNav4) (make 2X the purchases over the phone): get them to wire money to help a sick ‘relative/ fake charities

[6. Internet fraud](https://www.ncoa.org/economic-security/money-management/scams-security/top-10-scams-targeting-seniors/#intraPageNav5): email/phishing scams from their bank or government

[7. Investment schemes](https://www.ncoa.org/economic-security/money-management/scams-security/top-10-scams-targeting-seniors/#intraPageNav6)

[8. Homeowner/reverse mortgage scams](https://www.ncoa.org/economic-security/money-management/scams-security/top-10-scams-targeting-seniors/#intraPageNav7): door to door sales for home improvement services

[9. Sweepstakes & lottery scams](https://www.ncoa.org/economic-security/money-management/scams-security/top-10-scams-targeting-seniors/#intraPageNav8): must send money to unlock winnings

[10. The grandparent scam](https://www.ncoa.org/economic-security/money-management/scams-security/top-10-scams-targeting-seniors/#intraPageNav9): “Guess who this?”

**Why? How?**

Because seniors are thought to have a significant amount of money sitting in their accounts.

Financial scams also often go unreported or can be difficult to prosecute, so they’re considered a “low-risk” crime. However, they’re devastating to many older adults and can leave them in a very vulnerable position with little time to recoup their losses.

It’s not just wealthy seniors who are targeted. Low-income older adults are also at risk of financial abuse. And it’s not always strangers who perpetrate these crimes.

Over 90% of all reported elder abuse is committed by an older person’s own family members, most often their adult children, followed by grandchildren, nieces and nephews, and others.

**How seniors can protect themselves from elder abuse**

1. Be aware you are at risk from strangers - and those closet to you!
2. Don’t isolate yourself- stay involved. Connect with local senior centre
3. Always tell solicitors to ‘send me something in writing”. “I never buy anything from anyone who arrives or calls unannounced”
4. Shred all receipts with credit card number on it. Never give out personal information on the phone if you did not initiate the call
5. Sign up for Do Not Call Lists, and take yourself off of mailing lists
6. Use direct deposit for benefit checks, rather than snail mail which can be stolen
7. Be an informed consumer. Shop around. Read all contracts before signing