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Nursing Home Abuse and Negligence by [Stacy Rocheleau](#)

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Deciding to place a loved one in a long-term facility is stressful enough. Add on top of that, the constant worry of whether they will be cared for in a way that you are comfortable with. Unfortunately, you have certainly heard stories of nursing home abuse and neglect. While no one can care for a family member as you would at home and although nursing home abuse and neglect is a sad reality, you can forego the worry and assure your loved one is well taken care of by doing your homework before obligating yourself to a nursing home.

Choosing the Right Nursing Home

Word of mouth continues to be a very strong advocate. Ask around about the reputations of different facilities. Steer clear of those who have had numerous problems or complaints in the past. If your results are still ambiguous, take the time to dig a little deeper.

Make unannounced visits to the home that you are considering. Stop in during the afternoon one day and in the evening the next. Pay close attention to the attitudes of the residents as well as the staff. Is the staff attentive? Do they take their time and answer questions? Are the residents happy and involved in activities or do they confine themselves to their rooms without speaking to anyone? The demeanor of the residents™s as well as the staff is a strong indication of how the residents™s are being treated. After you have chosen a nursing home, you should still make it a point to make surprise visits. Of course everyone is going to be on their best behavior if they know when to expect you.

Signs of Abuse and Neglect

Once your loved one has been placed, be aware of the signs of neglect and abuse. Visible injuries are not hard to miss, however, neglect and mental or emotional abuse may take more to notice. An unmistakable sign of possible neglect or emotional abuse is noticing a significant change in your loved one. For instance, if your loved one has always been a happy-go-lucky type and always talkative, yet they become more sedated, this may be cause for concern. They may not wish to divulge certain information to you, but it™s important to ask questions and assure them that you will take care of any problems if they exist.

By visiting often, you can make sure they are being properly bathed, fed, getting exercise, and that their room and bedclothes are cleaned regularly. You know your loved one best. If they begin to display abnormal behavior such as depression, anxiety, or fear, it is important to immediately take action.

Taking Action

Keep a journal of your visits if you have concerns about the care or treatment of your loved one in the nursing home. Make note of the nurses who care for them and the orderlies who are on duty at the times you visit. Also contact the administrator and voice your concerns. If abuse or neglect is confirmed, contact the police and report it. It is also pertinent to have a skilled elderly abuse attorney at your side to fight for you and your loved ones rights.

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Stacy Rocheleau is the owner of a [Rocheleau Law Group](#). Rocheleau Law practices primarily divorce and injury law. She graduated from Whittier College with a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration and received her Doctorate of Jurisprudence from the University of San Diego Law School. She is a member of the Clark County Bar Association, the Southern Nevada Association of Women Attorneys, and National Association of Women Business Owners and named a "Who's Who" by In Business in 2006. Stacy can be reached at 702-914-0400. If you want to know, more about just visit a [child support obligation](#).

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