



7 Ways to Protect Senior Finances

With these difficult economic times we are experiencing an unfortunate increase in elder abuse. Financial exploitation takes many forms. Those include: taking money or property, forging an older person's signature and getting an older person to sign a deed or will through deception or coercion.

Family members can be undetected predators

Most cases of financial exploitation involve family members. Usually, it's someone who is dependent on Mom and Dad. They need that big pot of money. They're unemployable, or didn't try to work, or have substance abuse problems. They end up isolating Mom and Dad. The other kids are not sure what's going on. It's easy to transfer the house to their name or take out mortgages on the house. They might use some of the money for Mom and Dad, but they use some for themselves, too. Increased longevity is also contributing to the problem. Children with a sense of entitlement grow increasingly impatient awaiting their inheritance.

Southeastern Massachusetts has an elder abuse hotline: 1-800-922-2275. Signs of potential financial exploitation can include unpaid bills, withdrawals from bank accounts and transfers that the older person cannot explain. Sometimes a predator becomes the new "best friend," getting access to funds and bank accounts. Anyone can call the hotline and report the abuse. If you suspect an elder you know is being abused please call. An investigator will be assigned to look into the situation.

Pay attention to estate planning

To guard against such problems, legal and financial advisers suggest taking care of estate planning early. Picking who you know and trust as health care agent and durable power of attorney is very important. Do it while you have the mental capacity to make the best possible decision for yourself. If possible, let other people know about it. If putting adult children in charge is problematic, consider hiring a third party -- an attorney, a CPA -- who is not emotionally attached. By planning early and letting everyone know what the plan is there is less chance that the senior will be taken advantage of in the future.

Some safety tips for seniors

To help older people protect their finances, we offer these tips:

1. Arrange for direct deposit of Social Security checks and other retirement benefits.
2. Do not give anyone access to your ATM cards or passwords.
3. Take great care in choosing someone to appoint as power of attorney and in completing or revising a will.
4. Be careful about permitting family, friends or tenants to live in your house. Have a written agreement about expectations of services to be performed or rent paid.

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5. Treat home attendants like employees, not friends.
6. Keep valuables hidden if someone comes into the house on a regular basis.
7. Maintain contact with family, friends, neighbors and/or your community. The more active you are, the less likely you are to be exploited

If you need help establishing your estate plan, call our office for a consultation at 508-994-5200. We generally charge \$500 for a consultation but this fee will be waived if you mention this article. This article is for general informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. For specific questions you should consult a qualified attorney. Attorney Michelle D. Beneski of Surprenant & Beneski, P.C, wrote this article. The law firm has offices in New Bedford, and Hyannis and specializes in estate, tax, Medicaid and disability planning.

Mark Your Calendars For These Upcoming Events in April!

Estate Planning 101 presentations! Call 1-800-929-0491 to reserve your seat! You can also register by going on-line to: www.myfamilyestateplanning.com

Is it Time to get your Ducks in a Row?

- Tuesday, June 1st (code: Brockton) 6:30pm-8:00pm**
Taunton Inn and Conference Center, 700 Myles Standish Blvd, Taunton, Ma 02780
- Tuesday, June 14th (code: Hyannis) 6:30pm-8:00pm**
Hyannis Cape Codder, 1225 Iyannough Road, Hyannis, Ma 02601
- Thursday, June 16th (code: Arbors) 6:30pm- 8:00pm**
The Arbors of Taunton Assisted Living, 763 County Street, Taunton, Ma 02780
- Tuesday, June 21st (code: Tremont) 1:30-3:00**
The Tremont, 605 Main Street, Wareham, MA 02571



Here's What You'll Learn...

- How living trusts avoid probate, why wills don't and what good trust planning costs.
- How your Healthcare Proxy, Living Will and the new HIPAA release must work together.
- How to avoid death taxes, guarantee IRA stretch outs and plan for disabled kids or grandkids.
- How to "bulletproof" your children's and grandchildren's inheritances from their divorces, debts, lawsuits, medical expenses, irresponsible life styles and transfers out of your bloodline.
- How to protect your home and savings from \$8,300/month nursing home bills and Medicaid without buying long-term care insurance – even if you or a loved one is in a nursing home now.
- How qualified veterans and their spouses can get up to \$1949/month for at-home health care or assisted living costs from a little-known VA benefit for non-service connected disabilities.

Elder Law Today is produced by Robert L. Surprenant, of counsel, Daniel M. Surprenant & Michelle D. Beneski, Attorneys at Law. This newsletter is published as a service of Surprenant & Beneski, P.C., 35 Arnold Street, New Bedford Massachusetts 02740 and 336 South Street, Hyannis, MA 02601

COASTLINE ELDERLY NUTRITION NEWS

From the desk of Kim Ferreira, MS, RD, LDN

Food and Drug Interactions

Many older adults take prescription drugs and can be at risk for negative food and drug interactions. The effect food can have on medication can be either positive or negative. Food can either interfere with the body's ability to absorb a medication (which can result in a reduction of the dose received), or food can increase absorption (which can result in improved availability of the drug or risk of toxicity).

Let's summarize the most common and problematic pairings between drug and food and their interactions. Please be sure to contact your doctor or pharmacist if you have questions regarding medications that you take and the possible side effects.

DRUG:	FOOD:	DRUG EFFECT:
Some Statins (eg: Lipitor, Zocor)	Grapefruit, Pomegranate, & Cranberry juice	Increase
Antidepressants (MAO inhibitors)	Chocolate & other food Containing Tyramine	Increase
Allergy meds (eg: Allegra)	Black Pepper	Increase
Anti-clotting Agents (eg: Plavix)	Fatty Fish	Increase
Blood Thinners (eg: Coumadin)	Leafy Greens	Decrease
Beta-Blockers	Natural Licorice	Decrease
Antibiotics	Milk & Calcium fortified juices	Decrease

Source: Today's Dietician, December 2010

Elder Law Today



DURPRENANT & ENESKI
Estate, Tax, Medicaid and Disability Planning

***Thank YOU for recognizing our efforts by
sending your friends & family!***

Anna Hayes
Arline Phillips
Attorney David Reservitz
Attorney Sara O'Leary
Carolynn Curccio
Cheryl Bzdula
Daniel & Mary Jane Roy
Deolinda Harrington

Erin Shea
Jean Lewis
Jean Pellitier
Jennifer Shepley
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We invest 100% of our time & energy to delivering first-class service to our clients. As a result, our valued clients, partners, & friends refer their family, clients, friends & associates to us. We build strong, lifelong relationships, one person at a time!