

# Domestic violence survivor elder abuse risk

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Australian researchers have called for additional services for survivors of intimate partner violence—warning those who have these experiences are more vulnerable to elder abuse.

Women who survive domestic violence continue to experience [negative](#)

[effects](#) well into their older years but they are also more vulnerable to elder abuse, says Flinders University researcher Dr. Monica Cations, lead author of the study published in the *American Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry*.

"This is the first time this relationship has been demonstrated and tells us that older survivors need close monitoring and prevention efforts to keep them safe from further abuse."

The study looked at the psychological and physical impacts and risk for elder abuse associated with historical domestic (intimate partner) violence in [older women](#) based on the 12,259 women aged 70-75 included in the Australian Longitudinal Study on Women's Health (ALSWH).

In all, 792 or 6.4% of the cohort reported they had survived domestic violence in their past and have had significantly poorer psychological wellbeing throughout their older age than women who had never experienced [intimate partner violence](#) (IPV) - confirming the need for clinical monitoring and ongoing support for survivors as they age.

"Women who survive domestic violence can continue to be socially isolated and financially dependent on others, and these factors can make them easy targets for [elder abuse](#)," Dr. Cations explains.

"Both domestic violence and aged care services need to be aware of the ongoing vulnerability of survivors. Elder abuse prevention efforts can be targeted to help keep [domestic violence](#) survivors safe," she says.

**More information:** Monica Cations et al, Impact of Historical Intimate Partner Violence on Wellbeing and Risk for Elder Abuse in Older Women, *The American Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry* (2020). [DOI: 10.1016/j.jagp.2020.12.026](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jagp.2020.12.026)

Provided by Flinders University

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