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## [How to Talk to an Older Adult Who Has a Problem with Alcohol or Medications](#)

Older adults experience an increasing number of hardships as they age, including loss of friends and loved ones, cognitive impairment, health and financial problems, loneliness, boredom, and physical disabilities. Some older adults struggle with alcohol abuse, some with overuse of prescription medications, and some with both. In fact, alcohol use can complicate almost all aspects of an elderly person's life.

What can you do if you think an elderly loved one in your life is abusing alcohol or other drugs? First, understand that intervening is not the same as interfering. And know that it's never too late to offer help. A good first step is to educate your self about the disease of addiction. Many books, pamphlets, and other materials are available that describe what your older adult may be experiencing and what you can do to help. Physicians, treatment centers, and other helping professionals can provide resources for getting help.

The **Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation** provides articles and resources including [How to Talk to an Older Adult Who Has a Problem with Alcohol or Medications](#) that describes the signs and symptoms of a problem and the steps to getting help.

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Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation

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