

New Scam Targeting Seniors

Everyone is vulnerable to scams in one way or another. Hopefully have heard about the newest and largest healthcare fraud schemes in U.S. history targeting Medicare beneficiaries. I am speaking of the genetic testing scheme where individuals were recently charged for collecting and selling patient information and corruptly prescribing these tests. So why seniors? Think about it...they often have more robust financial resources and grew up in a world where politeness and trust were more typical. Dr. Erin Yelland, specialist with Kansas State University, shares some simple steps to protect yourself.

***Educate yourself. Being aware of common scams, how scammers target people, and what to do if you are being scammed is very important. You can update yourself on common scams at FTC.gov/scams.**

***Know who you are dealing with at all times. Always ask questions to confirm someone's identity---especially if you aren't sure or if they are asking for money or other assets.**

***If you're not sure---don't answer or hang up. If you feel uncomfortable or confused, get yourself out of the situation as soon as possible. If you're on the phone---hang up. If you're on the internet---close the browser. If it is happening in person---excuse yourself and leave.**

***Keep your personal details secure. Never give away your personal information (address, social security number, insurance information, etc.) to someone you don't know. Always be sure to confirm who you are speaking to and why they need the information before you give it. If you're not sure, do not give them your information.**

***Be smart on the internet. Always be sure to use strong passwords (upper and lower case letters, numbers, and symbols) and do not use the same password for everything! Try to mix it up or use a password manager to keep it all secure. Also, be sure to use reputable security software to protect your computer and yourself.**

***Review your privacy settings. Periodically check your privacy settings to see what information people can get from you on the internet. Keep as much information as possible private. Do not share your address or other information publicly on social media, alumni directories, etc.**

***Trust your gut. Always trust your gut. If you feel uncomfortable or are unsure, get yourself out of the situation or ask for help from a trusted family member or friend.**

