The scamming of the elderly is a growing problem robbing people of billions of dollars each year. Why do the elderly seem to fall prey to these scams? Largely because the thieves go for “easy targets” taking advantage of their vulnerabilities. Some of these vulnerabilities include:

1. Isolation. This can play a factor if the senior is living alone. Loneliness tends to make seniors more susceptible to scams because there isn’t anyone checking in on their finances.
2. The elderly population is generally more trusting than other generations.
3. Sometimes, the elderly simply get bullied into handing over money to scammers.
4. Financial insecurity can make a get-rich-quick scheme appealing, not realizing they will never get their money back.
5. Changes in cognitive brain condition, like dementia, make for a very easy target.

Knowing these vulnerabilities; it is important to also beware of the following forms of scams:

1. The allure of an unexpected win. The scammer tricks you into sending money to claim your prize.
2. Any kind of threatening call, especially from the IRS or Social Security. These agencies do not conduct business in this way.
3. Investments that sound too good to be true. Always have them checked out before handing over any money, especially when the company is the one doing the soliciting.
4. Dating sites or social media used for finding companionship. These scammers play on emotional triggers to get people to provide money, gifts or divulge personal details. An upstanding organization will never ask for money.
5. Attempts to gain your personal information. Look out for sneaky approaches used to steal your personal details.
6. Fake Charities. Scammers will impersonate genuine charities asking for donations. Be sure to only gift to charities that are well known and that have been checked out and verified.

At Independence Hill Retirement Community, we take the safety of our residents very seriously and do all we can to educate them on the “Scam du Jour.” We encourage our residents to ask for help when they find themselves facing a suspicious request. These scammers are great at what they do...that is why education and knowledge is key and nothing to be ashamed of.

Independence Hill is located at 20450 Huebner Rd., San Antonio, TX 78258. For more information, call (210) 209-8956 or visit www.independencehill.com.