

SUICIDE PREVENTION

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General Population Statistics

Suicide in the U.S.

- 13.5 % of all Americans report a history of suicidal ideation or thinking
- 3.9 % actually made a suicide plan that included a definite time, place and method
- 4.6 % reported actual suicide attempts

General Population Statistics

Suicide in the U.S.

- Every 13 minutes another life is lost to suicide.
- Every 32 seconds there is an attempt
- Suicide is the tenth leading cause of death in Americans
- Almost four times as many males as females die by suicide.

SAMSHA 2013

Suicide Prevention

Myths and Misinformation

Myth: Asking about suicide may lead a person to commit suicide.

Reality:

- Asking a person about suicide does not create suicidal thoughts.
- The act of asking the question simply gives the person permission to talk about his or her thoughts and feelings

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Myths and Misinformation

Myth: There are 'talkers' and there are 'doers'.

Reality:

- People who talk about suicide must be taken seriously.
- Talking about suicide is an important warning sign that further mental health evaluation is necessary

Suicide Prevention

Myths and Misinformation

Myth: If somebody really wants to die by suicide, there is nothing you can do about it.

Reality:

- Individuals who have survived serious suicide attempts have clearly stated that they wished someone had shown an interest.
- By supporting the person to get help, you've gone a long way toward saving a life.

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Suicide Risk Factors

- Factors that may *INCREASE* risk
 - ▣ Current ideation, intent, plan, access to means
 - ▣ Previous suicide attempt or attempts
 - ▣ Alcohol/Substance abuse
 - ▣ Previous history of psychiatric diagnosis
 - ▣ Impulsivity and poor self control
 - ▣ Hopelessness-presence, duration, severity
 - ▣ Recent losses-physical, financial, personal

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Suicide Risk Factors

- ▣ Recent discharge from an inpatient unit
- ▣ Family history of suicide
- ▣ History of abuse (physical, sexual or emotional)
- ▣ Co-morbid health problems, especially a newly diagnosed problem or worsening symptoms increased pain
- ▣ Age, gender, race (elderly or young adult, unmarried, white, male, living alone)

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Factors that may increase risks

Veteran specific risks:

- ▣ Frequent deployments
- ▣ Exposure to extreme stress
- ▣ Physical/sexual assault while in the service (not limited to women)
- ▣ Length of deployments
- ▣ Service related injury

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Signs of suicidal thinking

Acute Warning Signs and Symptoms:

- Threatening to hurt or kill self
- Looking for ways to kill self
- Seeking access to pills, weapons or other means
- Talking or writing about death, dying or suicide

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Signs of Suicidal Thinking

Additional Important Warning Signs:

- ▣ Hopelessness
- ▣ Rage, anger, seeking revenge
- ▣ Acting reckless or engaging in risky activities
- ▣ Feeling trapped
- ▣ Increasing drug or alcohol abuse*

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Signs of Suicidal Thinking

Additional Important Warning Signs:

- ❑ Withdrawing from friends, family and society (Social Isolation)
- ❑ Anxiety, agitation
- ❑ Dramatic changes in mood
- ❑ Feeling there is no reason for living, no sense of purpose in life
- ❑ Difficulty sleeping or sleeping all the time
- ❑ Giving away possessions

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Psychosocial Stressors

Interpersonal Stressors

Conflict

- Marital Conflict
- Family Conflict
- Peer Conflict
- Workplace Conflict

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Psychosocial Stressors

Interpersonal Stressors

Loss

- Death of a loved one
- Divorce/Separation
- Relationship Breakup
- Loss of job
- Loss of home
- Major Financial loss

PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Protective factors, even if present, may not counteract significant acute risk

- **Internal:** ability to cope with stress, religious beliefs, frustration tolerance, medication
- **External:** responsibility to children or beloved pets, positive therapeutic relationships, social supports
- **Ask:** Is there anything that would prevent or keep you from harming yourself?

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Asking the Question

Know how to ask the most important question of all:

Are you thinking of killing yourself?

Or

Do you have thoughts about taking your own life?

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Asking the Question

Things to consider when you talk with the person:

- Remain calm
- Listen more than you speak
- Maintain eye contact
- Act with confidence
- Do not argue
- Use open body language
- Limit questions-let the person do the talking
- Use supportive - encouraging comments
- Be honest –there are no quick solutions but
help is available

Suicide Prevention

VETERANS CRISISLINE

1-800-273-TALK press 1

1-800-273-8255 press 1

SC United Way

211



Questions

Questions