



tip Call for help

If you or someone you know is at risk of suicide, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. This 24-hour, toll-free number is staffed by people who want to help you. Call 1-800-273-TALK (8255).

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Mind matters

Current Article

Suicide: You can be a lifeline

Unfortunately, suicide isn't rare. Every year, more than 30,000 Americans take their own lives, and thousands more attempt suicide, the National Institute of Mental Health reports. Knowing the risk factors and warning signs of suicide could help save a life.



Notice these risk factors

Some people may be more prone to consider or attempt suicide. Risk factors include:

- Depression, substance abuse and other mental disorders
- Stressful life events, such as the loss of a job or relationship
- Family history of suicide
- Previous suicide attempts
- Physical or sexual abuse
- Firearms in the home — half of suicides involve guns

Watch for warning signs

In many cases, those who commit suicide show warning signs beforehand. The person may:

- Threaten to hurt or kill him- or herself
- Seek firearms or harmful drugs
- Talk or write about death or suicide
- Have dramatic mood changes
- Show feelings of hopelessness
- Express uncontrolled anger
- Talk about feeling trapped — like there's no way out
- Have a desire for revenge
- Engage in reckless behavior, including drug or alcohol abuse
- Withdraw from family and friends
- Give away prized belongings
- Have a lack of interest in future plans

Take action

Trust your instincts and take these concerns seriously. If you think a person is at risk of suicide — even if he or she hasn't talked about it — take action:

- Don't leave him or her alone.
- Listen to the person's concerns.
- Don't try to counsel him or her yourself. Seek help from a doctor or mental health professional.
- Keep the person away from firearms, sharp objects and any potentially harmful medications. Removing or locking up these items may be necessary.

If a person threatens suicide, call 911. A medical professional can best determine how to help.

Look up more information about mental health

Visit myuhc.com. Click "Health & Wellness," then "Conditions AtoZ." Choose a topic under "Mental Health."

Mind matters

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