

## Nurses Corner:

September is Suicide Awareness Month. Over 44,000 Americans die by suicide every year. Suicide is the 4<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death for people 18-65. For every death there are 25 attempts.

National Suicide Prevention lifeline-1-**800-273-8225**

### **Warning signs:**

- Talking about wanting to die
- Looking for ways to kill oneself
- Talking about having no reason to live,
- Giving away prized possessions
- Acting anxious or agitated
- Talking about being in unbearable pain
- Sleeping too little or too much
- Withdrawing or feeling isolated
- Increasing the use of alcohol or drugs
- Showing rage or seeking revenge
- Displaying extreme mood swings
- Talking about being a burden to others
- Exhibiting daring or risk-taking behaviors
- Showing lack of interest in future plans

### **How to help someone with suicidal thoughts**

#### **Ask:**

Ask the person if they think about dying or killing themselves. Don't hesitate to do this- asking will not put the idea in their head, nor will it make them more likely to attempt suicide.

#### **Listen:**

Start a conversation with the person and listen without judging to show you care. Create a safe space for them to share their feeling and vent. DO NOT swear to secrecy.

**Stay:**

Don't leave the person alone. Stay with them or make sure they are in a private, secure place with another caring person until you can get further help.

**Secure:** If you suspect the person could be a harm to themselves, take them seriously. Remove any objects that could be used in a suicide attempt.

**Call:**

Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline and follow their guidance. If danger for self-harm seems immediate, call 911.

A parent in a class I attended reminded us to say "they died by suicide". It's a new phrase for most of us, but its terms that I consciously use when talking about a person's death.