

Suicide

There is no single cause to suicide. It often occurs when stressors exceed current coping abilities of someone suffering from a mental health condition. Over 40,000 people die each year by suicide in the United States. Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the US for all ages. Suicide is currently ranked as the second leading cause of death for youth (15 to 24 years old) in the United States behind accidents/road traffic. There is one death by suicide in the US every 12 minutes. (CDC). Talking about suicide does not cause someone to be suicidal.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-8255

Risk Factors

Risk factors are characteristics that make it more likely that someone will consider, attempt, or die by suicide. They can't cause or predict a suicide attempt, but they're important to be aware of.

- Mental disorders, particularly mood disorders, schizophrenia, anxiety disorders, and certain personality disorders
- Alcohol and other substance use disorders
- Hopelessness
- Impulsive and/or aggressive tendencies
- History of trauma or abuse
- Major physical illnesses
- Previous suicide attempt(s)
- Family history of suicide
- Job or financial loss
- Loss of relationship(s)
- Easy access to lethal means
- Local clusters of suicide
- Lack of social support and sense of isolation
- Stigma associated with asking for help
- Lack of healthcare, especially mental health and substance abuse treatment
- Cultural and religious beliefs, such as the belief that suicide is a noble resolution of a personal dilemma
- Exposure to others who have died by suicide (in real life or via the media and Internet)

Warning Signs

Some warning signs may help you determine if a loved one is at risk for suicide, especially if the behavior is new, has increased, or seems related to a painful event, loss, or change.

- Talking about wanting to die or to kill themselves
- Looking for a way to kill themselves, like searching online or buying a gun
- Talking about feeling hopeless or having no reason to live
- Talking about feeling trapped or in unbearable pain
- Talking about being a burden to others
- Increasing the use of alcohol or drugs
- Acting anxious or agitated; behaving recklessly
- Sleeping too little or too much
- Withdrawing or isolating themselves
- Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge
- Extreme mood swings