

HELP AND PREVENTION

There are a number of ways to reach out if you or a loved one are experiencing symptoms or warning signs of suicidal thoughts and/or behaviors.

KEEP IN MIND

You're not alone, and help is available. Consider reaching out to your health care provider and engaging other counseling resources for guidance on next steps.

What steps will you take today to be well and live life more fully?



Suicide Warning Signs
Mental Health

Suicide Warning Signs

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WELL-BEING BEGINS HERE

Seeing or feeling
suicide signals?

**ENGAGE
OTHERS NOW**
for help.

*Imagine for a moment how much more enjoyable
and productive life might be in the absence of
pervasive thoughts or concerns about suicide.*

Life can be challenging. When people feel they're unable to cope with life's struggles and become overwhelmed, suicidal thoughts can surface. Hopelessness about the future becomes reality, and they experience a "tunnel vision" where suicide seems to be the answer.

SUICIDAL THOUGHTS

Suicidal thoughts fall into two categories: active and passive. An active statement is based on intent. It could be, "I'm going to kill myself," or "I made a plan to die." Whereas passive suicidal statements would be more like, "I wish I hadn't been born," or "I wish I could just go to sleep and never wake up." Both active and passive suicidal language should be taken seriously.

SUICIDAL RISK FACTORS

In addition to family history and impulsivity, other risk factors include:

- Significant loss surrounding a life event such as the death of a family member
- Stressors such as health issues, strained relationships and financial pressures
- A history of alcohol and/or drug abuse
- Access to firearms or other lethal means of suicide
- Feeling lonely and isolated from others
- Identifying oneself as bisexual, transgender, or homosexual in an unsupportive environment
- Struggling with mental illnesses such as bipolar

- disorder and post-traumatic stress disorder
- History of physical or sexual abuse, mental illness, or suicide attempts
- Living with chronic pain or a terminal illness

WARNING SIGNS

Suicidal statements and behaviors are not something to take lightly. Consider the following warning signs to prevent a possible suicidal situation:

- Listen for suicidal statements such as "Everyone would be better off if I wasn't here," or "I just want to die," or "I don't know if I can go on any longer."
- Watch for Suicidal behaviors such as withdrawing from others, isolating themselves, disturbances in sleep and appetite patterns, increased substance use, giving away possessions, saying goodbye to others, researching ways to commit suicide, agitation and reckless behaviors.

ACTION STEPS

- ✓ Ask the person if they are having thoughts about suicide.
- ✓ Acknowledge the feelings as real. Listen and don't try to debate with the individual.
- ✓ Offer to go with them to meet with a primary care provider or counselor for further help.
- ✓ Never promise that you will keep another person's suicidal thoughts or plan a secret.
- ✓ Don't feel like you have to help them alone; seek help from others who can support you.
- ✓ Consider seeking support or counseling and guidance for yourself.