



Learn the WARNING SIGNS

Suicide can be prevented. While some suicides occur without any outward warning, most people who are suicidal do give warnings. Prevent the suicide of loved ones by learning to recognize the signs of someone at risk, taking those signs seriously and knowing how to respond to them.

WARNING SIGNS OF SUICIDE INCLUDE:

! OBSERVABLE SIGNS OF SERIOUS DEPRESSION:

- Unrelenting low mood
- Pessimism
- Hopelessness
- Desperation
- Anxiety, psychic pain and inner tension
- Withdrawal
- Sleep problems

! INCREASED ALCOHOL AND/OR OTHER DRUG USE

! RECENT IMPULSIVENESS AND TAKING UNNECESSARY RISKS

! THREATENING SUICIDE OR EXPRESSING A STRONG WISH TO DIE

! MAKING A PLAN:

- Giving away prized possessions
- Sudden or impulsive purchase of a firearm
- Obtaining other means of killing oneself such as poisons or medications
- Unexpected rage or anger

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF SOMEONE TELLS YOU THEY ARE THINKING ABOUT SUICIDE?

If someone tells you they are thinking about suicide, you should:

- Take their distress seriously
- Listen non-judgmentally
- Help them get to a professional for evaluation and treatment
- If someone is in imminent danger of harming himself or herself, do not leave the person alone. You may need to take emergency steps to get help, such as calling 911.
- When someone is in a suicidal crisis, it is important to limit access to firearms or other lethal means of committing suicide.

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO PREVENT IT?

Learn the warning signs and get professional help. The USPS EAP has professional counselors that can provide you with information, support and resources you need.

WHO IS AT RISK FOR SUICIDE?

Suicide affects everyone, but some groups are at higher risk than others. Men are 4 times more likely than women to die from suicide. However, three times more women than men report attempting suicide. In addition, suicide rates are high among middle aged and older adults. Several factors can put a person at risk for attempting or committing suicide. But, having these risk factors does not always mean that suicide will occur.

Risk factors for suicide include:

- Previous suicide attempt(s)
- History of depression or other mental illness
- Alcohol or drug abuse
- Family history of suicide or violence
- Physical illness
- Feeling alone

Note: These are only some risk factors.