

Know the Warning Signs of Suicide

Have you heard someone make these statements? Have you thought them yourself?

"I think I'm going to end it all."

"I no longer want to live."

"Death seems like the only way out."

Have you seen someone doing any of these things? Are you doing them?

Hoarding pills. Getting a gun or knife. Looking for a high place from which to jump. Refusing food, medicine, or other treatment.

These behaviors and statements are warning signs of suicide. The person needs IMMEDIATE help. Contact a nurse, social worker, doctor, mental health professional, or clergy RIGHT AWAY.



Do either of these descriptions sound like your neighbor, a friend, or yourself?

- ◆ A resident has been drinking more than usual. He doesn't think his life has any purpose now that his wife is gone. He yells at the food servers and maintenance staff for taking too long.
- ◆ Another resident has stopped coming to bridge club and exercise class. She paces around at night, unable to sleep. She says she feels hopeless, that nothing in her life will ever improve.

These residents may be showing warning signs that they are **considering suicide**. Get help if you notice any of these behaviors and moods in yourself or another resident.

3 warning signs that a person could be at immediate risk of suicide:

- ◆ Threatening or talking about wanting to kill or hurt him/herself
- ◆ Looking for ways to kill him/herself
- ◆ Talking or writing about death, dying, or suicide when this is not usual for the person.

Warning signs that a person could be considering suicide:

BEHAVIOR

- ◆ Withdrawing from family, friends, or others
- ◆ Sleeping all the time or unable to sleep
- ◆ Acting reckless
- ◆ Increasing use of alcohol or drugs

MOOD

- ◆ Hopeless or feeling trapped
- ◆ No sense of purpose in life
- ◆ Anxious or agitated
- ◆ Rage, uncontrolled anger
- ◆ Dramatic changes in mood

Challenges Facing Older Adults

Most of the residents in this community are active, engaged, productive, and positive. However, some older adults face challenges that make it more likely they could become depressed, or even suicidal. These challenges include:

- ◆ Loss of family members, friends, and community support
- ◆ Major life changes, such as retirement, change in financial status, and moving from a home or community
- ◆ Physical illness and disability

The majority of people who attempt suicide are depressed. Depression is not a normal part of aging. It is a treatable illness.

What You Can Do

If you or someone you know is showing any of the warning signs of suicide, talk with a nurse, doctor, clergy, social worker, or mental health professional.

While that's easy to say, it's not always easy to do. People are sometimes uncomfortable seeking help for emotional health problems. If they've never done it before, they may not know what to expect.

The stigma or belief that someone should be able to cope on his or her own can also prevent a person from getting much needed treatment.

Taking care of your emotional health is just as important as taking care of your physical health.

If you had a hearing loss, you would get help.

Do the same with an emotional health concern.

SUICIDE CAN BE PREVENTED!

If You or Someone Else Shows Warning Signs of Suicide

In this facility, contact: _____

Or contact: _____

In the local community, contact: _____

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: call 1-800-273-TALK (8255); 24 hours, 7 days