

TOPIC

Suicide

CAUSES AND RISKS OF SUICIDE

Suicide is the act of ending ones own life intentionally. In 2011 alone, over 39,000 Americans committed suicide, and across the globe there are anywhere between 10 and 20 million suicide *attempts* yearly. We have learned that 90% of those who commit suicide have mental illnesses that were probably treatable. In most cases, those illnesses had gone unrecognized and untreated.

There can be many different causes and risk factors for suicide. Untreated depression is the leading cause of suicide. Someone who is suicidal could be in so much physical or emotional pain that they see no other option for themselves. These people usually have feelings of self-loathing, and helplessness. Older, single, white males are the leading demographic for committing suicide. There is also a heightened risk for homosexuals. Some other risk factors for suicide include history of abuse, recent breakup or divorce, lack of social support, gambling problems, or family history of suicide. Alcoholism or drug abuse is also a big risk factor for suicide. Substance addiction makes any feelings of helplessness worsen and only add other problems. In general, teens and older adults have a higher risk of suicide.

“Suicide is devastating for everyone, but it can be prevented by applying the right approach of working together to get through tough times.”

Dr. David Buch
CARRIER CLINIC

SUICIDE PREVENTION

A person who is suicidal may not ask for help, but that doesn't mean they don't want it. The most important part of preventing suicide is knowing the warning signs and taking them seriously. Talking openly about suicidal thoughts is a great place to start and could possibly even save a loved one. The best way to start the conversation is by telling someone their behavior or actions have been of concern lately. Ask important questions such as how long they've been feeling this way and make sure to let them know they are not alone. Do not start an argument with someone who is suicidal, it could just make them feel worse. Remove all potentially life-threatening items including, guns, knives, pills, and razors. Support from friends and family is vital in recovery.

HOW TO GET HELP

If you or someone you know is having suicidal thoughts it is imperative to get help immediately. The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is available to call 24/7. The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention www.afsp.org is also a valuable resource for those seeking help. Calling this number (1-800-273-8255) will connect anyone to a trained crisis counselor close by. Getting into therapy is also a good idea. Having an unbiased professional to talk to as many times a week or month as necessary could just be the ticket to feeling better.

Concerned about suicidal thoughts from you or a loved one should always be addressed. To discuss treatment programs, call Carrier Clinic at (800)933.3579.