



Checklist How to Prevent Suicide?

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How to Help to Prevent Suicide?

Introduction:

Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death overall. People of all genders, ages, and ethnicities can be at risk. It is a major public health concern. Although suicide is complicated and tragic, it is often preventable with:

- Making a suicide safety plan
- Use of medicines if needed
- Counseling and psychotherapy.



It is important to note that suicide is not a normal response to stress. Suicidal thoughts or actions are a sign of extreme distress and should not be ignored. Suicidal behaviour is complex, and many different factors can contribute in making someone to attempt suicide. At-risk people mostly tend to share specific characteristics like;

- Depression / other mental disorders / substance abuse disorder
- Certain medical conditions like chronic pain, incurable diseases.
- A prior suicide attempt.
- Family history of: a mental disorder, substance abuse and suicide
- Family violence, including physical or sexual abuse.
- Having guns or other firearms in the home.
- Having recently been released from prison or jail.
- Being exposed to others' suicidal behavior, such as that of family members, peers, or celebrities

Often, family and friends are the first to recognize the warning signs of suicide and get help for the concerned person from someone who specializes in diagnosing and treating mental health conditions.

Signs and Symptoms:

If undermentioned warning signs apply to you or someone you know, get help as soon as possible, particularly if the behavior is new or has exaggerated recently.

- Thinking: Thinking about death often, wanting to die or to kill themselves.
- Feeling:
 - They talk about feeling empty, hopeless, being trapped, seeing no solutions, no reason to live.
 - Feelings of great guilt or shame and being a burden to others.
 - Mood swings, suddenly changing from very sad to very calm or happy
 - Feeling unbearable emotional pain or physical pain.
- Behaviour changes:
 - Making a plan: looking for a way to kill themselves, such as searching for lethal methods online, stockpiling pills, or buying a gun
 - Excessive smoking, using alcohol or drugs more often, acting anxious or agitated, showing rage or talking about seeking revenge.
 - Withdrawing from family and friends.
 - Changing eating and/or sleeping habits
 - Taking great risks that could lead to death, such as driving extremely fast.
 - Completing tasks: giving away important possessions, saying goodbye to friends and family and putting affairs in order, making a will.

**People who die by suicide
don't want to end their life,
they want to end their pain.**

Six steps to help someone in intense emotional pain:

1. **ASK:** Ask questions: “Are you thinking about killing yourself?” and “Do you have a plan to do so?”. If someone is having these thoughts they may feel understood and taken seriously. Which can decrease emotional pain.
2. **KEEP THEM SAFE:** If you know their plans then reducing their access to highly lethal items or places is an important part of suicide prevention.
3. **BE THERE:** Listen carefully and learn what the individual is thinking and feeling. Acknowledging and talking about suicide may reduce suicidal thoughts.
4. **HELP THEM FINDING HELP:** If you can not help them then look for adequate help.. You may ask for urgent help from a nearby hospital. In the Netherlands you can call 0800-0113, 24hours/7days a week. Search for help numbers in the country where you live or contact your primary healthcare provider who can help you adequately or can refer you to the right professional.
5. **STAY CONNECTED:** Staying in touch after a crisis can make a difference. Also make connections with trusted individuals like a family member, friend, spiritual advisor, or mental health professional.
6. **TREATMENT OF THE ROOT CAUSE:** After getting stabilized it must always be an aim to prevent possible recurrence of the problem by giving perspective and hope and starting with the treatment of the root cause of problems.



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