

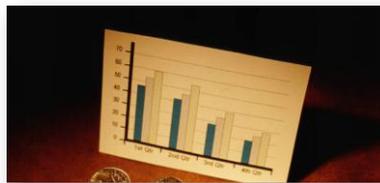
Quick Facts on Suicide #1

Definitions

- **Suicide:** Self-inflicted death with evidence that the person intended to die
- **Suicide attempt:** self-injurious behavior with a non-fatal outcome with evidence the person intended to die
- **Suicidal ideation:** thoughts of serving as the agent of one's own death

Risk factors

- ▶ Depression or other mental illness
- ▶ Alcohol or substance use
- ▶ Prior suicide attempt
- ▶ Family history of death by suicide
- ▶ Major life stressor (e.g. health problems, loss of relationship or job)
- ▶ Access to firearms

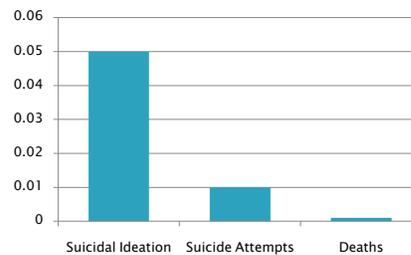


Resources presented by Thomas P. Welch, MD, MA, DFAPA, Adult & Forensic Psychiatry, 10/20/09 in *Access to Tools in Addressing Suicide: Pastoral Supports and Prevention Strategies*, a webinar provided by the National Catholic Partnership on Disability (NCPD) Council on Mental Illness. Distributed with permission by NCPD www.ncpd.org. May be reprinted provided you credit these sources.

Quick Facts on Suicide #2

Statistics

- In the U.S. in 2006, 33,300 deaths by suicide were reported
- More men die by suicide than women; women attempt suicide more often than men.
- In the course of a year, over 5% of the population has suicidal ideation, less than 1% attempts suicide, and only one-tenth of 1% dies by suicide.



Statistics (continued)

- ▶ Highest rates of death by suicide in teens and young adults and in elderly white men
- ▶ Rates increasing in middle-aged women
- ▶ Deaths by suicide more frequent in April, June, July



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Quick Facts on Suicide #3

Protective Factors

- ▶ Ability to cope with stress and tolerate frustration
- ▶ Responsibility for children or beloved pets
- ▶ Religious beliefs
- ▶ Social supports

Warning Signs

- ▶ Intense anxiety or sense of internal pain or restlessness
- ▶ Feeling desperate or trapped
- ▶ Intense anger
- ▶ Social withdrawal
- ▶ Speaking of suicide, making plans



Quick Facts on Suicide #4

Response

- ▶ Take comments seriously
- ▶ Supervise the individual
- ▶ Remove dangerous items (firearms, pills, knives)
- ▶ Seek professional help and access emergency services if threat is imminent



Considerations

- ▶ Some people with mental illness, despite optimal care, die suddenly of their illness, not unlike people with heart disease or cancer.
- ▶ Death by suicide is not predictable, but might be preventable.
- ▶ When someone dies from suicide, the effects on the survivors can be enormous.



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Quick Facts on Suicide #5

Prevention

- ▶ Identify and treat depression, other mental illnesses, and alcohol and substance use problems
 - Screening: in primary care providers' offices, in schools, on college campuses
 - Ensure access to mental health services
 - Abolish stigma



Prevention (continued)

- ▶ Don't be afraid to ask!
- ▶ Education
- ▶ Formal suicide prevention programs, especially ones supported by U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA.gov)



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