



Suicidal Ideation: Know the Signs

Before you read: This content talks about suicide prevention. Some linked sources may include sensitive topics. Our goal is to raise awareness, promote prevention and care for readers' well-being.

In 2022, more than 49,000 people in the U.S. died by suicide. About 1.6 million people tried to take their lives, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Suicide is now the 11th leading cause of death in the country.

Many people show warning signs before a crisis. These signs can appear in a close friend, a coworker, or someone you do not know well. If you notice them, speak up. Showing care early can save a life.

Start by sharing your concern in a calm and kind way. You might say, "I noticed that you said that you feel like a burden to others, which concerns me. Are you okay?" Or, "I noticed that you seem like you have been pulling away from people. Are you okay?" This helps the person feel seen and supported.

Warning Signs to Watch

Look for these signs, especially if this is outside a person's normal behavior:

Talks about feeling trapped or in deep pain

Says they feel like a burden to others

Gives away meaningful or valued items

Uses more alcohol or drugs than usual

Acts anxious, restless or upset

Sleeps too little or too much

Pulls away from people or feels alone

Shows anger or talks about revenge

Has sudden mood changes

Takes unusual risks

Talks about having no future plans or a sense of hopelessness

Any of these signs can indicate increased risk when they are new, more intense, or more frequent than what is typical for that person.

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Highest Urgency Warning Signs

Actions

Seeking access to lethal means or researching methods to harm themselves

Dramatic mood shifts from deep sadness to calmness

Increased substance use

Increased sleep or insomnia

Writing about death, dying or suicide when it is out of the ordinary for the person

Sudden reckless or risky behavior

Giving away prized possessions

Making arrangements for dependents or pets

Statements

"I can't do this anymore."

"Everyone would be better off without me."

"I wish I could sleep forever."

"Nothing will ever get better."

Source: National Institutes of Health

What to Do if You're Concerned

If someone shows any of these signs, help them find support right away. You can encourage them to:

- Call the behavioral health number on the back of their health insurance card
- Contact their Employee Assistance Program, if available
- Make an urgent visit with a local counseling office

If the person is in immediate danger, suggest calling the **Suicide and Crisis Lifeline** at **988** or **800-273-8255**. This service is free and available 24 hours a day. Your support can make a real difference.

If You Have Lost Someone to Suicide

Losing a loved one to suicide can feel overwhelming. You do not have to go through it alone. Talking with a mental health professional or joining a support group can help you heal and move forward.

#StopSuicide

If someone is in crisis, encourage them to call the **Suicide and Crisis Lifeline** at 988 or 800-273-8255. Help is free, private and available all day, every day.

Reviewed by Clinical Consultant, LMHC.

Call 911 if someone is in immediate danger or a life-threatening emergency requiring immediate physical intervention. If you or someone you know is struggling emotionally, feeling overwhelmed, anxious, hopeless, in crisis, or simply needs someone to talk to, call or text 988 for free, confidential support 24/7. The 988 Lifeline is available to anyone in the United States or U.S. territories. People do not have to be suicidal or in immediate danger to call or text 988. There is also a chat feature available on 988lifeline.org. Lucet members can contact us to connect with free resources and find care.

