



SUICIDE PSYCHOEDUCATION

embrace



WHO IS AT RISK OF SUICIDE?

Suicide is complex with psychological, social, biological, cultural and environmental factors involved. The experience of conflict, disaster, violence, abuse, chronic pain and illness or loss (e.g. financial or in a relationship), and a sense of isolation are strongly associated with suicidal behavior. Suicide rates are also high amongst vulnerable groups who experience discrimination, such as refugees and migrants; indigenous peoples; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex (LGBTI) persons; and prisoners.

The by far strongest risk factor for suicide is a previous suicide attempt.

In Lebanon, the most common reasons given for attempting suicide were family conflicts, work/school problems and financial problems (Karam 2008).

Suicide is usually associated with one or more risk factors including:

- Mental disorders (such as depression, bipolar disorder, drug or alcohol dependence and schizophrenia)
- Previous suicide attempts
- Harmful use of alcohol
- Death by suicide of a family member or loved one
- Terminal illness
- Chronic pain
- Recent loss or stressful life event
- Social isolation or sense of isolation
- Loneliness
- Financial loss
- Chronic pain
- Discrimination
- Abuse, violence, conflictual relationships
- Stress related to moving to live in a different culture (e.g. indigenous peoples or displaced persons)
- Post-conflict and post-disaster situations

PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Mental disorders are treatable. Suicide is preventable.

What precautions and protective factors can individuals with mental health disorders take?

- Identify and become aware of an underlying or prevalent mental health disorder (sadness, depression, loss of interest in activities, mood swings or alcohol / drug dependency)
- Reach out to family and friends for support
- Receive effective clinical care, through a mental health professional
- Tap into community or network for support (group gatherings or social media)
- Become aware of escalation of feelings or emotions and take proactive measures to change your setting and stay away from dangerous activities
- Explore religious, cultural or spiritual means that can help you cope
- Try to meditate or engage in activities that bring your peace



HOW CAN YOU SUPPORT YOUR RECOVERY AFTER A SUICIDE ATTEMPT?

ENGAGING IN SELF-CARE

Be kind to yourself. You are not your own worst enemy. The thoughts and feelings may be excruciating, but with the right support, you can get through it.

DEVELOPING A SAFETY PLAN OR HAVING A SAFE SPACE

Planning your recovery is integral at this point in your life. It requires self-reflection and learned strategies.

- Try to track your thoughts. What triggered the negative thoughts or suicidal attempt? Recognize the warning signs. Write them down.
- Think of some coping strategies to distract yourself without contacting another person (relaxation techniques, physical activities)
- Think of who are the people that can help take your mind off the thoughts. Call them or ask them to come over. The company you keep plays a big role in your life.
- Think of a social setting that can help take your mind off the thoughts, make an effort to go there.
- Ask a person supporting you to make your environment safe (take away anything you might hurt yourself with).
- Call The Lifeline if you are unsure of how to deal with this stage in your life: 1564

Returning to work or academics

Resuming your daily life activities is an important part of recovering and getting better. Here are some tips on how to get back on track:

- Inform your boss, teacher or supervisor about needing some additional support during this period
- Request to come back in with a flexible time schedule at first
- Ask for flexible deadlines as you transition back
- Make sure to keep time for your doctor appointments
- Ask for support at school or in the workplace



HOW COMMON IS SUICIDE?

- Suicide is a serious public health problem.
- Globally:
Close to **800 000 people** die from suicide every year around the world - that's one person every 40 seconds.
78% of suicides occur in low and middle-income countries.
- Globally, suicide is the second leading cause of death in **15-29 year-olds**.

IN LEBANON

- On average, **one person dies from suicide every 2.1 days**, in Lebanon, and on average one person attempts suicide every 6 hours.

SUICIDE WARNING SIGNS

- Thinking of harming yourself
- Talking about wanting to kill yourself or obsessing about death
- Feeling hopeless or that you have no purpose
- Feeling that you have no one to talk to, leading to thoughts of loneliness
- Increasing dependency of any substance, whether alcohol or drugs
- Reacting to a major Life Incident or Trauma in an exaggerated / Different way
- Suffering from a recent loss (whether loved one, job etc.)
- Being unable to carry out daily tasks, such as going to work or getting out of bed
- Sleeping for extended period of time, or not at all
- Sharing a note, post or message about wanting to self-harm
- Showing signs of extreme rage, or mood swings

GETTING THE HELP YOU NEED

Effective treatments are available. Plans for treatment and management can include lifestyle changes (such as regular sleep cycle, regular physical activity, and resuming previous social activities), psychological treatment and medication if needed.

- **Speaking with a professional (Psychotherapy)**

Through this form of therapy, called psychotherapy, it can help someone understand how thoughts can impact behaviors and vice versa. It helps the person feel listened to, cared for, and relieved of present and past pain and stresses. It helps work with the person through the tough thought processes so they no longer control them.

- **Medication**

There are many recommended medications that assist in treating underlying mental illnesses.

A doctor can work with the individual to find the most suitable medication for his or her case.

- **Hospitalization**

For a person at a high risk of suicide, hospitalization is recommended. It is a good option if someone cannot control their actions or does not want to commit to therapy. Through specialized programs in hospitals, people can learn how to cope, receive needed care and treatment and have open discussions about their thoughts, in order to decrease the likelihood of suicide. It is recommend for :

- Someone who attempted suicide
- Someone that has shown or spoken of a desire to end their lives
- Someone that suffers from severe depression or another mental illness

CALL THE NATIONAL LIFELINE FOR EMOTIONAL SUPPORT AND SUICIDE PREVENTION AT 1564. THE NATIONAL LIFELINE OPERATOR CAN ORIENT YOU TO RESOURCES CLOSET TO YOU.

