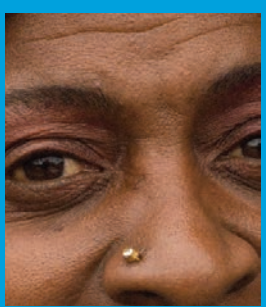
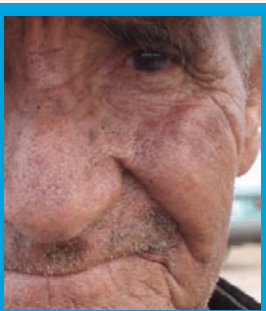




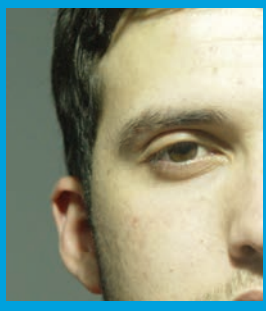
Your feelings will pass...



• Suicide is the second-leading cause of death for people ages 10-34.



• Men ages 75 and older have the highest rate of suicide.



• People suffering from depression, schizophrenia, and a dependency on drugs or alcohol are at a greater risk of attempting suicide.

Suicide Is Not the Solution

Over 90% of the people who commit suicide suffered from a mental illness at the time of their death. In many cases, this mental illness takes the form of depression. Everyone goes through periods of feeling sad, lonely, bored, nervous, and tired. But when these, or other negative feelings, dominate your emotions for a few weeks or more, they may be an indication of depression.

Depression can work like a cloud, entirely covering a person's perspective with hopelessness and pain. For some, suicide seems like a way out from under these overpowering, negative emotions. But clouds can be lifted; depression is a temporary and treatable condition.

RESOURCES

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline:
Available 24-hours a day in English or Spanish.
Call or Text: 988
Visit: 988lifeline.org

The following organization can help you locate a support group and can provide you with more information to help you through this time:

The National Alliance on Mental Illness
1-800-950-NAMI (6264)

With your help, suicide can be prevented.

>INFOCUS

avoiding
SUICIDE



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How Depression Works

When certain chemicals in a person's brain, such as serotonin, become unbalanced, it causes depression. Depression is not a choice, nor is it a sign of weakness.

Unfortunately, one symptom of depression is hopelessness. Those suffering from depressive illnesses often find it difficult to imagine a life without pain. Attempts at suicide are, in effect, attempts at ending that pain.

Fortunately, through intervention, people suffering from suicidal thoughts can regain perspective and fight their depression.

What are the signs that someone is thinking about suicide?

They may...

- write a suicide note or a will
- openly express a suicide plan
- be excessively sad or depressed

- be preoccupied with death
- abuse alcohol or drugs
- give away important personal possessions
- dramatically alter sleeping or eating habits
- avoid friends, family, and social situations
- neglect their work
- stop attending to their personal appearance
- be irritable, violent, or withdrawn
- become increasingly impulsive or engage in risky behaviors

If someone you know exhibits any of the above symptoms, take them seriously. People generally do not discuss suicide to get attention. When you witness or suspect someone is contemplating suicide, take action to prevent it.

How can I prevent someone from attempting suicide?

If you suspect someone is considering suicide, ask them in an open, non-judgmental way. Most people are relieved to discuss their feelings. Talking alleviates the pain and alienation, and can open the doors to getting long-term help. Don't worry about putting suicidal thoughts in



their mind, as talking about these feelings will only make the situation better.

One way to begin is by asking questions, such as:

- Have you ever thought about attempting suicide?
- Have you made a suicide plan?
- Have you thought through when you would do it?
- Do you have what you would need in order to carry out your plan?

As you listen, recognize the reality of the person's feelings. Express your understanding. Don't dismiss the person's problems or try to talk the person out of their feelings. Don't promise to keep what you know a secret. Remind your friend or loved one that they have nothing to be ashamed of, that help is available, and that suicidal feelings are treatable. Express your willingness to help. Keeping a friend alive is more important than keeping a secret.

If the danger seems immediate, do not leave that person alone. Immediately seek help from your local mental health care provider. Remove pills, guns, rope, or anything they might use to hurt themselves from the person's environment. Many people who attempt suicide make another attempt within a few months. For this reason, it's crucial that initial conversations are followed by action. Do one or more of the following:

- Help locate a mental health professional
- Help your friend or loved one make a first appointment and accompany them to it.

Remember, depression is a treatable mental health condition. People that are suffering from depression and experiencing suicidal thoughts simply need help. Intervention from friends and family is the best way to get help to those in need. Help prevent suicide by getting involved.



Those Who Are Left Behind

When someone you know or love dies through suicide, you are left with a very particular sense of loss. You may experience anger, numbness, frustration, or guilt. You may blame yourself or others for not having prevented the suicide, and you may even contemplate suicide yourself. All of these feelings are normal reactions.

Grief is an important part of the healing process, and everyone experiences it differently. Allow yourself to do whatever feels appropriate in order to grieve—whether it be laughing, crying, or talking about your feelings—and give yourself as much time as it takes to heal. Speaking with mental health specialists and other suicide survivors often helps ease suffering. Avoid speaking with people who minimize your feelings or who tell you, "you should be over it."