

Who Is At Risk?

Suicide can affect any veteran, regardless of age, branch of service, or combat experience. However, certain groups face elevated risk. Veterans who have experienced combat trauma, those transitioning to civilian life, and individuals with service-connected disabilities are particularly vulnerable.

Male veterans, especially those over 50, statistically face higher rates, though female veterans are also at significant risk. Veterans who feel disconnected from their communities or struggle with employment, housing instability, or relationship problems face additional challenges. It's important to remember that risk factors can affect anyone, and reaching out for help is a sign of strength, not weakness.



What Are The Risk Factors?

Multiple factors can increase suicide risk among veterans:

- ★ **Mental health conditions:** Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, anxiety, and traumatic brain injury (TBI) significantly elevate risk and require professional treatment.
- ★ **Substance use:** Alcohol and drug use often co-occur with mental health struggles and compound the danger of suicidal behavior.
- ★ **Chronic pain and physical injuries:** Persistent pain can lead to feelings of hopelessness and desire to escape suffering.
- ★ **Social isolation:** Loss of military camaraderie and disconnection from community leave veterans feeling alone and without support.
- ★ **Access to lethal means:** Access to firearms increases lethality when combined with suicidal thoughts.
- ★ **Recent losses:** Relationship breakdowns, job loss, or loss of purpose can trigger crisis moments requiring immediate intervention.
- ★ **Previous attempts or family history:** A previous suicide attempt or family history of suicide increases vulnerability and risk.

Veterans experiencing multiple risk factors require immediate attention and support.

RESOURCES

Veterans Crisis Line

<https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/>

988 Lifeline

<https://988lifeline.org/>

VA Mental Health Services

<https://www.va.gov/health-care/health-needs-conditions/mental-health/>

Military One Source

<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/>

in the know

© 2025 Prevention & Treatment Resource Press
www.PTRPress.com • 877-329-0570 • product #PB-PS170
This pamphlet may not be copied

This pamphlet is for educational purposes only and should not be substituted for medical advice. If you have questions or concerns, talk with a healthcare professional.

VETERAN SUICIDE PREVENTION

YOU DON'T HAVE TO FIGHT ALONE

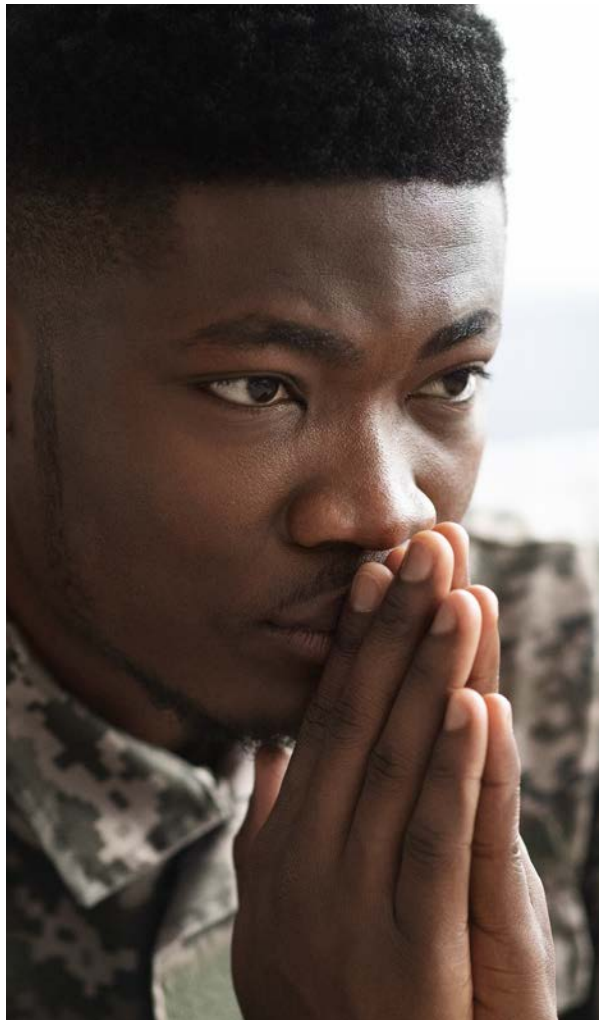


WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

Warning signs may be direct or subtle. Direct statements about wanting to die, feeling like a burden, or having no reason to live should always be taken seriously.

Behavioral changes include withdrawing from family and friends, giving away prized possessions, saying goodbye as if it's the last time, or searching online for suicide methods.

Mood changes such as extreme sadness, rage, anxiety, or sudden calmness after depression may indicate crisis.



“**“WHEN SHOULD A VETERAN SEEK HELP?”
IMMEDIATELY!**”

WHEN SHOULD A VETERAN SEEK HELP?

The answer is simple: immediately. If you're experiencing suicidal thoughts, reach out now. Don't wait for a crisis to escalate. Seeking help early can prevent tragedy and start the healing process. If you're thinking about suicide, have a plan to get help. This is an emergency requiring immediate attention.

Even if the suicidal thoughts are fleeting or you don't have a specific plan, talking to a professional can provide relief and perspective. Family members and friends should also seek help on behalf of veterans showing warning signs. Early intervention saves lives. Remember that asking for help is courageous, and there is absolutely no shame in reaching out during a difficult time.



WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE?

Veterans have access to numerous confidential, free resources:

- ★ **Veterans Crisis Line:** Call 9-8-8, then press 1 or text 838255. Available 24/7 with specially trained responders who understand military culture and experience.
- ★ **Vet Centers:** Community-based counseling centers offering free readjustment counseling to veterans and their families. Find locations at www.vetcenter.va.gov.
- ★ **Military OneSource:** Free, 24/7 support for service members, veterans, and families at 1-800-342-9647.
- ★ **Local Emergency Services:** Call 9-1-1 if you think you may commit suicide or harm yourself.



Recovery is possible. You've served with honor—now let others serve you.

Reach out today!

