

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO IF A LOVED ONE IS SUICIDAL

If you think a loved one might be considering suicide, it is time to take action. Learn the warning signs and the steps you can take to help your loved one.

If you, your child, or someone you know are thinking about suicide or self-harm, call or text 988, the National Suicide & Crisis Lifeline or go to the nearest hospital emergency room.

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Warning signs

Watch for any of these red flags:

- Discussing suicide and saying things such as, "I wish I were dead" or "I wish I hadn't been born."
- Buying a gun, pills or other items that could be used for self-harm.
- Becoming preoccupied with death, dying and/or violence.
- Withdrawing from friends and family.
- Engaging in risky behavior, like using drugs or driving recklessly.
- Putting affairs in order and/or giving away possessions.

- Becoming increasingly agitated or anxious.

Seek help in an emergency

If you believe a loved one might attempt suicide, seek help immediately.

- Do not leave them alone.
- Call 911 or another local emergency number.
- Drive them to the nearest emergency room.
- Call, text or chat 988 to access the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.



Fast fact

Suicide is the 12th leading cause of death in the United States and the second leading cause of death in adolescents. More than 45,900 Americans died by suicide in 2020.

How you can help

- 1. Start a conversation.** If you spot warning signs, talk to your loved one and offer your support.
- 2. Get them help.** Make a doctor's appointment and accompany them to the visit. Be sure they are following their provider's instructions and that they attend any follow-up visits.
- 3. Remove dangers.** These include firearms, razors, knives and medications.
- 4. Make a safety plan.** Your loved one can use this plan if they are thinking about suicide. It could include soothing activities, reasons for living and the contact numbers for their doctor, therapist and a crisis hotline.
- 5. Encourage a healthy lifestyle.** A well-balanced diet and regular exercise can help boost your loved one's mood and overall health.