

Factsheet: **Suicide**

Suicide is the biggest killer of men under 45. Whilst death by suicide can occur because of severe psychological illness, acute psychological stress, or someone's predisposing temperament and genetic vulnerabilities, suicide can happen to anyone. Most people who feel suicidal do not actually want to die; rather they don't have any hope for a different or improved future and so decide their only option is to end their life.

Signs to look out for in yourself or others

These are not exhaustive, and some people will show no significant signs.

- ▶ Changes in behaviour eg: mood swings, sleeping/eating patterns, becoming angry, negative, depressed
- ▶ Out of character reckless behaviour, eg: giving away all possessions, increased use of drugs or alcohol, excessive spending
- ▶ Social withdrawal
- ▶ Lack of energy
- ▶ Neglecting grooming and personal hygiene
- ▶ Suddenly appearing very calm or relieved after a period of depression
- ▶ Settling affairs and saying goodbye
- ▶ Talking about suicide or dying

If you have thought of suicide

- ▶ Talk to someone – a friend, your GP, a helpline
- ▶ Be around other people
- ▶ Go to a safe place such as a friend's house, a Samaritans drop in centre
- ▶ Try not to think about the future – just focus on getting through today
- ▶ Remember drugs and alcohol are not a solution and may make you feel worse
- ▶ Do something you usually enjoy

How to have a conversation with someone you believe to be suicidal

It is not the case that asking about suicide precipitates the action of suicide. Rather it shows the person you genuinely care, are interested in their welfare and want to help. Use simple, direct questions in a non-judgmental, non-confrontational way.

Ask – have you thought about suicide? Be direct

Listen to the response

Keep talking to the person telling them they are not alone and you want to help

Ask if you can assist them to access help and support by calling a family member, the emergency services, a helpline or their GP

If you believe there is an immediate risk do not leave the person alone if you are in the same room, but do be mindful of your own personal safety

If you are talking to them on the phone use another phone to let the police know

Follow your instinct

**Life in the law can be tough. Call our confidential helpline.
We're here to listen on **0800 279 6888** or visit **www.lawcare.org.uk****

Bereavement by suicide

A suicidal person believes that those close to them will be better off without them. This is not true. It is really tough to resume normal living after a death by suicide. It has the ability to undermine, overwhelm, devastate and destroy leaving behind many questions that can never be answered. This can take a real toll on your mental and physical well-being and you will develop feelings of guilt. The suicide of a loved one can also mean you consider suicide yourself, known as suicide ideation. You may want to seek help from your GP or a counselling organisation. There are also specialist organisations that can help such as SOBS (Survivors of Bereavement through Suicide) www.uk-sobs.org.uk

Useful Resources

Samaritans – for everyone

Call **116 123**

Email jo@samaritans.org

Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM) – for men

Call **0800 58 58 58**

5pm to midnight every day

Visit the webchat page

Papyrus – for people under 35

Call **0800 068 41 41**

Monday to Friday 10am to 10pm, weekends 2pm to 10pm, Bank Holidays 2pm to 5pm

Text **07786 209 697**

Email pat@papyrus-uk.org

Maytree Respite Centre - a sanctuary for the suicidal

Call **0207 263 7070**

Email maytree@maytree.org.uk

Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide

Call **0300 111 5065**

Suicide Bereaved Network

Call **0300 999 0003**

LawCare counselling factsheet

LawCare bereavement factsheet

LawCare worried about someone factsheet