



**Medical
Blueprints**

SUICIDE PREVENTION MONTH: SIMPLE STEPS TO STOP SUICIDES REPORT #2994

BACKGROUND: Suicide is death caused by injuring oneself with the intent to die. A suicide attempt is when someone harms themselves with any intent to end their life, but they do not die as a result of their actions. Suicide rates increased 30% between 2000–2018 and declined in 2019 and 2020. Suicide is a leading cause of death in the United States, with 45,979 deaths in 2020. This is about one death every 11 minutes. The number of people who think about or attempt suicide is even higher. In 2020, an estimated 12.2 million American adults seriously thought about suicide, 3.2 million planned a suicide attempt, and 1.2 million attempted suicide.

(Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/suicide/facts/index.html>)

DIAGNOSIS: Some of the signs that someone is thinking about suicide include if they are talking about wanting to die, having great guilt or shame, or being a burden to others. Some other signs are if they express feeling empty, hopeless, trapped, or having no reason to live, extremely sad, more anxious, agitated, or full of rage, or unbearable emotional or physical pain. Also look for changes in behavior, like making a plan or researching ways to die, withdrawing from friends, saying goodbye, giving away important items, or making a will, taking dangerous risks such as driving extremely fast, displaying extreme mood swings, eating or sleeping more or less, or using drugs or alcohol more often. If these warning signs apply to you or someone you know, get help as soon as possible, particularly if the behavior is new or has increased recently.

(Source: <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/warning-signs-of-suicide>)

NEW REGULATIONS: The National Suicide Hotline Designation Act, signed into law after the passage of bipartisan legislation in 2020, authorized 988 as a new three-digit number for suicide and mental health crisis. “988 is more than a number, it is a message: we’re there for you. Through this and other actions, we are treating mental health as a priority and putting crisis care in reach for more Americans,” said Secretary Becerra, who has been meeting with states across the country about the transition to 988 as part of HHS’ National Tour to Strengthen Mental Health. “There is still much work to do. But what matters is that we’re launching, 988 will be live. We are looking to every governor and every state in the nation to do their part to make this a long-term success.”

(Source: <https://www.samhsa.gov/newsroom/press-announcements/20220715/us-transition-988-suicide-crisis-lifeline-begins-saturday#:~:text=The%20National%20Suicide%20Hotline%20Designation,suicide%20and%20mental%20health%20crisis.>)

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