

**Suicide** is a leading public health problem in the United States and has become of increasing concern among recently returning veterans and active duty soldiers. The suicide rate among soldiers was the highest in recent years - nearly 13/100,000 - a rate twice as high as the general population. More than 90% of persons who commit suicide have a diagnosable and treatable mental health condition, commonly a depressive or substance abuse disorder.

It is important to recognize the risk factors for suicide and seek help if you notice changes in behavior in yourself or a loved one. If you or a person you care about is impacted by one or more of the following risk factors or warning signs - **please ask for help.**

### **Who should ask for help?**

- Anyone, but especially those who feel sad, hopeless, or suicidal.
- Family and friends who are concerned about a loved one who may be experiencing these feelings.
- Anyone interested in suicide prevention, treatment, and service referrals.

### **Suicide Risk Factors**

- Relationship problems
- Divorce or separation
- Financial problems
- Work / employment problems
- Trouble sleeping
- Major life stress
- Social isolation
- Substance abuse
- Access to firearms
- Recent illness or hospitalization
- Mental health conditions - especially depression, Post-traumatic Stress Disorder, and substance abuse

### **Suicide Warning Signs**

- Talking or joking about suicide
- Talking about feeling worthless or helpless
- Suddenly and unexpectedly happier or calmer
- Giving away prized possessions, money
- Obsession with firearms, knives, pills
- Risk-taking behavior such as reckless driving
- Self-destructive behavior such as alcohol and / or drug abuse
- Threatening to hurt or kill oneself or talking about wanting to hurt or kill oneself
- Looking for ways to kill oneself by seeking access to firearms, available pills, or other means

- Talking or writing about death, dying, or suicide when these actions are out of the ordinary for the person
- Feeling hopeless
- Feeling rage or uncontrolled anger or seeking revenge
- Acting reckless or engaging in risky activities—seemingly without thinking
- Feeling trapped—like there's no way out
- Increasing alcohol or drug use
- Withdrawing from friends, family, and society
- Feeling anxious or agitated, being unable to sleep, or sleeping all the time
- Experiencing dramatic mood changes
- Seeing no reason for living or having no sense of purpose in life

**With appropriate** treatment and knowledge, the risk of suicide can be greatly reduced.

All threats, talk, and thoughts of harming oneself should be taken seriously.

Someone who is thinking of suicide may not always appear particularly unhappy or upset.

Please do not be afraid to ask for help for yourself or a loved one.

## Suicide Prevention Phone Numbers

*National Suicide Prevention Hotline*  
**1-800-273-TALK (8255)**

*Mental Health Clinic Crisis Line*  
*VA Medical Center, WPB, FL*  
561-422-7515 (8am - 4:00pm)

*VA Tel-Care Nurse*  
1-877-741-3400 (Nurse After 4pm)

*Palm Beach Vet Center*  
561-585-0441 (8:30am - 5:30pm)

*Palm Beach County Helpline*  
Dial: 211

The National Suicide Prevention Hotline is a free and confidential service for those who are seeking help when they feel like there is nowhere to turn.

1-800-273-TALK (8255) can be dialed toll free from anywhere in the United States 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Trained crisis center staff are available to listen to your needs and offer:

- Crisis counseling.
- Suicide intervention.
- Mental health referral information.

You are not alone. We are here to listen and to help you find your way back to a happier, healthier life.

**If you or someone you know  
is thinking about suicide,  
call the National Suicide  
Prevention Hotline.**



To operate the National Suicide Prevention Hotline, VA partnered with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

The National Suicide Prevention Hotline, **1-800-273-TALK (8255)**, is staffed by VA mental health professionals who work closely with local VA Medical Centers to help callers.

**Department of Veterans Affairs  
Medical Center**  
7305 North Military Trail  
West Palm Beach, Florida 33410

561-422-8262 (local)  
1-800-972-8262 (toll free)

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**If you've ever had boots on the  
ground, been in the bush, deployed,**



**or not...**

**you're not alone**

**Feeling disconnected, depressed?  
Thinking about harming yourself?**

**There are people who  
CAN HELP.**