

# Facts about Suicide

- » Worldwide there are more deaths due to suicide than to accidents, homicides and war combined.
- » About 30,000 people in the United States die by suicide every year.
- » Currently, suicide is the 11th leading cause of death in the U.S.
- » Every day, approximately 80 Americans take their own life, and 1,500 more attempt to do so.
- » A person dies by suicide about every 18 minutes in the U.S. An attempt is estimated to be made once every minute.
- » In the U.S. in 2001, the suicide rate among women was 4.1 per 100,000, while for men it was 17.6 per 100,000.
- » There are more than four male suicides for every female suicide, but twice as many females as males attempt suicide.
- » Firearms are the most frequent method of suicide among adults in the United States.
- » Over ninety percent of people who die by suicide had at least one psychiatric illness at the time of death. The most common diagnoses are depression and drug and/or alcohol abuse.
- » Alcoholism is a factor in about 30 percent of all suicide deaths.
- » Early recognition and treatment of depression and other psychiatric illnesses appears to be the best way to prevent suicide.
- » Certain personality disorders, such as borderline and antisocial personality disorders, appear to carry high risk for suicide. Impulsivity also appears to be a risk factor for suicide.
- » Between 20 and 50 percent of people who kill themselves had previously attempted suicide. Although the majority of people who die by suicide have not made a previous attempt, a serious suicide attempt is a clear risk factor for suicide death.
- » Suicidal individuals often talk about suicide directly or indirectly using statements like, “*My family would be better off without me.*” Sometimes they talk as if they are saying goodbye or going away, and may arrange to put their affairs in order.
- » Other signs of contemplating suicide include giving away articles they value, paying off debts or changing a will.