

SE PA Crisis Services (24/7)

- Bucks County
Lenape Valley Fdn 800-499-7455
- Chester County
Valley Creek Crisis Ctr 877-918-2100
- Delaware County
CCMC Crisis Ctr 610-447-7600
Crisis Connections 855-889-7827
- Montgomery County
MCES 610-279-6100
- Philadelphia County
Northeast 215-831-2600
Northwest 215-951-8300
North 215-707-2577
Center City/South 215-829-5249
West/Southwest 215-748-8525



Protective Factors:

These are some things that can deter suicidal thoughts and behaviors in elders:

- Believing in the value of life
- Having reasons for living
- Strong social connections and supports
- Hope for the future—optimistic outlook
- Spiritual beliefs against suicide
- Living in a positive setting
- Sobriety/limited use of alcohol
- Feeling of personal control
- Sense of self-worth and self-esteem
- Willingness to use available services



For Veteran's Crisis Line Press [1]

Elder Suicide:

What to Know

High Risk Elders

- Men age 75 and older
- Elderly women with psychiatric histories
- Those living alone or in long term care
- Elders with self-injury backgrounds
- Retirees from high-risk occupations

This information is meant to be educational and not to take the place of advice and help from qualified health care sources.

Montgomery County
Emergency Service
50 Beech Drive
Norristown, PA 19403
610-279-6100
www.mces.org
@MCES1

Purpose

This brochure offers basic information about suicide risk in older adults. It is intended for those who care for and care about elders. ***Suicide is preventable at every age and is always a premature death that leaves behind loved ones and others to cope with traumatic loss.***

How Suicide Happens

The exact cause of suicide is not known but a suicide attempt may occur when a strong intent to die and the ability for lethal self-harm come together.

A intense desire to die may result from an elder's *belief* that he or she is a burden to those close to them or they would be better off without him or her.

An ability for lethal self-harm may arise from trauma, abuse, pain, access to guns, alcohol abuse, military service.

Possible Triggers

Interpersonal issues, separation
Financial loss/exploitation/insecurity
Loss of autonomy/self-care/dignity
Death of spouse, other loved one
Physical/sexual/emotional abuse
Worsening chronic illness/disability

Some Warning Signs

Talking of being trapped, losing control
Increasing alcohol/medication misuse
Withdrawal from family/friends
Anxiety/agitation/sleep problems
Mood changes, anger, growing pessimism, unnecessary risk-taking
Growing self-neglect
All or nothing, black/white thinking

Some Danger Signs

Indifference to support/care regimens
Giving away pets, tools, favored items
Sleep disturbances, nightmares

Help with Warning Signs

Directly ask about suicide
Call one of the numbers on the back panel of this brochure ASAP
Stay with the elder or get someone else to, maintain contact as much as possible
Don't believe they will get help on their own or if they say they are alright
Try to remove firearms from home

When to get Emergency Help

An elder needs immediate help when:

- Voicing/communicating to others clear thoughts of suicide
- Citing a specific suicide plan giving when and how
- Seeking a means of suicide

Any one of these signals imminent dangerousness and you should:

- Call the local crisis center ***now***
- Take the elder to the nearest hospital Emergency Department ***now***
- If above not doable call 911 ***now***

Elder suicides are rising in Pennsylvania and likely to rise significantly as the high risk "Baby Boomer" generation ages.