



Be Safe: Prevent Self-Harm Healthy Living Message



What's Important to Know?

People can experience emotional or mental health distress in response to a range of situations. Distress may be triggered by troubles such as problems in relationships or loss of a job. This distress can get worse and lead some people to consider hurting or even killing themselves (suicide). In general, Veterans are at a higher risk of suicide than civilians.

These warning signs **may** indicate that someone is in crisis and/or possibly having thoughts of suicide:

- Hopelessness, feeling like there's no way out
- Anxiety, agitation, sleeplessness, or mood swings
- Feeling like there is no reason to live
- Talking about death, dying, or suicide
- Rage or anger
- Engaging in risky activities without thinking about possible harm
- Increasing or excessive tobacco, alcohol, or drug misuse
- Withdrawing from family and friends
- Feeling like a burden to others
- Feeling overwhelming guilt or shame

These signs require **immediate** attention:

- Thinking about killing yourself
- Looking for ways to kill yourself
- Self-destructive behavior such as drug abuse, reckless weapon use, etc.

If you or someone else is in crisis and having thoughts of suicide:

- Seek immediate help from your health care team or the nearest hospital emergency room

- Call 911
- Call the Veterans Crisis Line. Dial 988, then Press 1



- Text 838255
- Contact the Veterans Chat Service at <https://www.veteranscrisisline.net>
- During times of crisis or hopelessness, consider removing firearms from the home or using a gunlock or gun safe to make them less accessible

Want to Know More?

If you want to learn more about how to prevent self-harm or suicide, talk with your VA health care team. Visit VA's Suicide Prevention Website: www.mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide_prevention. There is help for stressors that are making life difficult. Don't wait. Reach out: <https://www.va.gov/REACH/>

You can find additional information and resources at VA's Prevention website using the QR code above or the link below:

https://www.prevention.va.gov/Healthy_Living/Be_Safe_Prevent_Self_Harm.asp