



10 Things You Should Know About... *Suicide, Treatment and Prevention*

1. Every 16.2 minutes someone in the U.S. completes Suicide; and, every 17 minutes someone is left to make sense of it.
2. There are 18 Veteran suicide deaths per day. Male Veterans are more likely to use firearms as a means than female Veterans.
3. Substance abuse/misuse is a key risk factor for suicide.
4. Suicide rates are highest in the older (50+), single, male, Caucasian population who have a mood disorder and/or are abusing alcohol.
5. Individuals with certain *non*-cancer pain-related conditions are at greater risk for suicide than those without these diagnoses.
6. Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF)/Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF)/Operation New Dawn (OND) Veterans who have mental health conditions are at increased risk for suicide. The increased risk is associated with diagnoses of depression, bipolar disorder, substance use disorders, anxiety disorders, and schizophrenia.
7. Individuals with a diagnosis of Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) are at greater risk for suicide than those without this diagnosis.
8. A suicide crisis is time-limited and, with appropriate intervention, the risk for harm can be thwarted.
9. If you think someone is at risk: Open up a dialogue, listen; Don't judge, try to understand the problem driving the crisis; Convey a message of hope that the crisis will pass; Offer to contact a chaplain or mental health provider; Provide a safe environment by removing the means; and, Escort the person to a behavioral health facility ASAP.
10. Immediate help and/or treatment is readily available to Veterans:
 - The Veterans Crisis Line is **800-273-8255, press 1**; a confidential online chat session can be initiated at www.veteranscrisisline.net/chat; or a text message sent to **838255** will initiate a connection with a VA responder.
 - Veterans may speak confidentially with a Vet Center Counselor at **877-WAR-VETS (927-8387)**, and family and friends of Veterans can contact Coaching into Care at **888-823-7458** for confidential support in talking about concerns and treatment options with their Veteran.
 - Make the Connection, <http://maketheconnection.net> connects Veterans and their friends and family members with information, resources, and solutions to issues affecting their lives.

Acknowledgement: "10 Things You Should Know" is produced by the VA San Diego Healthcare System in partnership with Chaplains Caring for Veterans and Families, an informal organization committed to helping faith communities identify and attend to the spiritual distress experienced at times by those in military service.

Visit the **Rural Clergy Training** website for more information about caring for our Veterans,
www.ruralhealth.va.gov/ruralclergytraining.