

Suicide and its Survivors

2020 saw almost 46,000 Americans die from suicide in the U.S., making it now the 12th leading cause of death in our country. With one death every 11.5 minutes, there are approximately 125 Americans dying by suicide every day.

Surviving an attempt

Those who have attempted suicide describe being stuck in a state of transition. After making an attempt to end their life, they are now attempting to cope with the aftereffects.

Attempt survivors describe the importance of family involvement in one's recovery. However, family members might be uncertain about what to say, how to behave or experience compassion fatigue after hearing a loved one talk about suicide or make multiple attempts. There are various common and evidence-based interventions that can effectively address suicidal thoughts, like cognitive behavioral therapy, medication and mindfulness techniques.

Effect on loved ones

Every suicide affects between five and 80 individuals. These suicide survivors are at increased risk for depression, anxiety and suicidal behaviors of their own. They also have an increased likelihood to experience suicide grief—an ongoing, heightened state of mourning that prevents healing, reaching 40% of this population.

Improving care

Barriers to seeking help, both for suicide survivors and suicide attempt survivors, have improved in the recent past and have been impacted greatly by healthcare technology. With ease and reach of access, those in need of immediate care can connect with support when it is critically needed.

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline has designated 9-8-8 as the new three-digit code that will route individuals in need to trained counselors who are part of the existing National Suicide Prevention Lifeline network. This is available nationally starting on July 16, 2022.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
800-273-8255 or dial 988

Sources: SAVE, JAMA Network, U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, Today, NIH National Library of Medicine, National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

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