

Did You Know?

Global Facts

The World Health Organization estimates that over 800,000 people die by suicide each year — that's one person every 40 seconds¹.

Suicide accounted for 1.4% of all deaths worldwide, making it the 15th leading cause of death in 2012. Effective and evidence-based interventions can be implemented at population, sub-population and individual levels to prevent suicide and suicide attempts.

No single determinant, including mental illness, is enough on its own to cause a suicide. Rather, suicide typically results from the interaction of many factors, for example: mental illness, marital breakdown, financial hardship, deteriorating physical health, a major loss, or a lack of social support².



Times of Crisis

If you or someone you know is thinking about suicide, cannot make the thoughts go away, feel like acting on the thoughts, have a plan for how to die by suicide, or have access to the means with which to end life, you need to get help immediately! Call 911, go to the nearest hospital emergency room or urgent care clinic, or call a crisis line or distress centre.

Suicide in Canada

Suicide rates among immigrants is half the rate compared to native-born Canadians. Among youth, suicidal ideation is similar between the two groups³.

In Canada, men complete suicide at higher rates than women, but in the immigrant populations, that gap is smaller. Newcomers to Canada have higher rates of suicide in older populations, whereas native-born Canadians have a higher rate in youth.

In most cases, suicide rates among immigrants are more similar to their birthplace versus Canadian suicide rates⁴.

Newcomers may suffer from varying degrees of social isolation - especially if they are separated from their family members. For others, the failure to reach their employment or economic expectations can cause feelings of utter hopelessness. Racial discrimination, language barriers, and the breakdown of community and family support structures are other serious factors that can contribute to disparaging conditions leading to a greater risk of suicide⁵.

What You Can Do

Don't assume that people who think about or talk about suicide are not serious, are being dramatic, or that their suicidal thoughts will simply go away on their own - they often don't.

Keep in mind that helping loved ones doesn't mean you can or should solve their problems, treat their illness or take away their pain. Helping doesn't mean that you should assume personal responsibility for someone else's safety or for stopping their suicidal thoughts or actions. It means listening, caring, supporting, and helping the person get the professional mental health help they need, when and where they need it.

If the situation isn't urgent but you or the person you are concerned about is distressed, help is available. Helping to make calls and appointments can be very important to getting someone help in a timely manner.

What You Can Do for You!

Think about your emotional well-being. Assess your emotional health regularly. Consider the particular demands or stresses you are facing and how they are affecting you. Give yourself permission to take a break from your worries and concerns. Recognize that dedicating even a short time every day to your mental fitness will reap significant benefits in terms of feeling rejuvenated and more confident⁶.

1. "Suicide Data". 2016. World Health Organization. http://www.who.int/mental_health/prevention/suicide/suicideprevent/en/.
2. Suicide In Canada. 1994. [Ottawa]: Health Canada.
3. Robert, Anne-Marie. 2016. "Mental Health And Well-Being Of Recent Immigrants In Canada: Evidence From The Longitudinal Survey Of Immigrants To Canada (LSIC)". *Cic.Gc.Ca*. <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/research/mental-health.asp#conclusion>.
4. Malenfant, Éric Caron. 2016. "Suicide In Canada'S Immigrant Population". *Statistics Canada*. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/82-003-x/2003002/article/6807-eng.pdf>.
5. Olson, Robert. 2016. "Suicide Prevention And Cultural Sensitivity". *Suicideinfo.Ca*. <https://suicideinfo.ca/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=DVmkQX4ScU%3D&tabid=592>.
6. "Mental Fitness Tips - Canadian Mental Health Association". 2016. *Canadian Mental Health Association*. http://www.cmha.ca/mental_health/mental-fitness-tips/#.V6TJX9ArKi4.