

UNDERSTANDING SUICIDE IN OLDER ADULTS: SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS TO WATCH FOR

Suicide in older adults is a growing concern that requires our attention and understanding. Recognizing the signs and symptoms of suicidal ideation, or thoughts, can save lives and provide necessary support to those in need.

Signs and Symptoms

- **Depression:** Persistent sadness, feelings of hopelessness, or a lack of interest in activities once enjoyed can be key indicators of depression, a major risk factor for suicide.
- **Social Withdrawal:** A noticeable withdrawal from social activities, friends, and family can signal emotional distress. This isolation increases the risk of suicidal thoughts.
- **Changes in Sleep Patterns:** Insomnia or excessive sleeping can both be symptoms of underlying mental health issues, including depression and anxiety.
- **Loss of Appetite:** Significant changes in eating habits, leading to weight loss or gain, can be a red flag for emotional distress.
- **Physical Symptoms:** Unexplained aches, pains, or gastrointestinal issues can sometimes be linked to mental health problems.
- **Talking About Death:** Expressions of hopelessness or talking about death, dying, or suicide should always be taken seriously.
- **Making Preparations:** Giving away prized possessions, making a will, or saying goodbye to friends and family can be signs of planning for suicide.

TAKING ACTION!



Be an empathetic listener without judgment, and don't be afraid to ask about their feelings and thoughts on suicide.

Encourage them to seek professional help and offer to assist in finding resources.



Regular check-ins and visits can provide crucial emotional support.

**Remember, early intervention can make a significant difference.
Stay informed, stay vigilant, and provide the support that can save a life.**

WE CAN HELP.

Our hospital-based outpatient program is designed to meet the unique needs of older adults experiencing depression and/or anxiety related to life changes that are often associated with aging or a chronic diagnosis. Anyone can make a referral to our program, including self-referrals, provider referrals, or community consultations.

Call us today at