



Please call 911 if you think you have a medical emergency.

S u i c i d a l T h o u g h t s T r e a t m e n t

If in crisis, you are not alone.

Call the Suicide Prevention Hotline at 1-800-SUICIDE (1-800-784-2433) or 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255) -- or the deaf hotline at 1-800-799-4889.

[Additional Crisis and Suicide Information](#)

S e l f - C a r e a t H o m e

For the otherwise healthy person with no signs of depression, mental illness, or drug or alcohol abuse, fleeting thoughts about death or suicide are usually harmless. However, any current desires to die make home care completely inappropriate.

If anyone—including the suicidal person—has concerns that the person might be depressed or have other difficulties, then home care is not appropriate.

A concerned friend or partner should inquire directly about thoughts of suicide.

- Contrary to conventional wisdom, asking about suicidal thoughts or plans does not put the idea in the person's head.
- If you are concerned that someone may be depressed or suicidal, then ask in a direct and caring manner.
- You might simply say, "You seem down to me, and I'm concerned. Is everything all right? Are you experiencing thoughts about death or suicide?"

M e d i c a l T r e a t m e n t

The treatment for suicidal thoughts might range from gentle reassurance to hospital admission.

- In some cases, the person is sent home with instructions to return if the thoughts become persistent or symptoms of depression become evident.
- In this case, follow-up with a mental health professional is usually arranged within 48 hours.
- An anti-anxiety medication or even an antidepressant may be started right away.

- If the person's suicidal thoughts are believed to be of a dangerous nature, follow-up is likely to be immediate with admission to the hospital.

If someone is admitted to the hospital because of suicidal thoughts, he or she undergoes extensive evaluation by a psychiatrist and is often started on medication and scheduled for follow-up counseling.

From the doctor's perspective, suicidal thoughts are to be taken seriously and evaluated thoroughly. Predicting suicide is difficult.

- People who actually commit suicide are usually terribly depressed.
- They often have alcohol or drug abuse problems.
- Many are diagnosed with schizophrenia—a serious mental illness.
- Many commit suicide in response to difficulties in their lives.
- By the same token, most depressed people, people with drug or alcohol problems, and those with schizophrenia never attempt suicide.

more information from eMedicineHealth

- When to Seek Medical Care
- Exams and Tests
- Next Steps
- Prevention
- Outlook

For more information, read the complete article, Suicidal Thoughts

(<http://www.emedicinehealth.com/script/main/art.asp?articlekey=58647>) on <http://www.emedicinehealth.com>.

WebMD Medical Reference from eMedicineHealth

Reviewed by Cynthia Haines, MD on May 24, 2006

Last updated: May 24, 2006

This information is not intended to replace the advice of a doctor.

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