

Suicide Warning Signs

Assessing for risk of suicide is challenging because warning signs are often subtle, and many are not overly alarming on their own. However, when these warning signs present themselves collectively, they become very concerning. The following are potential signs that may indicate that an individual needs help.

Loss of interest in things they used to care about

Giving things away

Methodically making amends, settling quarrels

Sudden decline in functioning at school or work

Change in appearance, hygiene, etc.

Talking about feeling hopeless, helpless, or worthless

Talking about suicide and/or what it would be like to die (preoccupied with death)

Increased irritability and edginess

Visiting or calling people to say goodbye

Withdrawal and isolation from friends and family

Suddenly happier, right after a long, deep depression

Increased risk-taking behaviour (e.g., use of drugs, reckless driving)

Hoarding pills, hiding weapons

Threatening to take their own life

Direct statements:

- “Sometimes I just feel like killing myself.”
- “If I killed myself, then people would be sorry.”

Indirect statements:

- “What’s the use of going on?”
- “My parents would be happier if I’d never been born.”
- “I just can’t take it anymore.”