UnitedHealthcare®

# Mental Health Support: Suicide Prevention



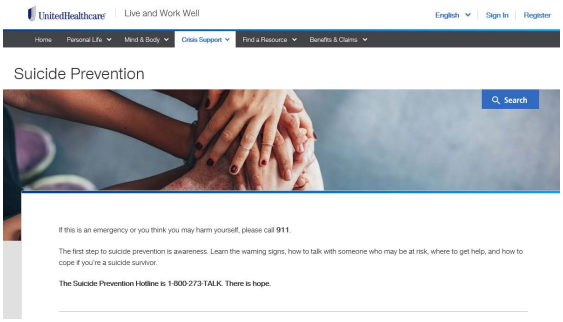
If you turn on the TV, pick up a newspaper or go on the Internet, you'll likely find significant coverage on the topic of mental health, due to the recent suicides of several celebrities. Mental Illnesses are real medical conditions, and they can be successfully treated. You can live your life to the fullest in recovery.

We all worry and experience times we struggle with our feelings. Many people wonder sometimes if they have a mental health condition and some are afraid to get help. They may feel sad or elated, anxious, depressed, overwhelmed, fearful, disoriented, or forgetful. Relationships may become difficult. Work seems harder than it used to be. Something feels wrong. Life may be a struggle. If feelings or symptoms are affecting your life, consider getting help just as you would for any medical condition. There are a variety of resources available to yourself and loved ones on **liveandworkwell.com**.

**Mental Health Center:** Type the keyword "mental health" into the search bar, select *Mental Health*. Here you'll find articles, assessments, self-help programs, and resources on a variety of mental health topics to help yourself and loved ones live life to the fullest.

**Suicide Prevention Center:** Type the keyword "suicide" into the search bar, select *Suicide Prevention*. Here you'll find information to learn the warning signs, how to talk with someone who may be at risk, where to get help and how to cope if you're a suicide survivor.

**Coping Center:** Type the keyword "coping" into the search bar, select *Coping*. Here you'll find articles, guides, self-help tools and videos on recovering your mental health.




Visit **www.liveandworkwell.com** and enter with your company access code.

**UHC Public Help Line:** Our toll-free emotional support help line at **(866) 342-6892** is free of charge and available to anyone who is overwhelmed, depressed, or searching for answers. A phone call will connect you with a compassionate counselor who is standing by to help.

**The National Suicide Prevention Hotline is 1-800-273-TALK (8255). There is hope.**

# Mental Health Support: Suicide Prevention

## Gaining Perspective on Suicide

Understand it's not a character flaw to have thoughts of self-harm or a desire to escape mental anguish. Yet in order for you to feel better, you must acknowledge that you need help and reach out to someone.

Know that there are some circumstances or conditions that may increase your risk for suicide. They include drug and alcohol use, depression, a family history of suicide or the recent suicide or death of a friend.

Make sure to pay attention to your feelings and reach out for help. There are people around you who care and would welcome the opportunity to help. Suicidal thoughts are usually a serious symptom of a treatable illness. The key to dealing with suicidal thinking is treatment of the underlying illness.

## Ways to seek help

**A psychiatrist or other mental health care professional** is an excellent choice. Suicidal thoughts need to be taken seriously and evaluated carefully. If you are in treatment and are feeling suicidal, you should call your doctor or therapist right away.

**Suicide Hotlines** are another source of help for you. Available 24/7, they offer a quick means of reaching someone who cares in the time it takes to make a phone call. One of the hotlines' biggest advantages is that they permit you to remain anonymous; no one needs to know who you are or any other identifying information.

**Online.** There is a lot of help available on the Internet if you'd rather turn there, but choose your site carefully. Some suicide bulletin boards have little traffic and may not respond very quickly to your needs, although some sites may be excellent in supporting you over time.

**Other Support.** Clergy, family members and friends can be very good support persons, particularly those you trust enough to confide your feelings to. Friends and family members in particular have an emotional investment in their relationship with you and much to lose if you are successful in taking your own life. Allow them to be there for you when you need it.

## Steps you can take

**Safely store medications.** Ask a friend or family member to store your medications safely, so they cannot be used in a suicide attempt[1].

**Keep phone numbers for hotlines** and mental health professionals easily accessible[2].

**Pay attention to your moods and feelings** and be on the lookout for a return to persistent thoughts of self-harm. Practice self-observation and recognize when you need support and where you can find it[2].

**Remove firearms or other means** of lethal injury from your home, so the means to end your life are not readily at hand[1].

*If you feel that you are in immediate danger of hurting yourself or others, call 911 or your local emergency services immediately. Other resources include your health care professional or a suicide hotline such as* **1-800-273-TALK (8255).**

1. Reduce Access to Means of Suicide. Accessed May 10, 2018. http://www.sprc.org/effective-prevention/comprehensive-approach

2. National Suicide evention Lifeline. Accessed May 4, 2018. https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/

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