



Always here

Understanding and helping to prevent suicide in veterans

Veterans are among our bravest and most dedicated citizens. Yet they have one of the highest suicide rates of any group in our country. In fact, veterans' suicides accounted for 14% of all suicides in the U.S. in 2018.¹

Why do veterans have a high rate of suicide? What can we do to help them? Read on for important information.

What makes veterans more susceptible to suicide?

There are some unique reasons veterans may experience emotional pain and suicidal thoughts. They may have:

- PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) from involvement or witnessing distressing events
- Depression
- Challenges of transitioning back to civilian life after military life
- Relationship issues and — if there's been deployment — the challenges of rebuilding the family unit
- Alcohol and substance misuse
- Guilt or shame about asking for help when they are “supposed to be” strong
- The stress and anxiety of the pandemic — added to all the above

¹Shane, Leo. [Suicide rate among veterans up again slightly, despite focus on prevention efforts](#). Accessed July 2021.

Special vulnerability

Each of these problems could affect anyone. But veterans — with their dedication, rigorous training and military experiences — may feel them more intensely.

They may have unrealistic expectations of themselves and be less tolerant of their frailties. They may not wish to dishonor the military. After adjusting to military life, they may find it hard to fit in to their old civilian roles.

Veterans' issues can be complex. Getting them to reach out for help can be very difficult.

“Thank you for your service”

We owe a lot to our service men and women. If you know a veteran who's struggling, be aware and understanding of their stressors.

You can also help them find resources. For more information on how veterans can get help with social, emotional or mental issues, visit the following:

- **The Department of Veteran Affairs (VA)**
- **The Veterans Crisis Line: 1-800-273-8255 / text 838255**
- **Give an Hour:** An organization that connects those who need help with professional counselors who donate their time to help. Services are free.
- Your own doctor, counselor or hospital
- Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) or other mental wellbeing benefits offered through an employer

Veterans were there for us.
Let's be there for them.

The EAP is administered by Resources For Living, LLC.

All EAP calls are confidential, except as required by law. EAP instructors, educators and participating providers are independent contractors and are not agents of Resources For Living. Provider participation may change without notice.