



Warning Signs
for Identifying
Suicide Risk and
Suicide Ideation
in Elder Adults

SUICIDE IS PREVENTABLE!

Risk Factors and Warning Signs

Suicidal thoughts in older adults may be linked to several important risk factors and warning signs. These include, among others:

- Depression
- Prior suicide attempts
- Marked feelings of hopelessness, lack of interest in the future
- Feelings of loss of independence or sense of purpose
- Medical conditions that significantly limit functioning or life expectancy
- Impulsivity due to cognitive impairment
- Social isolation
- Family discord or losses (death of loved one)
- Inflexible personality or marked difficulty adapting to change
- Access to lethal means
- Sudden personality changes
- Alcohol or medication misuse or abuse
- Verbal suicide threats
- Giving away prized possessions