

Resources Are Available For Anyone With Suicidal Thoughts

by Submitted by St. Elizabeth's Hospital
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O'FALLON — Nearly 800,000 people die by suicide every year, which is one person every 40 seconds, according to the World Health Organization. In addition, for each completed suicide, there are more than 20 attempts.

Navigating a pandemic and national unrest may contribute to these troubling statistics, as fear and anxiety may overcome us as we're trying to understand what's happening around us. People of all genders, ages and ethnicities can be at risk for suicidal thoughts and behaviors.

During September's National Suicide Prevention Month, HSHS St. Elizabeth's Hospital reminds everyone that if you or someone you know is having suicidal thoughts, there are resources available. In July, a new, nationwide Suicide and Crisis Lifeline was launched: 988. You can call, text or chat this three-digit number which connects people to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline where free and confidential help is available 24/7.

Local activities: St. Clair County Out of the Darkness Walk HSHS St. Elizabeth encourages the public to participate in the St. Clair County Out of the Darkness Walk on Saturday, Oct. 15 on the Square in downtown Belleville starting at 9 a.m. The Out of the Darkness Community Walk, led by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, is a journey of remembrance, hope, and support. It unites our communities and provides an opportunity to acknowledge the ways in which suicide and mental health conditions have affected our lives and the lives of those we love and care about.

[Register for the walk or donate here.](#)

Trained counselors will listen, offer support and connect those in crisis with additional resources if necessary. It is important to not only take note of your own feelings on a regular basis, but also of those around you. Here are five signs someone may be contemplating suicide:

1. They give a direct verbal clue by saying something like "I'm going to end it all," or "I wish I were dead."
2. They give a coded verbal clue by saying something like "I'm tired of life. I just want out," or "I can't take it anymore."
3. They exhibit behavioral clues like increased risk-taking, self-injurious behavior, drug or alcohol use, sleeping too much or too little, saying goodbye to friends and family and/or giving away prized possessions.
4. They take on blame for situations like being fired from a job, being diagnosed with a serious illness or being bullied or humiliated.
5. They showcase a noticeable change in mood such as depression, anxiety, withdrawal from activities, irritability and/or shame. The National Institute of Mental Health provides additional warning signs and resources for those in or near crisis.