

Mindful Continuing Education

Enhancing Emotional Health and Preventing Suicide Among the Elderly

Questions You May Have

1. Older adults tend to be more willing to discuss mental health issues if it is framed in a more positive way, such as “promoting emotional well-being,” rather than “suicide prevention” or “depression”.

- A. True
 - B. False
-

Getting Started

2. Each of the following is an accurate statement about suicide among older adults EXCEPT:

- A. Suicide rates are higher among older adults than in the general population
 - B. Suicide rates are higher for older women than for any other group in the United States
 - C. In addition to the thousands of older adults who die by suicide, many more have made suicide attempts and suffer from the emotional pain of suicidal thoughts
 - D. Although older adults are less likely than younger adults to report serious thoughts of suicide or a suicide attempt, attempts are more likely to result in death among older adults than among younger people
-

3. Studies suggest that some of the key risk factors for suicide among older adults include mental disorders, substance use problems, physical illness, disability, pain, social isolation, stressful life events and losses, and access to lethal means.

- A. True
 - B. False
-

Strategy 1: Promote Emotional Health

4. The authors suggest that factors that may help protect older adults from suicide and other behavioral health problems include positive and caring social connections and:

- A. Effective behavioral healthcare

- B. Cultural and religious beliefs that discourage suicide
 - C. Support for help-seeking
 - D. Personal characteristics and skills
-

Support the Development of Social Connections

5. Senior centers can provide older adults with a variety of opportunities to develop positive connections, and women, in particular, should be encouraged to participate in such activities since they are at highest risk.

- A. True
 - B. False
-

6. Older adults may be vulnerable to bullying since it is a social problem that affects people of all ages, so senior centers should be prepared to adopt protocols for addressing bullying if necessary.

- A. True
 - B. False
-

Strategy 2: Recognize and Respond to Suicide Risk

7. Signs of immediate risk for suicide include talking about wanting to die or to kill oneself, looking for a way to kill oneself, such as searching online or obtaining a gun, and:

- A. Talking about feeling trapped or being in unbearable pain
 - B. Talking about being a burden to others
 - C. Talking about feeling hopeless or having no reason to live
 - D. Withdrawing or feeling isolated
-

Recognize and Respond to Depression

8. Depression is a normal part of aging, particularly for men who are facing physical, social, and emotional changes.

- A. True
 - B. False
-

Increase Access to Care

9. According to the authors, which of the following is NOT one of the reasons that help seeking may be particularly difficult for older adults?

- A. They grew up in a time when attitudes about mental illness were very negative
 - B. They distrust health professionals and are worried about confidentiality
 - C. Some may not realize that the symptoms they are experiencing could be caused by a mental illness
 - D. Feelings of hopelessness and helplessness linked to suicidal thoughts and depression may prevent help seeking
-

What Can You Do

10. Words used when encouraging older adults to seek care for behavioral health problems should be:

- A. Neutral and nonthreatening
 - B. Empathic and nonjudgmental
 - C. Compassionate and gentle
 - D. Thoughtful and realistic
-

Strategy 3: Respond to a Suicide Attempt or Death

11. People who are affected by a suicide attempt or death may experience feelings of grief, guilt, anger, shame, and embarrassment, and exposure to a suicide death can also increase suicide risk among vulnerable individuals.

- A. True
 - B. False
-

Tool 1: Suicide Among Older Adults

12. Compared to young people, suicide attempts may result in death among older adults more frequently because:

- A. Older adults plan carefully and use more deadly methods-particularly firearms
 - B. Older adults are more likely to live alone than other age groups and are less likely to be discovered and rescued than younger people
 - C. Many older adults are physically frail so they are less likely to recover from a suicide attempt than younger people
 - D. All of the above
-

Risk and Protective Factors for Suicide Among Older Adults

13. Personal characteristics and skills that tend to be protective factors for suicide among older adults include sense of purpose or meaning, self-esteem, social skills, flexibility, and skills in coping and adapting to change.

- A. True
 - B. False
-

Tool 4: Activities to Promote Health and Wellness

14. Activities that enhance education and skill building among older adults include classes that boost knowledge and abilities, intellectual activities, and:

- A. Art activities
 - B. Spiritual activities
 - C. Mastery activities
 - D. Fitness activities
-

Copyright © 2025 Mindful Continuing Education

Visit us at <https://www.mindfulceus.com>