



# Caregiver Resources

## Suicide Prevention

### Caregiver Sheet

Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) prioritizes preventing suicide among all Veterans including those who may never seek care within the VA health care system. Life can present challenges for both Veterans and their caregivers, but you don't have to face them alone.

### What is suicide prevention?

Suicide prevention involves various efforts to reduce the risk of suicide. These efforts can take place at the individual, relational, and community levels. VA recognizes the vital role caregivers play as partners in the care of Veterans but also recognizes that caregivers may experience thoughts of suicide and prevention efforts must include caregivers. VA Suicide Prevention is built upon 3 core tenants: suicide is preventable, suicide prevention requires a public health approach, everyone plays a role.



### Benefits of suicide prevention education

- **Guidance on Saving Lives:** Learn practical strategies to help prevent suicide.
- **Tools for Recognizing Risk and Protective Factors and Warning Signs:** Equip yourself to identify when you might need to have a conversation with a loved one about suicide.
- **Support for Clinical Suicide Prevention Needs:** Provide assistance to those who need acute and long-term care.



### Veterans Crisis Line

If you're a Veteran in crisis or concerned about one, contact the Veterans Crisis Line to receive 24/7 confidential support. You don't have to be enrolled in VA benefits or health care to connect. To reach responders, [Dial 988 then Press 1](tel:988), chat online at [VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat](https://VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat), or text [838255](tel:838255).

## VA S.A.V.E. Training for Caregivers

VA S.A.V.E. Training for Caregivers equips caregivers with useful tools for suicide prevention, focusing on four key actions: Spot the Signs, Ask the Question, Validate the Veteran, and Encourage/Expedite Treatment. This interactive training is provided by

Caregiver Support Program staff for enrolled caregivers, and it includes information on caregiver risk for experiencing suicidal thinking as well as evidence-based treatments, resources and supports available to caregivers. This training includes a practice for caregivers to Ask the Question and to start conversations about securely storing firearms and other lethal means. More information can be found here: [CSP-VA-SAVE-Training-Cargivers-Flyer-Final.pdf](#)

**PsychArmor.org** offers free online courses related to both Veteran and caregiver suicide prevention which can be found at <http://learn.psycharmor.org/courses/va-save>, and <https://learn.psycharmor.org/courses/va-save-preventing-caregiver-suicide>.

You can also contact your local Suicide Prevention Coordinator for in-person training <https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/find-resources/local-resources/>

## VA Suicide Prevention Toolkit

The VA Suicide Prevention Toolkit for Caregivers provides essential information on suicide prevention and evidence-based treatments for mental health and substance use disorders, designed to help Veterans recover and achieve their goals. This toolkit includes resources accessible to anyone during a crisis and offers guidance on self-care to ensure you have the support you need to stay healthy and strong while caring for a Veteran. Access the toolkit here:

<https://www.caregiver.va.gov/pdfs/VA-Suicide-Prevention-Toolkit-for-Caregivers.pdf>

## Family Member and Friend Support

If a Veteran in your life is struggling, you can help. Learn how to start a conversation to help understand any challenges they may be experiencing. Learn how to support the Veteran in your life, take better care of yourself, and strengthen your relationship. Let them know that seeking help is a sign of strength. Go to <https://www.va.gov/REACH/family-friends/> for more information.

## Don't Wait. Reach Out.

Everyone can be part of the solution by checking in with the Veterans in their life and encouraging them to reach out if they need help. On [VA.gov/REACH/spread-the-word](https://www.va.gov/REACH/spread-the-word), you can also find downloadable content to help spread the word to Veterans in your life. People who are close to Veterans are often the first to notice when they are struggling. Letting a Veteran know you're there for them can help start a conversation.

## More Information

- Reducing Firearm & Other Household Safety Risks for Veterans and Their Families: [Read more](#).
- Staying Safe on Prescription Opioids: [Learn about safe practices](#).
- Start the Conversation: Talking to a Veteran When You Are Concerned: [Get guidance](#).
- Respite Care: Because Caregivers Need a Break Too: [Find out more](#).