

Suicide Risk Factors – Hospice Adult

Only a fraction (2-4%) of suicide victims has been diagnosed with a terminal illness at the time of their death.

- White elderly male 65 and older*
- American Indian and Alaska native
- Widowed, divorced or unmarried
- Military veteran
- Loss (relationships, health, identity status, loss of independence--current or imminent changes in health, living conditions/home, nursing home placement, functional impairment)
- Untreated/uncontrolled pain
- Recent diagnosis of terminal illness and/or referral to hospice
- Accessibility to lethal methods, especially guns
- Hopelessness/Helplessness
- HIV/AIDS
- Legal issues/arrests/incarcerations
- Family discord
- Financial concerns
- Other stressful life event

* Men age 65 and older, rate higher than the national average. Men age 85 or older are at greater risk than all combined groups. They complete suicide almost 6 times the national average.

"Double Suicides" involving spouses/partners are most frequent among the aged.