

# The Connection Between PTSD and Suicide

Information presented in this article may be triggering to some people. If you are having suicidal thoughts, contact the [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) at [1-800-273-8255](tel:1-800-273-8255) for support and assistance from a trained counselor. If you or a loved one are in immediate danger, call 911.

For more mental health resources, see our [National Helpline Database](#).

In the United States, more than 40,000 people commit [suicide](#) each year. Although women attempt suicide more so than men, men are more likely to die by suicide.

People who have experienced a traumatic event and/or have post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) may be more likely to attempt suicide.

## Trauma, PTSD, and Suicide

In a survey of 5,877 people across the United States, it was found that people who had experienced physical or [sexual assault](#) in their life also had a high likelihood of attempting to take their own life at some point:

Nearly 22% of people who had been raped had also attempted suicide at some point in their life. In another study of adolescent girls who had been sexually abused, 46% reported having suicidal thoughts within the last three months.

Approximately 23% of people who had experienced a physical assault had also attempted suicide at some point in their life.

These rates of suicide attempts increased considerably among people who had experienced multiple incidents of sexual (42.9%) or physical assault (73.5%). They also found that a history of sexual molestation, physical abuse as a child, and neglect as a child were associated with

high rates of suicide attempts (17.4% to 23.9%)

The National Comorbidity Survey-Replication found that sexual trauma and non-sexual physical violence were linked to more severe and chronic presentation of PTSD symptoms.

People with a [diagnosis of PTSD](#) are also at greater risk to attempt suicide. Among people who have had a diagnosis of PTSD at some point in their lifetime, approximately 27% have also attempted suicide. Another large-scale survey found that 24% of military personnel diagnosed with PTSD had experienced suicidal thinking within the past year.

## **There Is Hope: Seeking Help**

Experiencing a traumatic event and/or developing PTSD can have a tremendous impact on a person's life. The symptoms of PTSD can make a person feel constantly afraid and isolated. In addition, [depression](#) is common following a traumatic event and among people with PTSD.

A person may feel as though there is no hope or escape from their symptoms, leading them to contemplate suicide.

It is important to realize that even though it may feel as though there is no hope, [recovery and healing is possible](#). If you are having thoughts of ending your life or if you know someone who is having these thoughts, it is important to seek help as soon as possible.