

Intentional Poisoning: Warning Signs and Prevention

What is intentional poisoning?

Poisoning is the third most common method of suicide, after gun use and suffocation. Every day, The University of Kansas Hospital Poison Control Center receives calls about people who have tried to harm themselves with poison. Some of these calls are placed by individuals, and others come from hospitals or paramedics.

What are the warning signs of suicide?

- Talking about suicide
- Feeling hopeless
- Losing the will to live
- Talking about being a burden to others
- Increased drug or alcohol use

When and why should I take action?

- Any attempt to hurt one's self is an emergency – even if the substance taken wasn't deadly
- Anyone who feels the desire to inflict self-harm – or who has acted upon it – should get help immediately
- People who try to hurt themselves once will often try again

What can I do to prevent intentional poisoning?

- Remove old or unnecessary medicines and chemicals from the home
- Safely dispose of these products per your local authorities
- Make sure all medicines are secured and administered by a responsible caregiver
- Get help for anyone who seems depressed
- Consult a physician about symptoms and treatment options as signs of depression vary with age

RESOURCES

Kansas Suicide Prevention Resource Center

www.kansassuicideprevention.org

National Suicide Prevention Hotline

1-800-273-TALK (8255) or online at
www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Suicide Prevention Resource Center

www.sprc.org

SAMHSA's National Helpline (also known as the Treatment Referral Routing Service)

1-800-662-HELP (4357)

Drug Disposal Guidelines

U.S. Food and Drug Administration

1-888-INFO-FDA (1-888-463-6332) or

www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm101653.htm



For any poisoning or medicine mistake, call your poison control center immediately at 1-800-222-1222. Calls are answered by physicians, nurses and pharmacists. All calls are quick, free and confidential.

