

Assessing Suicidal Risk

Factors to consider in assessing suicide potential:

1. Previous suicide attempts. This is the best single predictor. Attempts by family members or class friends will also exert an influence.
2. Definitiveness of plan. The more detailed and well thought-out the plan (when, where, how), the more serious the risk.
3. Reversibility of plan. Degree of finality of method. Using a gun is usually less reversible than taking pills.
4. Proximity of others.
5. History of or increase use of alcohol or drug abuse.
6. History of previous psychiatric treatment or hospitalization
7. Background of emotional instability.
8. Impulsivity
9. Pessimism ("nothing I do will make a difference"), hopelessness.
10. Perfectionism.
11. Underdeveloped or minimal coping skills.
12. Loneliness, isolation.
13. Difficulty dealing with anger.
14. Relationship with family- close vs. Alienated
15. Giving away personal possessions- getting life in order.
16. Recent loss, failure major life change, number of stressors- precipitating factors.
17. Availability of resource and support systems.
18. Willingness to use resource and support systems.