



## **Chronic pain and suicidal thoughts**

- Many people with chronic pain think of suicide and or death.
- It is the pain that you want to end, not your life. You just want your old life back.
- The losses in your life (which includes emotional pain) due to the physical pain, contribute to depression, along with the overwhelming feelings that there is no way out, which leads to despair.
- These thoughts, while common for people in chronic pain, become dangerous when left untreated.
- People in chronic pain are afraid to tell others these thoughts, for fear they will be labeled "crazy". So, they keep these thoughts inside and since they are already isolated (due to the pain), these thoughts become stronger and begin to make sense to them.
- Talking about these thoughts with a family member, friend, clergy, a support group, doctor or mental health professional is essential for healing.
- If talking does not relieve these thoughts, then therapy and medications maybe needed to help you cope with the changes in your life.
- There are always options (we just don't see or know them at the time) and hope in healing.
- Acceptance of our physical changes will change our emotional feelings and thoughts.

**DON'T STAY ALONE IN YOUR PAIN!**



**Suicidal thoughts are troubling, when accompanied by depression, other mental illnesses, alcohol or drug abuse, or plans for suicide. This situation demands immediate evaluation. These thoughts can indicate serious illness. The critical distinction is between a person's thoughts regarding death and suicide, and actually wanting to die.**

- Suicidal ideation can be active and involve a current desire and plan to die.
- Suicidal ideation can be passive, involving a desire to die but without a plan to bring about one's death.
- In otherwise healthy people, such thoughts are often brought about by sudden, unexpected change in life circumstances.
- Most depressed people report sleep disturbances-either an inability to fall asleep or an inability to sleep through the night.
- People who are depressed often speak of feeling hopeless or helpless. They seem unable to experience any feelings of happiness, even when participating in activities they normally enjoy.
- Many of these people experience either a rapid weight gain or weight loss along with their depression.
- They may seem inattentive, and their performance at work or school may suffer.
- They may appear listless and even complain of feeling "down" or depressed.
- Depressed people are often burdened with a tremendous sense of guilt. To an outside observer, this guilt often seems unwarranted, but to the depressed person, it seems deserved.

*(Taken from eMedicine Health)*

**Seek help as soon as possible by contacting a mental health professional or by calling the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK if you or someone you know exhibits any of the following signs:**

- Threatening to hurt or kill oneself or talking about wanting to hurt or kill oneself
- Looking for ways to kill oneself by seeking access to firearms, pills, or other means
- Talking or writing about death, dying, or suicide when these actions are out of the ordinary for the person
- Feeling hopeless
- Feeling rage or uncontrolled anger or seeking revenge
- Acting reckless or engaging in risky activities—seemingly without thinking



- Feeling trapped—like there's no way out
- Increasing alcohol or drug use
- Withdrawing from friends, family, and society
- Feeling anxious, agitated, or unable to sleep or sleeping all the time
- Experiencing dramatic mood changes
- Seeing no reason for living or having no sense of purpose in life

*(taken from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services)*

**If you or someone you know is considering suicide,  
call 1-800-SUICIDE or text 741741**