



Behavioral Health

# Suicide Prevention Week 2016

## Today's Tip and Your Challenge

Wednesday, September 7

### What do I need to know about older adult suicide prevention?

What many people do not know is that suicide rates are higher among older adults than any other age group, particularly among men. Physical and social challenges related to aging can increase the risk of depression, anxiety and isolation, but help is available for coping with these challenges

**Warning signs of suicide for older adults may can be different from a younger person and can include:**

*Depression*

*Hopelessness*

*Withdrawal*

*Preoccupied with death*

*Looking for means to self-harm*

*Changes in sleep*

*Saying goodbye*

*Increased substance use*

*Neglecting doctor's orders*

*Failure to take care of self*

If you observe these warning signs, especially if they are new or unusual for the person, or if something doesn't seem right to you, take action. The most important thing to do is ask the person directly if they are considering killing themselves. Then listen and let them know you care and truly want to help. Suggest a few services and supports. Offer to sit with them while they call, or accompany them to an office visit.

### Challenge!

Find out what services and supports are available for older adults locally, compile a list and share. Think broadly. Consider supporting the work of one or more of these organizations by volunteering your time or skills.



[suicideispreventable.org](http://suicideispreventable.org)

Funded by counties through the Mental Health Services Act (Prop 63).