An analysis of Medicaid data found that adults treated for deliberate self-harm were 37.2 times more likely to die by suicide within 12 months than adults in a matched general population cohort. The patients who died by suicide were more likely to be older, male, and white. Those who used “violent” methods to injure themselves, such as firearms, were at higher risk for dying by suicide in the next 30 days than people who used “nonviolent” methods, such as poisoning or cutting. Men were more likely to use violent methods than women.

The majority of people who survived an initial self-harm episode were white, 18 to 34 years of age, and female. Of those, 19.7 percent were treated for another episode of nonfatal self-harm within the next year. The risk of repeat self-harm was highest among those who were white, older in age, and recently treated for a mental illness or substance use disorder. The authors noted that the data did not allow them to determine which episodes of self-harm involved suicidal intent.


About Suicide: Behavioral Health Disorders, Self-Injury (NSSI), Suicidal Thoughts and Behavior