

## ***For Good Mental Health***

- ❑ Use your mind - stay mentally active.
- ❑ Set goals for yourself and work toward them.
- ❑ Be physically active every day.
- ❑ Eat and drink nutritious foods and drinks.
- ❑ Get adequate sleep.
- ❑ Develop and maintain good relationships.
- ❑ Learn to recognize the signs and symptoms of depression.
- ❑ Get regular physical checkups.



**Myth:** Physical pain and emotional pain are rarely related.

**Fact:** Depression in older adults is often manifested physically in “just not feeling well” or unexplained physical pains. In addition, on-going physical pain can lead to depression. The depression can and should be treated.

## ***No matter the time, day or night, there is Help and Hope:***

**Contact the crisis line** of your local community mental health center, or call one of the free, confidential national suicide prevention hotline networks.

**If someone is suicidal, contact one of these IMMEDIATELY.**

### **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline**

1/800/273-TALK (1/800/273-8255)  
“Para Espanol, imprima el numero dos.”  
TTY number: 1/800/799-4TTY (4889)  
Interpreters for 150 other languages can be teleconferenced in when needed

### **National Hopeline Network**

1/800/SUICIDE (1/800/784-2433)  
“Para Espanol, imprima el numero dos.”

### **Linea Nacional de Esperanza**

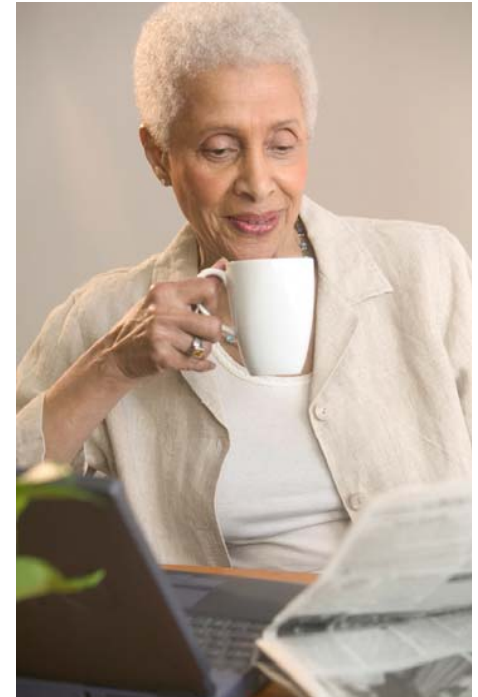
1/877/SUICIDA (1/877/784-2432)

**Sedgwick County residents, please call Comcare’s 24-hour Suicide Prevention Line: (316) 660-7500**

This brochure was developed by the Suicide Prevention Subcommittee of the Governor’s Mental Health Services Planning Council and the Sedgwick County Aging and Wellness Coalition. Printing was provided by KDHE under cooperative agreement number U17/CCU724763-02 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the CDC.

August 2007

# ***Suicide Awareness For Older Kansans***



***Depression is NOT a Normal Part of Aging***

***There is Help and Hope***

**KANSAS**  
DEPARTMENT ON AGING



## ***Did You Know...***

In the United States in 2004, every 100 minutes, one person over the age of 64 died by suicide.

Each of those **5,200** people's lives and deaths affected many others - family, friends, neighbors, and more.

**Kansas ranked 16** in highest rates of suicide in the U.S.A. with 13.5 deaths per 100,000 compared to the national rate of 11.1 per 100,000.

**In 2005, 55 Kansans** over 64 years old died by suicide - 47 men and 8 women. 70% of these deaths were by firearms.

**In 2005, 49 Kansans** over 64 years old were hospitalized after suicide attempts. 76% of these attempts were by poisoning, including medication overdoses.

**Studies have found that many older adults who die by suicide - up to 75% - have visited a primary care physician within a month of their suicide.**

Information sources:

Kansas statistics: KS Dept of Health & Environment

National statistics: Centers for Disease Control

Physician visits: National Institute of Mental Health

### **Before you say – “I’m fine” – ask yourself if you feel:**

- Nervous or “empty”
- Guilty or worthless
- Very tired and slowed down
- You don't enjoy things the way you used to
- Restless and irritable
- Like a burden
- Like no one loves you
- Like life is not worth living

### **Or if you are:**

- Sleeping more or less than usual
- Eating more or less than usual
- Having unexplained headaches, stomach aches, or chronic pain

These may be symptoms of Depression, a treatable medical illness.

Your doctor can only treat you if you say how you are really feeling.



**Depression is not a normal part of aging.**

**Talk to your doctor and a mental health professional.**

Information adapted from  
National Institute of Mental Health  
[www.nimh.nih.gov](http://www.nimh.nih.gov)

**Myth:** Asking someone if he or she is thinking about suicide increases the risk of suicide.

**Fact:** Talking does not give someone an idea he or she did not already have. Talking openly about suicide is one of the most important steps for getting help when it is needed. If the person is suicidal, contact one of the centers on the back IMMEDIATELY.

### ***For additional information on suicide prevention:***

Suicide Prevention Resource Center  
[www.sprc.org](http://www.sprc.org)

American Association of Suicidology  
[www.suicidology.org](http://www.suicidology.org)



***If you or someone you know has lost a loved one to suicide,*** please be aware that although it is common to feel guilty, it is important to know that suicide is *never* someone else's fault. To find support, please contact one of the hotlines listed on the back or look for support groups in the “Surviving Suicide Loss” section of the Web site of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention at [www.afsp.org](http://www.afsp.org)