



▶ **Taking Care of Yourself**



**Moving Ahead after
your Treatment in the
Hospital or Emergency
Department**



This brochure offers information about moving ahead after your treatment in the emergency department or hospital and provides resources about suicide and mental illness

TODAY

Today may feel like the hardest day of your life. You have seriously thought about or perhaps attempted to end your life. You may be exhausted. A common feeling after surviving a suicide attempt is extreme fatigue. You might be angry. You could feel embarrassed or ashamed. The attempt itself, the reactions of other people, transportation to and treatment in an emergency room can be overwhelming to you right now. But recovery is possible. And all the feelings that you are experiencing right now can get better.

AFTER THE EMERGENCY ROOM OR HOSPITAL STAY

After you have been treated for a suicide attempt in an emergency department and the doctors believe that you are medically stabilized, you will either be discharged (released) to your home or you will be hospitalized. If your doctor believes that you continue to be an immediate risk of harming yourself, he/she may arrange for you to see a Psychiatrist or Intake Worker for further assessment and screening. The exact steps for follow-up care will vary with each person, but your plan might include:

- A referral to the Five Hills Health Region Mental Health and Addiction Services. You, your family, or the emergency department can call to speak to our Intake Worker:

Monday to Friday 8:00-5:00 pm at **306-691-6464**

- The physician may sign a *Form A*. This *Form A* requires you to be seen by a psychiatrist for further assessment.



Five Hills Health Region
Mental Health and Addictions Services
Monday to Friday 8:00 am-5:00 pm
306-691-6464
Toll-free: 1-877-564-0543



Self Help Info: www.heretohelp.bc.ca

Everyone's Recovery is Different (cont.):

- Get involved in LIFE. Finding a hobby or enjoying a favorite pastime – such as listening to music, watching your favorite movie, or collecting things is a great way to help you cope when things get tough. Joining a club or volunteering will give you a sense of satisfaction, and the interaction with others will be beneficial. Whatever your interest may be, make sure you can have access to these things you enjoy if your negative thoughts return. Turn to something that brings you comfort and enjoyment.

Remember - you can



Recovery is possible.

- If the doctor assesses you to be of lower risk of suicide, discharge home with family or loved ones may be possible.
- If the psychiatrist assesses you to be an immediate high risk of harming yourself, they may admit you either voluntarily or involuntarily in the Mental Health inpatient unit in the Dr. F.H. Wigmore Regional Hospital.

NEXT STEPS: MOVING AHEAD AND COPING WITH FUTURE THOUGHTS OF SUICIDE

Recovery from thoughts and feelings that made you want to end your life is possible. You may get to a place where you never have thoughts of suicide again and you can lead a happy, satisfying life. You might also need to learn to live with these thoughts in a way that keeps you safe.

After you leave the hospital there are several things that can help in your recovery. It can feel hard and overwhelming right now, but over the next few days following these tips will help you move forward.



Create a Safety Plan:

A safety plan will help reduce the risk of a future suicide attempt. When creating a safety plan, be honest with yourself and your care provider to ensure that the plan meets your needs and that you feel comfortable with it. Although everyone's safety plan is different, some common things that may be in your plan include: signs that may indicate a return of suicidal thoughts or feelings and what to do about them; when to seek additional treatment; and contact information for your doctor, therapist, or a trusted friend or family member. Keep a written copy of your safety plan nearby so you can refer to it as needed.

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Build a Support System:

This is a key part of recovering from a suicide attempt and preventing another one. It is very important that you have at least one person in your life who can be your “ally”. This must be a person you trust and can be very honest with – especially if you start to have thoughts of ending your life again. Family members or a close friend can serve this important purpose. A member of the clergy, mentor or colleague could also be helpful to you at this time.

Keeping your ally informed about your thoughts, feelings, and wishes can help in your recovery and may help prevent another suicide attempt. You will have to be honest about your feelings to make this work. Even when you are feeling alone, always remember that there are people in your life who care about you and are willing to help.

Learn to Live Again:

When you are recovering, the world can look like a pretty bleak place. It may take a little while before your life starts to feel comfortable again. One thing you can do to help is to get back into a routine. Eat at regular times, exercise regularly, and go to sleep and get up the same time each day. Try to join in your usual activities, and build in more activities with time.

If you continue to have thoughts of suicide, reach out immediately and contact your ally, a doctor, your therapist, or call the 24 hour Healthline at 811 or the Suicide Crisis Line at 306-525-5333.

Listen closely and carefully consider the support and advice you receive. Again, it is important to be honest with yourself, your doctor or others about your feelings so that you get the best possible care.

Sometimes being under pressure and having thoughts of suicide can make it difficult for you to make the best decisions, and at those times, other people may have a more realistic view of your situation than you.

Everyone’s Recovery is Different:

Some people have persistent thoughts of suicide. For others, such thoughts may accompany certain moods or circumstances. Here are some steps that you can take to prevent negative and destructive thoughts in the future and keep yourself safe. Add some of these steps to your safety plan.

- Remove the means of hurting yourself from your environment. Work with your ally to remove methods of self-harm. It is better not to have these things around while you are recovering. If you use medication, keep only a few days supply on hand and ask someone else to hold on to the rest. Remove guns and lock up sharp objects. Place these items in someone else’s hands for a while; you can always take these items back when things feel more settled.
- Identify what sets off or starts these thoughts for you. It may be an anniversary of a painful event, for instance, or seeing a knife in the kitchen. Plan to minimize the effect of these triggers on your life. Sometimes you can avoid them or train yourself to respond differently.
- Learn about mental illness. Someone who has had or is living with suicidal thoughts may be diagnosed with a mental illness such as depression.
- Do not drink alcohol or use substances that could compound the problem.
- Learn about crisis hotlines. Hotlines provide you with a trained person to talk to when you are having suicidal thoughts. This person will listen to you and help you choose another path. Review your safety plan with the person.
- Participate in a mutual peer support group. Learning from others and sharing your experience can make a big difference in the way you think about your life. It may also help save the life of someone else. The Five Hills Health Region offers a variety of group services that can be beneficial. Talk with your psychiatrist, therapist, or Intake worker for possible options.