



Where can I find help as someone affected or as a trusted person?

You can get help from your general practitioner's office, a psychiatric or psychotherapeutic practice, self-help groups, counseling centers, or hospitals.

At any time, you may contact hospital outpatient clinics or the emergency medical service. In an emergency, dial 112 for the emergency services.



Here you can find more information and support:

German Society for Suicide Prevention (DGS)
www.suizidprophylaxe.de

AGUS—Support for family members after a suicide
www.agus-selbsthilfe.de

German Center for Addiction Issues e.V.
www.dhs.de

Here you will find information about self-help groups, counseling centers, and clinics.



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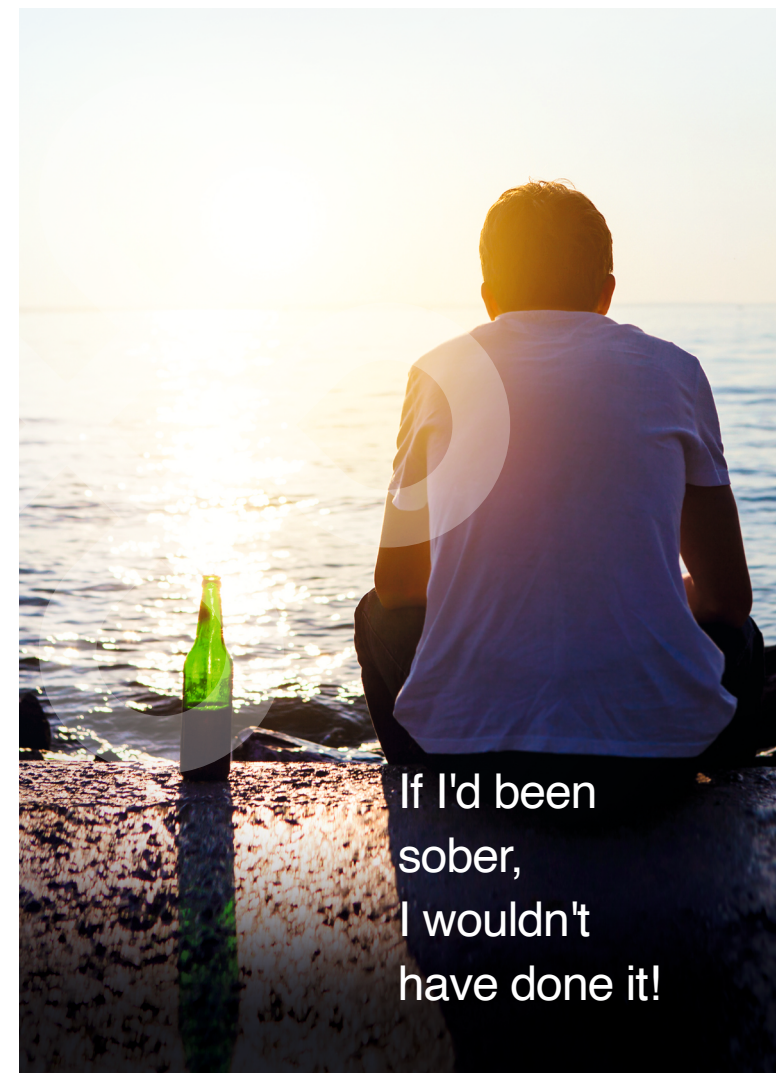
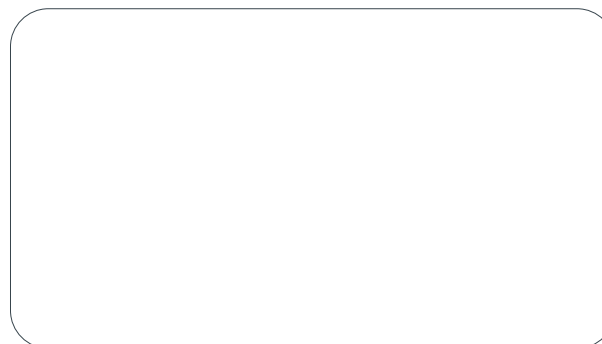
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Work Group Medical Care – Addictive Disorders

NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAM FOR GERMANY

Email: Sucht@naspro.de

This flyer was handed out by:



If I'd been
sober,
I wouldn't
have done it!

MORE INFORMATION AT:
www.suizidpraevention.de

**RISK OF SUICIDE IN ADDIC-
TION DISORDERS**

HELP FOR THOSE AFFECTED AND
THEIR FAMILIES

ALCOHOL AND DRUG USE

And the risk of suicide.

In Germany, **around 1.7 million people are currently addicted to alcohol and more than 10 million engage in risky alcohol consumption.**

Between 1.4 and 1.9 million people are addicted to medicines and around 400,000 people to illegal drugs⁽¹⁾.

The risk of suicide is greatly increased in cases of substance abuse and is often underestimated. For example, the risk of suicide is about 10 times higher in the case of alcohol addiction than in the general population; in the case of drug addiction, the risk of suicide is even about 20 times higher than in the general population ⁽²⁾.

Acute suicide risk also exists in cases of alcohol intoxication. According to calculations by the World Health Organisation (WHO), treating alcohol dependence would reduce suicide rates worldwide by approximately 8% ⁽³⁾.

The risk of suicide remains consistently high among addicts who have been ill for many years, especially alcoholics ⁽⁴⁾.

Children and adolescents from families affected by addiction are more prone to suicidal behaviour.

REFERENCES:

¹ De Matos EG, Atzendorf J, Kraus L, Piontek D. Substanzkonsum in der Allgemeinbevölkerung in Deutschland Ergebnisse des Epidemiologischen Suchtsurveys 2015. SUCHT 2016, 62: 271-281.

² Schneider B, Georgi K, Weber B, Schnabel A, Ackermann H, Wetterling T. Risk factors for suicide in substance-related disorders. Psychiatrische Praxis 2006 33(2):81-87.

³ Pompili M. Epidemiology of suicide: from population to single cases. Epidemiol Psychiatr Sci. 2019; 29:e68.

⁴ Inskip HM, Harris C, Barraclough B. Lifetime risk of suicide for affective disorder, alcoholism and schizophrenia. Br J Psychiatry 1998; 172: 35-37.



Possible indications of a particular risk:

- Current heavy drinking
- Long-term dependence on alcohol, nicotine, gambling addiction
- Depression and other mental illnesses
- Suicidal thoughts and previous suicide attempts
- Unemployment/financial difficulties
- Low social support, isolation
- Relationship and life crises
- Older age
- Aggressive behaviour

Warning signs of an acute risk of suicide can include:

- Written or verbal expressions of suicide
- Concrete preparations for a suicidal act
- Further withdrawal from interpersonal relationships
- Aggressive behaviour
- Sudden change in mood or behaviour

How can I help someone affected?

- Do not look away!
- Make contact!
- Offer your help!
- Say, for example:

"I am worried about you, how can I help you?"

- Ask about their weariness of life!

"Are you feeling so bad that you would rather end it all?"

"Are you thinking about harming yourself?"

Do not be afraid to talk openly about suicidal thoughts!

Such questions do not cause those affected to have these thoughts in the first place.

- Stay in touch!
- Encourage them to seek professional help!

"Let's talk to someone who can help."

"You are not alone, and there are people who can help you in your situation."

- Be aware of the limits of your efforts to help!