

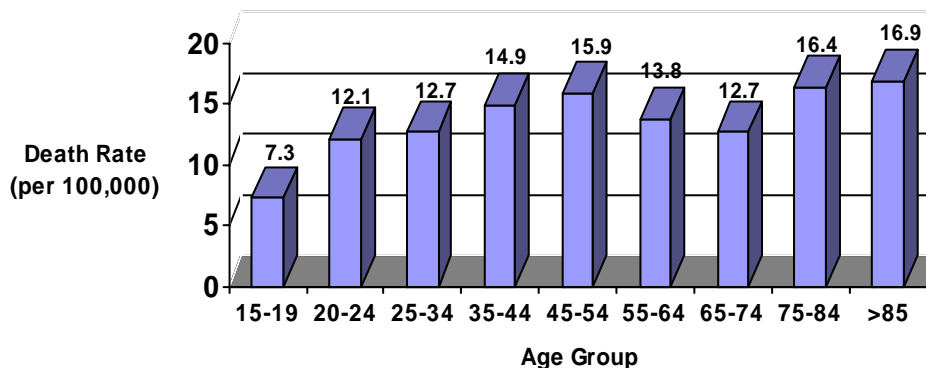
Suicide in America

- in 2003, 31,484 deaths were due to suicide.¹
- every 18 minutes, someone in America commits suicide.¹
- more people die from suicide than homicide.²
 - for every 2 victims of homicide, there are 3 persons who commit suicide.³
- suicide is the 11th leading cause of death.³
- it is estimated that each suicide intimately affects 6 people.⁴

by age...

- suicide is the third leading cause of death among 15-24 year olds, despite the slow decline since 1992.⁵
 - the rate for this age group has tripled since 1950 for white males.¹
- in 2003, 16.9% of all U.S. high school students had seriously considered attempting suicide and 8.5% actually made a suicide attempt.⁶
 - more white and Hispanic students crafted a suicide plan than African Americans.
- over half of all suicides occur in adult men, between the ages of 25 and 65.³
- *suicide and the elderly...*
 - the suicide rate for men increases with age, most dramatically after 65.¹
 - white males over the age of 80 are at the greatest risk of all age, gender, or racial groups.⁷
 - the ratio of suicide attempts to completions narrows drastically with age, indicating that older individuals who contemplate suicide are more likely to complete it.⁷
 - most elderly individuals who complete suicide see their physician within a few months to a few weeks before their death.¹
 - "double suicides," involving spouses occur more frequently in the elderly population.⁸
 - "silent suicides"
 - often suicides among the elderly are under-reported because they are considered "medication overdoses" or "accidental deaths."⁸

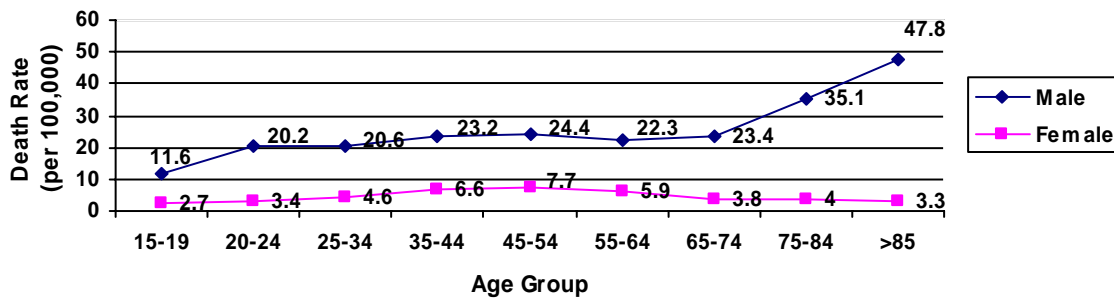
Suicide Death Rates, by Age: 2003⁹



by gender...

- suicide is the 8th leading cause of death for all U.S. men.⁵
 - highest among white and American Indian/Native Alaskan men.
- women report attempting suicide during their lifetime approximately 3 times more often than males.⁵
- while females report attempting suicide twice as often as males, there are 4 times as many deaths to suicide for males than females.^{1,5}
- in 2003, more female high school students reported seriously considering suicide, devising a suicide plan, and attempting suicide than did male students.⁶
- men underreport depression and can be expected to underreport suicide attempts.
- men may have higher rates of completed suicide because of their lack of strong social support and unlikelihood to seek psychiatric and medical help.¹
- white men over the age of 50 account for close to 40% of all suicides.¹
- in 2001...
 - 86% of all suicides among those 15-24 were to males.⁵
 - 85% of all suicides among the elderly (>65) were to men.⁵

Suicide Death Rates, by Age and Gender: 2003⁹



¹American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. *Facts and Figures* [online]. 2006. Available at: http://www.afsp.org/index.cfm?page_id=04EA1254-BD31-1FA3-C549D77E6CA6AA37

²SAVE: Suicide Awareness Voices of Education. *Facts About Suicide: Suicide in the United States* [online]. Save: 2005. Available at: <http://www.save.org/basics/facts.html>

³National Strategy for Suicide Prevention. *Suicide: Cost to the Nation* [online]. Available at: <http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/suicideprevention/costtonation.asp>

⁴McIntosh J. *U.S.A Suicide: 2003 Official Final Data*. National Strategy for Suicide Prevention. Available at: <http://www.suicidology.org/associations/1045/files/2003datapgb.pdf>

⁵Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Suicide: Fact Sheet* [online]. National Center for Injury Prevention and Control; 2006. Available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/factsheets/suifacts.htm>

⁶Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2003*. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, May 21, 2004; 53(SS-2). Available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/ss5302a1.htm>

⁷Institute on Aging. *Suicide and the Elderly* [online]. Available at: <http://www.gioa.org/programs/cesp/sfacts/html>

⁸Ageworks. *Suicide*. University of Southern California [online]. Available at: http://www.ageworks.com/information_on_aging/mentalhealth/suicide.shtml

⁹Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *National Center for Health Statistics; Health, United States, 2005 with Chartbook on Trends in the Health of Americans*. Hyattsville, MD; 2005. Available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/hus/05.pdf>