Suicide in North Dakota

Last Month, North Dakota’s Governor Burgum declared September as Suicide Prevention Month in North Dakota. Centers For Disease Control shows North Dakota has the highest percentage increase of suicide rates between 2009 and 2016 in the nation. The Vital Signs study shows 58.6 percent increase in the state's rates, which is at least ten percent higher than the next state, Vermont. Researchers found that more than half of people who died by suicide did not have a known diagnosed mental health condition at the time of death. Relationship problems or loss, substance misuse, physical health problems, and job, money, legal or housing stress often contributed to risk for suicide. Firearms were the most common method of suicide used by those with and without a known diagnosed mental health condition. North Dakota’s Department of Health encourages residents to offer support to those who have lost loved ones to suicide. Studies have shown that most suicides are preceded by one or more of the following 12 warning signs:

**WARNING SIGNS**

- Feeling like a burden
- Displaying extreme mood swings
- Expressing hopelessness
- Increased substance use
- Increased anxiety
- Increased anger or rage
- Talking about feeling trapped or being in unbearable pain
- Sleeping too little or too much
- Looking for ways to access lethal means
- Withdrawing or feeling isolated
- Making plans for suicide
- Talking or posting about wanting to die

Five steps to help someone at risk:

**Ask** – It may be a tough question but it is so important to ask someone directly if they are having suicidal thoughts.

**Keep Them Safe** – Work with the person to remove any lethal means available to them (i.e. firearms, medications, etc.)

**Be There** – Be present, listen with compassion and without judgment, let them know you care about them.

**Help them connect** – Dial 1.800.273.8255 for local crisis support and resources.

**Follow up** – Continued support is needed from friends and family even if the person is seeking professional help.

If You Know Someone in Crisis: Call the toll-free National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (NSPL) at 1–800–273–TALK (8255), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The service is available to everyone. The deaf and hard of hearing can contact the Lifeline via TTY at 1–800–799–4889. All calls are confidential. Contact social media outlets directly if you are concerned about a friend’s social media updates or dial 911 in an emergency. Learn more on the NSPL’s website. The Crisis Text Line is another resource available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Text “HOME” to 741741.

For more information on suicide prevention, visit http://www.ndhealth.gov/suicideprevention or contact Alison Traynor, NDDoH suicide prevention director at 701.328.4580.
Mouth Monsters

Good oral health habits play a big part in having a nice smile, speaking well, being able to eat properly and having confidence. Research has shown that children who have poor oral health miss more school and receive lower grades than children who don’t. Visiting your dentist for regular cleanings and check-ups, brushing, flossing, fluoride treatments, and eating a healthy diet can help slow tooth decay. **If you are having sweets, remember these tips.**

- **Chocolate is your best bet** - Dark chocolate contains antioxidants which can actually stop bacteria from sticking to your teeth, helping to fight gum infections and tooth decay.
- **Be picky if it’s sticky** - Gummies, caramels, sour candy, and bubble gum can stick in the grooves and crevices of the teeth allowing cavity-causing bacteria more time to work.
- **Say “no” to the hard candies** - People tend to keep these kinds of candies in the mouth for longer periods of times. They can actually break your teeth! The sugars in food and germs in plaque mix together to make acid. The acids in your mouth attack your teeth. Chewing sugarless gum increases saliva and helps wash out food and acid. Its always a good idea to brush after eating candy.

**We are a Sipping Nation**

Sipping on sugary drinks all day may rot your teeth! Soda, juice, formula, milk, and even breastmilk can all cause acid attacks on our teeth. Be sure to sip on water throughout the day and if you have a sugary drink, have it with a meal.

First District Health Unit offers **FLUORIDE TREATMENTS** for all ages. ($25 per treatment)

Call to schedule your appointment today.

(If you cannot afford services, please call. You may qualify for a reduced fee.)

---

**Why not Quit Today?**

Cigarette smoking causes more than 480,000 deaths each year in the US. It causes more deaths each year than the following 5 combined:

1. HIV   2. Illegal drug use   3. Alcohol use
4. Motor vehicle injuries   5. Firearm-related incidents

---

**NDQuits**

1.800.QUIT.NOW
ndquits.health.nd.gov

---

**First District Health Unit**

For more info, contact:

- **Bottineau County:** Bottineau 228-3101
- **Burke County:** Bowbells 377-2316
- **McHenry County:** Towner 537-5732
- **McLean County:** Garrison 463-2641
- **Washburn:** 462-3330
- **Renville County:** Mohall 756-6383
- **Sheridan County:** McClusky 363-2506
- **Ward County:** Kenmare 385-4328
- **Minot:** 852-1376

---

**Take Three Actions to Fight the Flu**

1. Get Vaccinated
2. Help Stop the Spread of Flu Viruses
3. Take Antiviral Drugs if Your Doctor Prescribes Them

#FIGHTFLU

www.cdc.gov/flu

---

Beginning Oct. 8th, First District Health - Minot Clinic
Walk-in Flu Shots - Monday - Friday 9AM - 4PM
Extended Hours Nov. 8 until 7pm!