

Fact or Fiction?

Depression is the most
common mental illness in
people who die by suicide.



Arthur Sommer Rotenberg
Suicide & Depression
Studies Program



CAN-BIND

Canadian Biomarker Integration
Network in Depression

Fact

Depression is the most common mental illness among those who die from suicide, with approximately 60% suffering from this condition.

However, no single factor, including mental illness, is enough on its own to cause a suicide. Rather, suicide typically results from the interaction of many risk factors e.g., mood disorder, trauma, life stressors, lack of social support.

Adapted from: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/82-624-x/2012001/article/11696-eng.htm#n3>

Fact or Fiction?

The majority of people who have a mental illness receive treatment.



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Fiction

Although there are known, effective treatments for mental illnesses such as depression, fewer than half of those affected in the world (in many countries, fewer than 10%) receive such treatments.

Barriers to effective care include social stigma associated with mental disorders.

Adapted from: <http://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/depression>

Fact or Fiction?

If it may help a person, promising
to keep someone's suicidal thoughts
a secret is okay.



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Fiction

It's important not to promise to keep the suicidal thoughts of someone a secret as you and the individual may need to seek out supports. This is not a burden either of you should carry alone.

Explaining that you can't keep it a secret, because you care about them and want to ensure they're safe can help. Mentioning that you would only speak to people who can support and help them is also important.

Adapted from:

<https://www.torontodistresscentre.com/suicide-intervention/>

Fact or Fiction?

Close to 800 000 people worldwide
die by suicide every year.



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Fact

Suicide is the second-most common cause of death among young people aged 15-29, but men in their 40s and 50s have the highest rate of suicide.

While women are three to four times more likely to attempt suicide than men, men are three times more likely to die by suicide than women.

Adapted from:

(1) <http://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/suicide>

(2) <https://cmha.ca/documents/preventing-suicide>

Fact or Fiction?

Brain chemicals, also known as neurotransmitters, play little or no role in suicidal ideation and behaviour.



Fiction

There is scientific evidence to show that decreased levels of brain chemicals such as serotonin (which helps to regulate mood) and dopamine (which controls our brain's reward and pleasure centres) are linked to more severe suicidal ideation and behaviour.

Adapted from:

- (1) Oquendo, MA et al. (2016). Positron Emission Tomographic Imaging of the Serotonergic System and Prediction of Risk and Lethality of Future Suicidal Behavior.. JAMA Psychiatry. 73 (10), p1048-1055
- (2) Fitzgerald, ML et al. (2017). Dysregulation of Striatal Dopamine Receptor Binding in Suicide. Neuropsychopharmacology. 42 (4), p974-982.