Health Bulletin

Sangyouhoken Service Co., Ltd.

Suicide Prevention Week is in September.
Let's learn self-care for managing stress!

Self-care

Suicide Prevention Week and Awareness Month

In Japan, the Basic Act on Suicide Countermeasures designates September 10–16 as Suicide Prevention Week and March as Suicide Prevention Awareness Month. The national government, local authorities and partner organizations work together to promote awareness under the principle of suicide prevention that supports life.

September 10: World Suicide Prevention Day

World Suicide Prevention Day began on September 10, 2003, the opening day of a conference in Stockholm, Sweden, organized jointly by WHO and the International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP). The day marked a declaration of shared responsibility for suicide prevention worldwide.

Signs you may notice in yourself

- Feeling sad, depressed or low
- Loss of interest or enjoyment
- Tiring easily or having little energy
- Less drive, motivation or concentration (hard to get anything done)
- Trouble falling asleep or waking early
- Loss of appetite
- Not wanting to see people
- Persistent worries and repetitive thoughts
- Difficulty recovering from setbacks, sadness or disappointment
- Self-blame or feelings of worthlessness

If these symptoms continue or interfere with daily life, speak with an occupational physician, public health nurse or mental health specialist.

Source: MHLW, Kokoro no Mimi, Self-care Tips

Signs others may notice

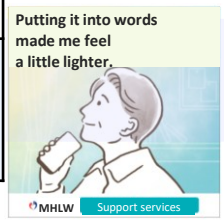
- More lateness, early departures or absences
- Absences without notice
- Unusually more overtime or work on days off
- Lower work efficiency
- Poorer thinking or judgment
- Slow progress or delayed work results
- Less reporting, consultation or conversation (or the opposite)
- Less expression or energy in movement (or the opposite)
- Unusual speech or behavior
- More mistakes or accidents
- Untidy appearance or dirty clothes

If uncharacteristic behavior persists or affects daily life, check in and encourage consultation with an occupational physician, public health nurse or specialist.

Suicide: Myths and Facts

Myth	Talking about suicide is a bad idea and may encourage someone to end their life.
Fact	Talking openly can help someone see other options and give them time to reconsider. This can help prevent suicide. Talking about suicide does not cause someone to take their own life.
Myth	People who talk about suicide do not really intend to act.
Fact	Many people who consider suicide experience emotional pain, anxiety, depression and despair, and may feel they have no other options. Some may act on these feelings, so take any mention of suicidal thoughts or feelings seriously.
Myth	People who consider suicide are determined to die.
Fact	People with suicidal thoughts often struggle between wanting to live and wanting to die. They may simply want relief from unbearable pain. Someone who wants to live may act impulsively and die several days later. Timely emotional support may help prevent suicide.
Myth	Most suicides happen suddenly, without warning.
Fact	Some suicides happen without warning, but most involve verbal or behavioral warning signs, such as saying "I'm going to kill myself" or buying something to use in a suicide attempt. Learn what warning signs look like and do not overlook them.

Making use of the workplace stress check
The annual workplace stress check helps you understand your current stress level. Use your results to find ways to relieve stress, talk to someone you trust or use your company's health counseling service.



MHLW: Protect Your Mental Health
Information on telephone helplines and counseling via social media.
https://www.mhlw.go.jp/mamorouyokokoro/

Source: Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW), Suicide Prevention That Supports Life

Self-care for Managing Stress

1. Move Your Body

Exercise can help release negative feelings, relax your mind and body, and regulate your sleep routine.

Aerobic activities, such as light jogging or cycling, are especially helpful. If that feels like too much, a walk around your neighborhood can help too. Aim for about 20 minutes a day, long enough to feel warm and slightly sweaty.

Keep it gentle enough to feel refreshed rather than overworked. Keeping it up regularly matters more than doing a lot in a single day.

2. Write Down How You Feel

When your feelings are hard to untangle, put them down on paper. Use your own words if you can, but doodles or scribbles are fine too. The point is to move your hands, rather than just think about things.

Writing has two main benefits. First, it helps you step back from your concerns and see them more objectively. This can ease the pressure and help you think calmly. Second, rereading what you have written may help you notice options you had not considered before.

If handwriting feels like a chore, use a phone or computer. Write honestly about how you feel, knowing that you do not have to show it to anyone.

3. Take Slow, Deep Breaths

Anxiety and tension can make your breathing shallow and fast. When this happens, consciously try taking deeper breaths.

Start by breathing out fully. Slowly exhale through your mouth as you count “one, two, three” in your head. Then breathe in through your nose. Repeat for about 5–10 minutes.

If thoughts about work or other distractions come up, let them pass and start counting again from “one.”

4. The Person You Want to Be

When you face a problem, you may become absorbed in finding its cause or focus only on your weaknesses. Yet there are probably many other things you are doing well. Notice those strengths and trust your abilities again.

Imagine the person you would like to become. If that vision came true, what would you be like? How would the people around you change? Once you have a clear picture, choose a small but meaningful goal as your first step and act on it.

Begin with something manageable that you can do without pushing yourself too hard. When you reach your first goal, give yourself credit. Achieving goals one by one can help you rebuild confidence through your own efforts.

5. Listening to Music and Singing

Music can naturally soothe the mind and body. Upbeat music can give you energy, while gentle, slower music can ease anxiety and tension. A song full of memories may bring you to tears. Music can also help you express emotions that are hard to put into words.

Choose music that suits your mood and immerse yourself in it. Focus on listening, rather than playing it in the background while you look at your phone.

You might also enjoy letting off steam at karaoke. Singing naturally deepens your breathing and may help ease anxiety or irritation.

6. Finding Reasons to Laugh

Laughter can lighten your mood and help you get through difficult days. Even a serious situation may have a humorous side when you look at it differently. Noticing this can make things feel easier.

If you make a mistake, acknowledge it and try laughing at the situation, rather than blaming yourself or feeling ashamed. You may wonder whether that is too easygoing, but the point is to change your perspective. Practicing this can gradually help you develop a more balanced outlook and a wider view.

Above all, laughter helps you build relaxed relationships with the people around you.

Source: MHLW, Looking After Your Mental Health