

# Spotlight on veteran suicide

[Health & Medicine](#), [Mental Health](#)



Approximately 20 veterans commit suicide everyday. Society assumes PTSD or depression are the underlying causes. From bootcamp through retirement, our veterans experience things beyond imaginable for us and learning to live as a civilian is hard. What drives these soldiers to suicide is more than being sad or having nightmares.

As soldiers begin their transition into active duty life, they do so with a group that they are assigned for deployments. Each group has a unique and quite unbreakable bond. Every soldier has a different background, but being an active duty member allows them to relate on a different level; more than they ever could with their civilian families. The brotherhood and sisterhood created between the soldiers gives them a sense of home away from home. This allows soldiers to voice their perception freely amongst each other without being criticized. Because they create these bonds, it is difficult for veterans to live life without it. As we know, veterans are more likely to commit suicide, but most veterans over 50 are the ones who feel they are at the point of no return and take their own lives.

Though older veteran suicide rates are higher, 35% of veteran suicides are from the younger generation of vets. Depression and anxiety have a significant impact on driving these soldiers into isolation and ultimately death. Living post war with the recollection of all the bad experiences from overseas is overwhelming for soldiers of all ages. For example, soldiers are licensed to kill. It is their job to kill whatever, and whoever, threatens their lives and the safety of America. Once they become veterans, they are forced into a civilian lifestyle. Sure they could become a police officer, or a first responder, but if their life was ever threatened in the line of duty, their first

instinct is to kill. Veterans no longer feel they belong in society after coming home from war. They no longer have their group of active duty members around to vent to or distract them from the reality they are living. Because they no longer have that support, it causes anxiety and eventually leads to depression.

The anxiety stems from being separated from their group they were close to for so long. This anxiety eventually leads to the beginning stages of depression because veterans are struggling emotionally and mentally to cope with the loss of support and the experiences they went through. Veterans make up roughly 9% of our population, which is about 27 million out of the 300 million people we have in our country. As a society we tend to assume that it's the soldiers own fault as to why they commit suicide. Civilians, including VA doctors, can not begin to fathom the baggage soldiers carry over from their deployments. Instead of sitting back and judging them, we need to welcome our soldiers with open arms and show them that we can be trusted. Our society is too busy pointing fingers and hating each other to realize that there are bigger problems in our country. It may not seem as a big problem to society, but 20 veterans a day is a lot. That's 20 families losing their heros daily. If these numbers begin rising, it could scare young adults away from wanting to fight for our country.