

Table 5.1

Risk and Protective Factors for Suicide

Category of risk/ protective factors	Specific risk/protective factors
I. Chronic/distal risk factors	
A. Demographic factors	Male gender White or Native American race/ethnicity Divorced, widowed, separated, single Ages (36–64; 75–85+; 2009 official data)
B. Past self-injurious/ suicidal behavior	Past suicidal ideation/plans ^a Past suicide attempts ^a Past self-injurious behavior
C. Past impulsive or violent behavior	Past impulsive behavior Past reckless and self-endangering behavior Past violent behavior
D. Cognitive/ psychological features as traits	Absolutistic thinking Tunnel vision Limited coping/problem-solving ability Limited capacity for self-soothing Perfectionism
E. Family/peer group factors	History of sexual or physical abuse/trauma as child/adolescent Family history of suicide or suicide attempts Family history of violence, substance abuse, psychiatric disorders needing hospitalization Family/self-rejection of sexual orientation Parental divorce as a young child
F. Socioeconomic factors	Barriers to accessing mental health care Stigma related to accessing mental health care
G. Easy access to lethal methods (esp. firearms)	Guns in the home Hoarding of medications
H. Mental disorders	Mood disorders (including major depressive disorder and bipolar disorder, depressed) Substance use disorder (esp. alcohol abuse/dependence, cocaine abuse, nicotine dependence)

(continued)

Table 5.1

Risk and Protective Factors for Suicide (*Continued*)

Category of risk/ protective factors	Specific risk/protective factors
	Schizophrenia
	PTSD (esp. combat-related PTSD)
	Anxiety disorder
	Personality disorder (esp. borderline and antisocial)
	Eating disorders
	Body dysmorphic disorder
	Conduct disorder (in adolescents)
	Comorbid disorders (e.g., depression and anxiety, alcohol abuse and depression.
	schizophrenia and depression, PTSD and alcohol abuse)
I. Medical illness	Cancer (risk greater in first year)
	HIV/AIDS (risk greater with progression of disease)
	End-stage renal disease (risk greater—age >60)
	Spinal cord injury/disease (risk greater in first 2–5 years)
	Traumatic brain injury (risk greater with cerebral contusions)
	Epilepsy (risk greater for women)
	Stroke (risk greater when age <50)
	Multiple sclerosis (risk greater in first year)
	Huntington's disease (risk greater just prior to diagnosis and with decreased functioning)
	Comorbid Axis III and Axis I disorders (e.g., Axis III disorder and depression or alcohol abuse)
II. Acute/proximal risk factors	Current suicidal ideation ^b
	Current suicidal plan ^b
A. Suicide ideation/ behavior	Current suicidal plan includes very lethal means
	Preparation for suicide (e.g., giving away valued possessions)
	Recent suicide attempt (with no wish to be saved)
B. Acute symptoms of mental disorder	Acute depression
	Active abuse of alcohol (esp. increased use relative to historical pattern)
	Depression following cocaine use

Table 5.1**Risk and Protective Factors for Suicide (*Continued*)**

Category of risk/ protective factors	Specific risk/protective factors
C. Acute comorbid mental disorders	Rapid mood cycling in bipolar disorder Command hallucinations (to commit suicide) Insomnia Persistent nightmares Acute depression and anxiety or panic symptoms Acute depression and agitation Alcohol abuse and acute depression Schizophrenia and depressed mood PTSD and active alcohol abuse Borderline personality disorder and depression
D. Physical illness and acute emotional distress	Physical illness and depression Burdensomeness of multiple physical illnesses Unremitting and disabling pain
E. Cognitive/ psychological features	Feelings of hopelessness Severe anhedonia and depressed mood Global insomnia and depressed mood Decreased self-esteem Feelings of shame or humiliation Feelings of intolerable aloneness Few or no reasons for living Feeling loss of purpose or meaning Feelings of being trapped
F. Behavioral features	Increased impulsive behavior or recklessness Increased anger and/or aggression Recent violent behavior Final act behaviors (e.g., making last will; giving possessions away) Evidence of stalking or preparation for murder/suicide Nonsuicidal self-injury

(continued)