

Self Harm Frequently Asked Questions

What is Self Harm?

Self Harm is when you hurt yourself on purpose; you usually do it because something else feels wrong, and it feels like the only way to let those feelings out. If you self harm it is usually because of the result of another problem; it can happen if you are feeling anxious, depressed, stressed or bullied, and you feel like you don't have any other way of resolving these issues.

How do people Self Harm?

There are lots of different forms of self harming. Some people use the same one all the time, other people hurt themselves in different ways at different times.



Mind provides examples of forms of self harm [here](#). It can be upsetting and potentially triggering to read information about how to self-harm. If you are feeling vulnerable at the moment, you might not want to read the information.

Can I recognise Self Harm?

It can be hard to recognise when someone has started to self harm as they may not want anyone else to know.

Physical signs of self-harm:

- keeping themselves fully covered at all times, even in hot weather
- unexplained cuts, bruises or cigarette burns, usually on the wrists, arms, thighs and chest
- unexplained blood stains on clothing or tissues
- signs that they have been pulling out their hair.

Emotional signs of self-harm:

- becoming very withdrawn and not speaking to others
- signs of depression, such as low mood, tearfulness or a lack of motivation or interest in anything
- signs of low self-esteem, such as thinking they're not good enough
- talking about ending things or not wanting to go on.

Who can help with Self Harm?

Support is available for anyone who self harms or thinks about self harm, as well as their friends and family. It's best to speak to a GP. A GP will listen and discuss the best options, which could include self-help or support groups. They can also give advice and treatment for minor injuries. You may also find it helpful to speak to a free listening service or support organisation:

- Call 116 123 to talk to [Samaritans](#), or email: jo@samaritans.org for a

reply within 24 hours.

- Text 'SHOUT' to 85258 to contact the [Shout](#) Crisis Text Line, or text "YM" if you're under 19.
- If you're under 19, you can also call 0800 1111 to talk to [Childline](#).

If you prefer a webchat, these services are available at certain times:

- For women and girls: [Self Injury Support webchat](#) available Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, 7pm to 9.30pm
- For men: [CALM webchat](#) available from 5pm to midnight every day.



What is Self Harm Awareness Day, or Self Injury Awareness Day (SIAD)?

There is a stigma around self harm that can stop people who are worried about self harm from looking for help. Part of this stigma comes from the misconceptions that surround it, such as the idea that it is attention-seeking.



1 March is Self Harm Awareness Day. It is not easy to just stop self-harming and these annual campaigns continue to make more people aware of it and make it easier for people to get help and get through it. Raising awareness about self harm is incredibly important. Awareness leads to understanding and empathy, banishing judgment and fear, and reducing the number of people who feel alone and suffer in silence. Raising awareness is about educating people who do not self harm and reaching out to people who do.

Where can I get more information?

For ideas and guidance for everyone affected by self harm and to find out how to help raise awareness visit: [LifeSIGNS](#), a small user-led self injury awareness charity.

[National Self Harm Network \(NSHN\)](#) is a survivor-led online support forum for people who self harm, their friends and families.

[Mind](#) provide advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem.

[distrACT](#) is an NHS App which provides information and advice about self harm.

[Harmless](#) is a user-led organisation that supports people who self-harm, and their friends and family.

[Samaritans](#) are open 24/7 to listen to anyone who needs to talk.

Take a look at a [British Medical Association guide for parents and carers coping with self harm](#).

Website: www.oldhamsafeguarding.org

Email: OldhamSafeguardingAdultsBoard@Oldham.gov.uk

