

Over the past few years, more and more research is showing that many autistic people are at an increased risk for suicide. In this study, participants from the Netherlands Autism Register, which is longitudinal register including individuals with autism, were asked about their possible experiences with thoughts and feelings about suicide. Specifically, the study looked at whether these thoughts and feelings in their lifetime and in the past month were related to various factors (such as their age, gender, and having psychiatric disorder diagnoses). It was found that 80% of the participants had experienced thoughts about or even attempted to take their own life at least once throughout their lifetime. Furthermore, in a subgroup of participants, the presence of a psychiatric disorder diagnosis, feelings of loneliness, and a higher number of autistic traits were associated with experiencing suicidal thoughts and feelings in their lifetime. For those who experienced these suicidal thoughts in the past month, having (multiple) psychiatric disorder diagnoses and a higher number of autistic traits were related to more severe and frequent thoughts about suicide in the past month. These findings show that additional factors in autistic individuals should be considered when assessing the suicide risk. They represent a step closer to understanding why suicide is more common for autistic people.