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## Risk Factors for Self-Directed Violence in US Soldiers: A Case-Control Study

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### Abstract

Military suicide has escalated in recent years, however almost no research has used military surveillance data to examine suicide risk factors. The aims of the current study were to compare suicide risk factors among US Soldiers who died by suicide, attempted suicide, and controls using a prospective case-control design. Controls were 247 Soldiers completing standard post-deployment assessment procedures. Cases were 276 suicide decedents ( $n = 85$ ) or suicide attempters ( $n = 191$ ), drawn from the Department of Defense Suicide Event Report.

Compared to controls, suicide attempters and decedents had greater odds of failed intimate relationships, legal problems, and substance abuse problems in the past 90 days. Suicide attempters and decedents also had greater odds of a history of a mood disorder and prior suicide attempt compared to controls. Suicide decedents had greater odds of exposure to legal problems in the past 90 days and lower odds of ever having an anxiety disorder, compared to suicide attempters. Vigilance toward early detection of modifiable suicide risk factors such as

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