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# Study Shows Importance of Financial Screening to Prevent Suicide Risk in Patients with ADHD

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*Financial distress in patients with ADHD greatly increases risk of suicide. Read more.*

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According to a new large population study, there is a link between attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, financial distress, and suicide. Adults with ADHD are much more likely to encounter financial distress, and those with the highest amounts of debt are at 4 times greater risk of suicide.

This study is a collaborative effort on the parts of Marieke Bos, MA, PhD, with the Stockholm School of Economics, and Ohio State University researchers Theodore Beauchaine, PhD, professor of psychology, and Itzhak Ben-David, PhD, professor of finance in the Fisher College of Business. The study was published in the journal *Science Advances*.<sup>1</sup>

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“Our modern life is built on paying bills on time and making rent and mortgage payments. These tasks are more difficult for people with ADHD and it takes a toll,” Ben-David said in a statement to the press.<sup>2</sup>

Mental health data on ADHD and suicide from 2002 to 2015 were pulled from all 11.5 million adults in Sweden for usage. Researchers also utilized a random sample of credit and default data from 189,267 Swedish residents.

Self-reports showed adults with ADHD are more financially dependent, have trouble paying bills, open fewer savings accounts, and use credit cards more compulsively. As is consistent with previous research, people with ADHD were found to be more likely to die by suicide than those without ADHD. They are also more likely to have bank overdrafts, unpaid alimony, unpaid educational support, unpaid parking tickets, and impounded property. These financial stressors may increase risk of suicide.

“Even when you take into account the other problems faced by those with ADHD, we found financial distress plays a key role in suicide,” Beauchaine explained to press.<sup>2</sup>

The study also showed men were more likely to be in a state of financial chaos before suicidal ideation or attempt. Analyses of financial behaviors in the months preceding suicide demonstrated that men with ADHD had a greater frequency of unpaid debts that significantly increased in the 3 years before suicide. No such connection was discovered for women, with no data explanation.

The potential link between worsening financials and psychological distress must be examined further, researchers stated, to help identify who is most at risk and how they might be helped.

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