

# Resources

**For more information, call 1-800-DONT-CUT (366-8288)**

**Columbia College**

Counseling Services - 573.875.7423  
[www.ccis.edu/counselingservices](http://www.ccis.edu/counselingservices)

**Drury University**

Counseling Services - 417.873.7419  
[www.drury.edu/counseling](http://www.drury.edu/counseling)

**Evangel University**

Counseling Services/Wellness Center - 417.865.2815, ext. 7222  
[www.evangel.edu/offices/student-development/counseling-center](http://www.evangel.edu/offices/student-development/counseling-center)

**Harris-Stowe State University**

Office of Counseling Services and Prevention- 314.340.5112

**Lincoln University**

Student Health Services - 573.681.5476

**Maryville University of Saint Louis**

Health & Wellness Services - 314.529.9520  
[www.maryville.edu/studentlife-health.htm](http://www.maryville.edu/studentlife-health.htm)

**Missouri Southern State University**

MSSU Wellness 417.625.9533  
[www.mssu.edu/wellness](http://www.mssu.edu/wellness)

**Missouri State University**

Taylor Health and Wellness Center - 417.836.4045

**Missouri University of Science & Technology**

Counseling, Disability Support, and Student Wellness - 573.341.4211  
[counsel.mst.edu](http://counsel.mst.edu)

**Missouri Western State University**

Counseling Center - 816.271.4327

**Northwest Missouri State University**

University Wellness Services - 660.562.1348  
[www.nwmissouri.edu/wellness](http://www.nwmissouri.edu/wellness)

**Rockhurst University**

Counseling Center - 816.501.4275

**Saint Louis University**

Student Health and Counseling Services - 314.977.2323

**Southeast Missouri State University**

Counseling and Disability - 573.986.6191  
[www.semo.edu/SAPE](http://www.semo.edu/SAPE)

**State Technical College of Missouri**

Student Services - 573.897.5110

**Truman State University**

University Counseling Services - 660.785.4014  
[ucs.truman.edu](http://ucs.truman.edu)

**University of Central Missouri**

Office of Violence and Substance Abuse Prevention - 660.543.8338  
[www.ucmo.edu/VSAP](http://www.ucmo.edu/VSAP)

**University of Missouri**

Wellness Resource Center - 573.882.4634  
[wellness.missouri.edu](http://wellness.missouri.edu)

**University of Missouri-Kansas City**

Counseling, Health and Testing - 816.235.1635  
[www.umkc.edu/chtc](http://www.umkc.edu/chtc)

**University of Missouri-St. Louis**

Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention Coordinator - 314.516.6369  
[www.umsl.edu/swbs](http://www.umsl.edu/swbs)

**Westminster College**

Counseling & Health Services - 573.592.5361  
[www.westminster-mo.edu/studentlife/chs](http://www.westminster-mo.edu/studentlife/chs)

Information adapted from the Cornell Research Program on Self-Injurious Behavior in Adolescents and Young Adults and Helpguide.org.

# Self Injury

## How to Help Yourself

## How to Help a Friend Who Self-Injures

This publication is brought to you by Partners in Prevention, a coalition of universities in Missouri.

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# What is self-injury?

**Self-injury, self-harm and self-mutilation all refer to a variety of behaviors in which an individual intentionally inflicts harm on his or her body.** Self-injury is typically not undertaken with suicidal intent, rather to relieve pain or feel something in the presence of emotional numbness. While cutting is one of the most common forms, over 16 forms have been documented among the college student population.

## The most common self-injury behaviors include:

- Intentional cutting of the skin
- Subdermal tissue scratching
- Burning
- Ripping or pulling skin or hair
- Swallowing toxic substances
- Self bruising
- Breaking bones

## Why do people self-injure?

**When emotions feel out of hand and you can't cope with your pain, you may turn to cutting yourself or other self-injury. Self-injury may be how you:**

- Regulate strong emotions
- Distract from emotional pain
- Express things that cannot be put into words
- Exert a sense of control over the body
- Self-punish or express self-hate
- Self-soothe

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# Helping Yourself

Self-injury may make you feel better at first, but the pain returns without any permanent recovery. You can end this dangerous cycle by learning safer, more healing ways to deal with your problems. There are professionals who can provide treatment, and ways you can help yourself. You have the power to find healthier ways to manage your pain.

**Ask yourself why you want to stop.** Examine your motivation for stopping so that you will be able to remember why you stopped as you go through the healing process.

**Identify your self-injury triggers.** Understanding why you self-injure can be a vital step toward your recovery. If you can figure out what function your self-injury serves, you can learn other ways to get those needs met-which in turn can reduce your desire to injure yourself.

**Talk to someone you trust.** This could be a friend, teacher, religious leader, counselor, or relative. Support from others can help you change your situation and learn new ways to cope.

**Seek professional help.** Although anyone who self-injures can benefit from the help of a professional, it is especially important to seek help if your own work to stop isn't helping your behavior. A therapist can help you get to the root of why you self-injure and help you work toward stopping it.

# Helping a Friend

**Ask and listen.** Ignoring a friend or family member's cutting and self-injury may help reinforce the feeling of shame surrounding the behavior. A lack of communication can also increase their feelings of isolation and alienation. You can help create change just by talking.

**Don't judge.** Avoid judgmental comments and don't dismiss the self-harm behavior as a way to get attention. Try to understand why the self-injury is taking place.

**Be genuine.** Let your friend or family member know that you care and understand that he or she is feeling pain. If professional help is indicated, a person is more apt to follow such a recommendation if you have genuinely listened to him or her.

**Refer person to seek professional help.** Be actively involved in encouraging the person to see a physician or mental health professional. Most people with deep emotional pain or distress need to work with a counselor or mental health professional to sort through strong feelings, heal past hurts, and to learn better ways to cope with life's stresses.