Rise in 'poor, female teens' poisoning themselves

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**Teenage self-poisonings appear to be on the rise in the UK, with females from poor backgrounds at greatest risk.**

According to University of Nottingham researchers, there was a 27% increase between 1992 and 2012, with 17,862 cases reported in that time.

Teens in poor areas were up to three times more likely to poison themselves - deliberately or accidentally.

Intentional poisonings in 16 to 17-year-old girls and alcohol poisonings in those 15-16 "both roughly doubled".

The [**report**](http://ip.bmj.com/lookup/doi/10.1136/injuryprev-2015-041901) published in the journal Injury Prevention says: "One potential explanation for the increase in alcohol poisonings over time is increased availability, with the relative affordability of alcohol in the UK increasing steadily between 1980 and 2012, licensing hours having increased since 2003."

It also suggests targeting poorer areas with more "social and psychological support for adolescents" could be a way to combat this rise.

"We must consider whether this [the increasing rates seen among young women] reflects real changes, increased health seeking behaviour or changes in GP coding practices, or popular trends, such as clinicians perceiving intentional poisonings as more frequent and therefore recording events as such."

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Earlier this year, [**Newsbeat met one girl**](http://www.bbc.co.uk/newsbeat/article/35500951/figures-reveal-rise-in-self-poisoning-with-teenage-girls-most-at-risk) who said she has self-poisoned 15 times and described it is "like an addiction".

The 15-year-old said she barely left the house, unless she was with her family, because she was scared about what she would do if she was left alone.

"I know as soon as I go out I will do something silly," she explained. "If I saw a box of tablets, I would take them."

What is self-poisoning?

It's [**described as**](http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Poisoning/Pages/Treatment.aspx) a type of self-harm, which normally happens if someone is depressed or anxious.

Doctors say people tend to cut themselves as a way of trying to cope with difficulty in their lives, while self-poisoning can happen to those who feel they can no longer cope.

If someone deliberately poisons themselves, it does not always mean they are trying to end their life.

[**BBC Advice has more information and links to support for self-harm.**](http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/1LJd4YvhLTnLRH7WgF8pypJ/self-harm)

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