

Firearm-owning veterans receptive to safety discussions in routine care

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Most veterans who own firearms believe that clinicians should provide

firearm counseling during routine care when a patient or family member is at heightened risk for firearm injury, according to a study published online June 29 in *JAMA Network Open*.

Frances M. Aunon, Ph.D., from the Veterans Affairs Connecticut Health Care System in West Haven, and colleagues used data from the National Firearms Survey (July 1 to Aug. 31, 2019) of 678 self-identified [veterans](#) who reported owning at least one firearm.

The researchers found that across six clinical contexts (if the patient or patient's family member is at risk for suicide, has mental health or [behavioral problems](#), is abusing or addicted to alcohol or drugs, is a victim of domestic violence, has Alzheimer disease or another dementia, or is going through a hard time), support for [clinicians](#) "at least sometimes" discussing firearm safety as part of routine care ranged from 73.4 percent when someone is "going through a hard time" to 88.2 percent when someone has "[mental health](#) or behavioral problems." Similarly, when a patient or family member is at risk for suicide, 79.4 percent of respondents said that clinicians should "at least sometimes" discuss firearms and firearm safety.

"These findings belie concerns that discussing firearm access with veteran firearm owners is an unacceptable practice," the authors write.

More information: Frances M. Aunon et al, Beliefs Among Veteran Firearm Owners Regarding Whether Clinicians Should Discuss Firearm Safety With Patients, *JAMA Network Open* (2023). [DOI: 10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2023.21219](#)

Mark A. Reger et al, Veteran Receptiveness to Clinician Discussions About Their Firearms, *JAMA Network Open* (2023). [DOI: 10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2023.21224](#)

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