

Assembled by Pa.M

Preamble

NOTES

This list is compiled from a large number of sources, the main one being this newsgroup (ASH). I have not named anyone in any of the entries to ensure their privacy.

Call:

I, on the other hand, will name sources if (and only if) the sources give me permission. There may be inaccuracies in many of the entries... double check if you can. Go to the library and read up on your favorite method - check dosages in the manufacturer's data sheets. If you do notice any inaccuracies, please write to the net ASAP.

LEGAL

This file is provided for the purposes of amusement, and the actual use of any of these methods is not recommended without first considering other possibilities, such as dying of old age. Please do not pass it onto people whom you know to be actively suicidal.. you may find yourself in jail for considerable periods. I have a small amount of info on British law regarding assisting suicides; feel free to ask me for a copy. Basically, distribution to a number of unknown people is fine, but giving it to someone whom you know is actively considering suicide can get you into jail for up to 14 years.

I should also point out that this file is distributed world-wide, and there will be significant differences in the legal aspects in other countries.

Call:

For example, in Sweden the distribution of this file is completely legal, according to a lawyer I know. As long as you don't physically help someone to commit suicide, you're safe. According to the lawyer mentioned above, Dr. Kevorkian's suicide machine would probably be legal in Sweden.

BIBLIOGRAPHY/SOURCES

1. "Final Exit: The Practicalities of Self-Deliverance and Assisted Suicide for the Dying" Derek Humphry (publisher: Hemlock)
 2. alt.suicide.holiday newsgroup on "usenet"
 3. alt.med newsgroup on "usenet"
 4. "Poisonous Plants and Fungi: an Illustrated Guide" (Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Foods) M R Cooper, A W Johnson
 5. "Encyclopedia of Human Biology"
- "Let Me Die Before I Wake" Derek Humphry
 - "Suicide, Mode d'Emploi" Claude Guillon, Yves Le Bonniec
 - "Zorg jij dak ik niet meer wakker word?" Klazien Sybrandy, Rob Bakker
 - "How To Die With Dignity" George B Mair, EXIT (Scottish)
 - "A Guide To Self-Deliverance" EXIT (Britain)
 - "Autodeliverance" Michel L Landa
 - "Justifiable Euthanasia" Pieter V Admiraal
 - "First You Cry" Betty Rollin
 - "Last Wish" Betty Rollin

- "Death of a Man" Lael Wertemberger
- "Jean's Way" Derek Humphry
- "The Savage God: A Study of Suicide" A Alvarez
- "Double Exit" Ann Wickett
- "Voluntary Euthanasia: A Comprehensive Bibliography" G Johnson (Hemlock)
- "The Woman Said Yes" Jessamyn West
- "The Bell Jar" Sylvia Plath
- "Clinical Toxicology of Commercial Products" Williams & Wilkins Company
- "Suicide: The Gamble with Death" Gene & David Lester
- "Crisis Intervention in the Community" Richard K McGee
- "Wanting to Die" Anne Sexton
- "Bitter Fame" (bio about) Sylvia Plath (author is) Anne Stevenson
- "Letters Home" (bio about) Sylvia Plath (author is) Aurelia S Plath
- "Raven: The Untold Story of the Rev. Jim Jones & his People" Dutton
- "Essays in Self-Destruction" (ed) Edwin S Shneidman
- "Suicide: A Study in Sociology" Emile Durkheim
- "Suicide and Attempted Suicide" Erwin Stengel
- "Endangered Hope: Experiences in Psychiatric Aftercare Facilities" David K Reynolds, Norman L Farberow
- "Death Wishes? The Understanding & Management of Deliberate Self Harm" H G Morgan
- "The Final Months: a Study of the Lives of 134 Persons who Committed Suicide" Eli Robins
- "Suicide: Inside and Out" David K Reynolds, Normal L Farberow
- "Attempted Suicide: A Practical Guide to its Nature and Management" Keith Hawton, Jose Catalan
- "The Negative Scream: A Story of Young People Who Took an Overdose" Sally O'Brien
- "Caring for the Suicidal" John Eldrid
- "The Samaritans: to help those tempted to suicide or despair" Chad Varah
- "Mishima: A Biography" John Nathan
- "Self-Mutilation: Theory, Research, and Treatment" Barent W Walsh, Paul M Rosen
- "Defeating Depression: a Guide for Depressed People and Their Families" C A H Watts
- "Depression: The Way Out of Your Prison" Dorothy Rowe
- "The Oxford Book of Death" D J Enright

This booklist is an extended list from [1]. I strongly recommend [1], try getting it mail order from the address below.

Calle:

Not used in the creation of this file, but recommended on the newsgroup was: "The Enigma Of Suicide" by George Howe Colt

GROUPS

The National Hemlock Society [American, pro-euthanasia, many books, PO Box 11830 D Humphry is founder]
 Eugene, OR 97440-3900 USA (503) 342-5748 Samaritans
 [British, suicide hotlines and prevention, Chad Varah is founder.
 non-interventionist approach] Befrienders International
 [International, suicide prevention, umbrella organisation] The Voluntary Euthanasia Society
 [British, pro-euthanasia] (Formerly British EXIT)
 Association pour le Droit de Mourir dans la Dignite
 [French, pro-euthanasia] Deutsche Gesellschaft Fur Humanes
 Sterben [German, pro-euthanasia]
 Club of Life [American, anti-euthanasia]

INDEX

to get index, type 'grep == methods >methods_index' in unix.

I will try to add an index in the next days --erik

Methods:

POISON

[1] makes most of these points:

- Most drugs cause vomiting. To help stop this, take one or two anti-histamine tablets (travel sickness, allergy, hayfever tablets etc) about an hour before, on a fairly empty stomach.
- If the drugs are in tablet form, take the first 20% as they are, and the rest crushed and dissolved / mixed in with strong alcohol / food. This helps the drugs to hit at the same time.
- Alcohol helps dissolve the drugs. Don't drink any beforehand, but wash the tablets down with vodka or similar, and then drink afterwards while you're still conscious.
- Use a large airtight plastic bag over your head, + something around your neck to hold it on. This transforms a 90% certainty method into a 99%...
- Friday night is a good time if you live alone - nobody will miss you until Monday if you work. Bolt all the doors you can. Say you'll be out over the weekend visiting someone, so people don't expect a reply to telephone.
- Some painkillers etc have less effect if you use them normally (tolerance).
- In general, you need to stay away from medical help until you actually die, but there are exceptions to this (that have been pointed out in the text).

Common drugs:

- **Cyanide (HCN, KCN)**

Dosage:

50 mg Hydrogen Cyanide gas, 200-300 mg Cyanide salts

Time:

seconds for HC, minutes Cs (empty stomach) hours (full s)

Available:

very difficult to get hold of

Certainty:

very certain

Notes:

It helps to have an empty stomach (since the salts react with the stomach acids to form H.C.). A full stomach can delay death for up to four hours with the salts. Antidotes to cyanide poisoning exist, but they have serious side effects. What you can do, is instead of taking the salts directly, drop 500mg or so into a strong acid, and inhale the fumes. This will be pure Hydrogen Cyanide, and you should die in 10 to 20 seconds.

[3]: "Hydrocyanic acid is one of the most poisonous substances known; the inhalation of its fumes in high concentration will cause almost immediate death. Hydrogen cyanide acts by preventing the normal process of tissue oxidation and paralyzing the respiratory center in the brain. Most of the accidental cases are due to inhaling the fumes during a fumigating process. In the pure state it kills with great rapidity. Crystalline cyanides, such as potassium or sodium cyanide are equally poisonous, since they interact with the hydrochloric acid in the stomach to liberate hydrocyanic acid. This poison has been used for both homicide and suicide; in recent history, a number of European political figures carried vials of cyanide salt for emergency self-destruction and some used them. Death resulted from amounts of only a fraction of a

gram. A concentration of 1 part in 500 of hydrogen cyanide gas is fatal. Allowable working concentration in most of the United States is 20 ppm. Two and one-half grains of liquid acid has killed. The acid acts fatally in about 15 minutes. The cyanide salts kill in several hours. The average dose of solution is 0.1 cc.

[1, DGHS talking about KCN]:

on an empty stomach, take a small glass of cold tap water. (Not mineral water nor any sort of juice or soda water because of it's acidity). Stir 1 -> 1.5 grammes of KCN into the water. More than that causes irritation to the throat. Wait 5 minutes to dissolve. It should be drunk within several hours. Consciousness will be lost in about a minute. Death will follow 15 -> 45 minutes later.

- **Aspirin (acetylsalicylic acid)**

Dosage:

20-30+ grammes (too many cause vomiting)

Time:

hours to days, variable

Available:

easy to get hold of (get soluble ones, & dissolve them)

Certainty:

unreliable

Notes:

Not recommended, fatal dose varies wildly, could cause liver & kidney damage instead of death. OD causes strange noises in your ears (like a video arcade) & projectile vomiting after about 10 hours. Medical help generally effective, so stay out of hospital for a couple of days. May cause bleeding in your stomach/upper intestines. Take with sodium bicarbonate (eg, bicarb. of soda), which speeds up the absorption (sp?) significantly. Take 1 or 2 antihistamine tablets.

- **Paracetamol (aka acetaminopren / tylenol)**

Dosage:

15+ grammes, 20+ is better

Time:

10 hours fatal damage, but 2 weeks to actually die

Available:

easy to get hold of

Certainty:

fairly reliable

Notes:

Once 10-12 hours is up, you've had it, but you still live for a week or two after that. Probably better to wait 15 hours just to make sure. Horrible side effects during this time (some of which are: acute toxic hepatitis, renal failure, cerebral oedema, intra-abdominal bleeding, aspiration pneumonia, haemophilia). Too small dose causes severe liver damage. Accidental deaths are very common. There are few if any side effects before the damage becomes fatal; occasionally vomiting and nausea.

- **Sleeping tablets (see specific notes for each kind)**

See later entries for amobarbital, butobarbital, diazepam, flurazepam, glutethimide, chloral hydrate, hydromorphone, meprobamate, methyprylon, meperidine (pethidine), methadone, morphine, orphenadrine, phenobarbital [also check trade names in same entries].

- **Alcohol (spirits preferably, your choice)**

Dosage:

1/2 litre vodka?, similar. Varies from person to person.

Time:

about 8 hours

Available:

good

Certainty:

unreliable

Notes:

will cause liver and kidney damage if 'rescued' before death. Drink it all at the same time, quickly as possible. Dosage is questionable, I don't have any figures. Taking the spirits as an enema is supposed to be a very quick way of absorbing alcohol, but a less unpleasant way is to inject it. The dosage it takes to kill you depends on whether you drink normally, the state of your liver, whether you pass out on your back or not.

[3]: "The fatal dose of pure alcohol in an average adult is 300-400 mL (750-1000 mL of 40% alcohol) if consumed in less than one hour. Apart from the effects of overdosage, death after alcohol consumption can occur as a result of choking on vomit while unconscious.

Consequences such as liver damage occur after chronic consumption." Alcohol helps other drugs to dissolve. Don't drink it in advance, wash down tablets with it, & follow by drinking another few glasses of spirits.

- **Water**

Dosage:

14 litres mentioned

Time:

12 hours or so?

Available:

always available

Certainty:

unknown

Notes:

works by washing out the salts in your body, until the cells fail (osmotic balance bugged up). You need to keep drinking continually until you collapse. Unusual method. Someone suggested it would also cause cramps. The following is something from [2]: "About a year ago a local newspaper carried a story about a woman who had drunk herself to death. Apparently she had ingested something mildly poisonous, and when she called her doctor asking him what to do, he told her to drink lots of water and see him in the morning. She got to it and managed to drink no less than 14 litres of water before the osmotic balance in her body was so upset it could no longer function and she died (don't know how quickly)".

Calle: The above anecdote originally came from me, and the death described occurred in Växjö, Sweden. Unfortunately I no longer remember which newspaper I saw it in. Recently, I was told about a similar case in San Antonio. It supposedly happened a couple of years ago and was reported in the local San Antonio Express/News.

- **Bleach and other corrosives (lye, drain cleaning fluids)**

Dosage:

A bottle (litre or half litre)

Time:

Hours/days

Available:

Easily available

Certainty:

Uncertain

Notes:

Bloody painful - depends on your stomach getting corroded, the stomach acids escaping, and doing their dirty work in your vital organs.

[1] says: "I have heard of people throwing themselves through plate glass windows in their death agonies after drinking lye."

- **Insulin (injected)**

Dosage:

No idea

Time:

death in hours to days

Available:

Difficult to get hold of unless you're a diabetic or a vet

Certainty:

reasonable

Notes:

Supposed to be quite pleasant (eg insulin shock treatments used for some psychiatric condition).

- **Petrol (in lungs/injected)**

Dosage:

"A Thimble-full" -20 ml?

Time:

Seconds/minutes

Available:

Common

Certainty:

I'm not sure of the dosage, but fairly certain if correct

Notes:

Can also use LPG (propane/butane) on skin surface (since these are light enough to go through the skin). Stick your hand in a bucket of propane and see how many seconds you last...

- **Oil of Wintergreen/Methyl Salicylate (in lungs/injected)**

Dosage:

Probably similar to petrol (20 ml)

Time:

Don't know

Available:

Not available in concentration

Certainty:

Don't know

Notes:

Don't have enough information on this one to be able to say anything about it. If it is just taken normally, it is the same as aspirin.

- **Malathion (insecticide) (entry revised by Calle)**

Dosage:

A few bottles, at least

Time:

2 to 3 hours

Available:

From a large garden centre or DIY shop

Certainty:

not so good

Notes:

A correspondent mentions that the LD50 of this stuff is 1 g/kg in rats, and adds that there is not nearly that much in a bottle. He also mentions that it is treatable. Instead of this, he recommends parathion, if you really want to use an insecticide.

- **Phosphine gas from aluminium phosphide pesticide (ALP)**

Dosage:

Single 3 gramme tablet (".. is enough to kill 10 people")

Time:

About 2 hours

Available:

Difficult. Used in India, sold on black market.

Certainty:

Without medical help, and using fresh pill, very good

Notes:

This is a common way of committing suicide in Indian villages. There is no specific antidote to this. The pills are 3 grammes of ALP, which produces lethal phosphine gas when it comes in contact with hydrochloric acid or water in the stomach. After severe vomiting, the victim loses consciousness, the blood vessels rupture, and body cavities fill with blood. While the pill is exceedingly lethal, some escape death because the rate of the gas' release declines with the pill's age and use, and exposure to moisture. Trouble with this one is the availability, and it also looks like a rather unpleasant.

- **Rat poison (Warfarin)**

Dosage:

not known

Time:

Hours to terminal damage, days to actual death

Available:

Available

Certainty:

Certain given sufficient dosage. Most probably treatable.

Notes:

This is one of the truly unpleasant poisons, along with Paracetamol/Acetylaminopren. I think it causes cerebral haemorage (rat poison works by giving the unfortunate rat haemophillia). Doctors can't do anything about it, they just leave you to die in agony on an intensive care ward.

Calle: Since human haemophiliacs usually live quite ordinary lives, the above sounds rather improbable.

- **Caffeine**

Dosage:

20 grammes (someone said 8 -> 10 grammes)

Time:

not known

Available:

Caffeine tablets available in Chemist shops

Certainty:

don't know

Notes:

I don't know very much about this. There isn't all that much caffeine in coffee, maybe 200 mg.

- **Potassium Chloride (injected in solution) / KCl**

Dosage:

not known (try 20cc injection of strong solution)

Time:

Seconds to minutes

Available:

Widely available

Certainty:

Certain given correct dosage

Notes:

Causes heart attack (which is painful). May be difficult for coroner to realise it was suicide rather than a natural heart attack. An excess of K^+ in the blood interferes with nerve signals, and stops muscles and nerves from working. So when it reaches your heart, the heart stops.

- **Nitrogen gas (or other inert gas)**

Dosage:

Several litres uncompressed is minimum

Time:

Minutes

Available:

Try plumber, or welding supplies company

Certainty:

Certain

Notes:

This is really a form of asphyxiation, (see later), but is particularly good since you don't experience the lack of oxygen (what people really experience is the EXCESS of carbon dioxide).

- **Nitrous oxide (N₂O? NO₂?)**

Dosage:

Unknown

Time:

Minutes

Available:

Dentists supply would be good

Certainty:

reasonable

Notes:

Asphyxiate yourself with laughing gas. Nice.

- **Carbon Monoxide (CO)**

Dosage:

5% concentration or so?

Time:

Minutes to hours depending on concentration

Available:

You get it out of a car exhaust, you used to be able to use "town gas" (eg, stick your head in the cooker) but this is no longer available

Certainty:

Fairly certain, as long as you aren't "rescued"

Notes:

Causes brain damage.

Calle: A correspondent from Denmark, where you still can use "town gas" to kill yourself, says that even though it's possible it's not a good idea. He tells of an incident where a family committed suicide by turning on the gas and waiting. Apparently, the heavier-than-air carbon monoxide leaked through the floor and reached the people in the apartment below. Not nice.

The actual cause of death is asphyxiation, since the carbon monoxide binds tighter to haemoglobine than oxygen does (the oxygen gets crowded out, so to speak).

- **Chlorine gas**

Dosage:

not known

Time:

not known

Available:

tricky

Certainty:

Good

Notes:

This was used in the first world war in the trenches. Probably very unpleasant, does something to the lungs.

- **Hydrazine**

Dosage:

As produced by reaction

Time:

Not known, fortnight?

Available:

Bottle of bleach & bottle of ammonia

Certainty:

not known

Notes:

[2]: "This is no joke, D----. Several years ago at my high school, one of the janitors innocently mixed together half a bottle of bleach with half a bottle of ammonia in a small closet where the cleaning fluids were kept. He passed out due to the hydrazine (not chlorine) gas released in the reaction between the two chemicals. This man was in agony for two weeks in an intensive care unit in a local hospital with the majority of the inside surface of his lungs damaged and untreatable before he got lucky and died."

- **Chloroform**

Dosage:

not known, just put a splash onto a rag

Time:

several minutes probably

Available:

not known

Certainty:

good

Notes:

If you tape the rag over your mouth so that you get knocked out, you should die as you continue getting the stuff into your lungs.

- **Digitalis (Foxglove, Digitalis Purpurea)**

Dosage:

not known

Time:

not known

Available:

extract from foxgloves

Certainty:

bad due to vomiting

Notes:

[4]: Gives you a heart-attack. Symptoms: nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, diarrhoea, headache, and slow irregular pulse. Also sometimes trembling, convulsions, delirium, and hallucinations. Its difficult to take a fatal amount because vomiting usually gets rid of it.

- **Yew (Taxus Baccata, the "English Yew")**

Dosage:

not known

Time:

Can be very rapid (minutes), occasionally 3 or 4 days.

Available:

Grows wild in the UK, don't know about elsewhere.

Certainty:

not sure, but it sounds good if you eat enough

Notes:

[4]: All parts of the plant, *_except_* for the fleshy red bit of the fruit, contain poisons. The seeds are poisonous, so if you eat the berries, chew them. Symptoms: nausea, abdominal pain, coma, death. The mode of death is a heart attack which occurs rapidly after eating sufficient. If no heart attack occurs, you'll probably survive. Sometimes the sudden collapse leading to death is preceded by lethargy, trembling, staggering, coldness, dilation of the pupils, rapid pulse that becomes weak, and convulsions. Other species in this genus are said to be equally poisonous. See "plants in general".

- **Mezerein, Daphnetoxin (Mezereon, AKA Daphne Mezereum, AKA D. Laureola)**

Dosage:

"a few". Probably 10 or more.

Time:

not known

Available:

Garden plant. Seeds are particularly poisonous.

Certainty:

not known, dosage is questionable.

Notes:

[4]:

The berries taste horrid, but you only need to eat a few to cause death. Symptoms: burning sensation in mouth, nausea, vomiting, stomach pains, diarrhoea, weakness, disorientation, convulsions, followed by death. The seeds can be dried and stored without affecting the poisons. Don't confuse this with laurels in the Prunus genus, Rosacea family. See "plants in general".

- **Atropine (Atropa Belladonna AKA Deadly Nightshade. Also potato fruits)**

Dosage:

5 berries in young children.. maybe 30 in adults?

Time:

6 to 24 hours

Available:

from fruits of some plants in the potato family.

Certainty:

unknown, particularly dosage is questionable

Notes:

[4]:

AB also contains hyoscyamine and hyoscine (scopolamine). Symptoms: dry mouth, flushed face, dilation of pupils, rapid pulse. Possibly also breathing difficulties, constipation, convulsions, hallucinations, and coma. AB is often confused with other Nightshade species, which aren't as poisonous. The berries are black in AB, and red in Woody Nightshade. In addition, the flowers are larger (1.2 in) in the true Deadly Nightshade.

Present in unripe deadly nightshade fruits, fruits of potato, and fruits of other members of this family (not tomato though!), but stick with AB. See the "plants in general" entry.

Calle: A correspondent mentions that Jimsonweed will also do, and that a specific antidote exists.

- **Oleander (Nerium Oleander. Poison similar to digitalis)**

Dosage:

not known, but fairly small amounts.

Time:

unknown.

Available:

leaves, wood of the plant. From garden centres.

Certainty:

unknown.

Notes:

[4]:

Deaths have been caused by using wood from this plant in fires, and making tea from the leaves. In a few hours there is abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, bloody diarrhoea, rapid pulse, and visual effects. Later, a slow, weak, irregular pulse and fall in blood pressure, followed by failure of heart. See the "plants in general" entry.

- **Death-Cap / Destroying-Angel toadstool (Amanita Phalloides)**

Dosage:

Fraction of one can kill, but eat 1 or 2 just in case.

Time:

Week or so

Available:

Have to know what it looks like.. similar edible ones

Certainty:

Definite without med. treatment; unknown with.

Notes:

[5, Volume 7, pp591-592]:

"Poisoning by toxic Amanita species is characterised by a delay in onset of 4 to 12 hours. At this point, nausea vomiting, colic-like pain, and diarrhea occur. There then follows a period of respite, which can last for two to four days. This phase does NOT signify recovery: damage to the liver and kidneys continues to develop and the respite gives way to hepatic and renal failure. Death usually occurs a week or so after poisoning.". See "plants in general".

- **Ricin (Castor oil plant, Ricinus Communis)**

Dosage:

death has occurred from eating 1 bean, but take more than 10

Time:

within 3 to 5 days

Available:

From eating the castor beans

Certainty:

depends on ricin content of the beans. Pure ricin is deadly

Notes:

[2] and [4]:

Symptoms begin within a few hours with abdominal pain, vomiting and bloody diarrhoea for several days. Decreased production of urine and a fall in blood pressure. Note that people have survived eating more than 10 beans, *with treatment*. Presumably the fatal dose without medical intervention is less. Surviving more than 3 to 5 days usually means recovery. Ricin is described as "...one of the most potent toxins known".

In 1978 a Bulgarian journalist (Georgi Markov) was assassinated in London by being prodded with an umbrella. The umbrella had a tiny ball coated with ricin on its tip, which lodged into the dissident. He died a few days later in hospital. See "plants in general".

- **Colchicine (Acetyltrimethylcolchicinic acid, Autumn Crocus, Royal Lily)**

Dosage:

7 mg to 60 mg (why so wide variation?)

Time:

symptoms in about 4 hours, death in about 4 days

Available:

Easily available (from large garden centre)

Certainty:

certain

Notes:

[New Scientist article:]

From the Autumn crocus (*Colchicum Autumnale*) / royal lily (*Gloriosa Superba*). One flower of CA is about 12 mg, so take at least five of them. 20g tuber of GS provides 60mg, single seed of CA provides 3.5mg (so take 18). Damages blood vessels and nerves, and stops cell division. Don't know whether its painful or not, but that bit about damaging nerves is worrying. I just _love_ the name of the acid! See See the "plants in general" entry.

- **Aconitine (AKA Wolfsbane, Monkshood, *aconitum napellus*, *a. anglicum*)**

Dosage:

"a few grams"

Time:

10 mins to few hours

Available:

Garden plant, so get from garden centre

Certainty:

unknown (can be treated in hospital)

Notes:

[2] and [4]:

The poison is concentrated in the unripe seed pods and roots. During winter, the roots are particularly poisonous. Symptoms develop in less than an hour. Burning sensation, feelings of coldness, sweating. Later, numbness, vomiting and diarrhoea with abdominal pain. Finally, slow pulse, convulsions and coma. Death may occur within 2 hours. The poison kills by causing a cardiac failure, and it is painful. See the "plants in general" comment.

- **Cicutoxin (Cowbane, *Cicuta Virosa*)**

Dosage:

".. a few bites .. can cause serious poisoning or death".

Time:

a few hours or more.

Available:

rare in most parts of UK, don't know about elsewhere.

Certainty:

good, but resembles wild carrot & wild parsnip.

Notes:

[4]:

The poison is strongest in the yellow juice of the underground parts. Symptoms after half an hour: burning of mouth, excessive saliva, flushing, nausea, vomiting, dizziness, dilation of pupils, and later a bluish tinge to the skin. Muscular contractions and convulsions, with difficulties in breathing are followed by unconsciousness and death, often within a few hours of eating the plant. See "plants in general".

- **Coniine, Gamma-Coniceine, others (Hemlock, Conium Maculatum)**

Dosage:

unknown

Time:

unknown

Available:

Grows throughout UK, except north. Don't know about elsewhere.

Certainty:

unknown

Notes:

[4]:

NOTE: There are many plants called "hemlock", some of which aren't poisonous at all. It can also be mistaken for wild parsley and carrot, and is in the same family as Cowbane.

Symptoms appear in 15 mins to 2 hours. Initially burning and dryness of the mouth, muscular weakness leading to paralysis that affects the breathing. Sometimes also dilation of pupils, vomiting, diarrhoea, convulsions, and loss of consciousness. If this is survived, birth defects may be caused in pregnant women. This is said to be the plant that Socrates took in 399 BC.

- **Oenantheotoxin (Hemlock Water Dropwort, Oenanthe Erocata)**

Dosage:

"..dangerously poisonous, even in small quantities".

Time:

Two to twelve hours.

Available:

Grows in chalky wet areas, particularly S and W Britain.

Certainty:

Fairly good, if you get the right species.

Notes:

[4]:

The tubers contain more poison than the rest of the plant, particularly in winter and early spring, and may be cooked or dried. Symptoms within an hour or two, nausea, salivation, vomiting, diarrhoea, sweating, weakness of legs, dilation of pupils. Later loss of consciousness with convulsions before death. See "plants in general" entry. Same family as Hemlock.

- **plants in general (hemlock, foxglove, oleander)**

Dosage:

N/A

Time:

N/A

Available:

garden centre

Certainty:

questionable

Notes:

[1] says:

"Everything I have ever read about death from plant poisoning indicates that it is risky and painful. Symptoms range from nausea and vomiting to cramping and bloody diarrhea. Altogether, I consider poisonous plants as a means of exit far too unreliable and painful. No matter how desperate you are, don't even think about it!"

- **Nicotine (Rewritten by Calle)**

Dosage:

extract from 100g tobacco? 40-60 mg pure.

Time:

Several hours, coma may set in much earlier. Much quicker if taken in large doses.

Available:

Easily available

Certainty:

Fairly certain, given a large enough dose.

Notes

This is what Mike wrote:

"Soak 100 grammes of tabacco for a few days. You get a brown mess. Strain off the tabacco, then simmer slowly until most of the liquid has gone, leaving about 2 teaspoons of brown treacle-like stuff. Add it to your night-time drink, and never wake up. Someone said the other day that 150mg of pure nicotine would be fatal in seconds. See the "plants in general" entry."

It is correct, as far as I have found out. It can be added that the effects include violent convulsions and that the direct cause of death is respiratory failure. Smokers should use larger doses than non-smokers.

- **Iron (diet suppliments)**

Dosage:

unknown

Time:

unknown

Available:

diet, health food shops

Certainty:

good

Notes:

[2]:

"Well it seems that iron pills achieve death. They oxydize in the stomach and eat a hole in it. The only reason I know this is that someone at my school just recently OD'd and died from this. It was ruled suicide since no person could accidently take that many iron pills. They didn't say how many she took or how many it takes to kill yourself though." [sounds unpleasant]

- **Cocaine**

Dosage:

1 ounce (don't know what that is in real weights..)

Time:

2 to 3 hours?

Available:

Difficult

Certainty:

not known

Notes:

Read something in a newspaper... a coke dealer died after eating an ounce of it, when the police raided his house. Cause of death was a cardiac arrest 2 1/2 hours after the overdose. However, a cocaine OD is painful, and causes paranoia / breathing problems. One form of cocaine smuggling is to swallow condoms filled with the stuff. From time to time, a "mule" has a condom burst inside him, and dies in pain reasonably quickly.

- **LSD (Lysergic acid diethylamide) nonfatal**

Dosage:

infinite!

Time:

never

Available:

who cares?

Certainty:

will not kill you

Notes:

LSD can't kill you by overdose.. you might go psychotic if you take tens/hundreds of thousands of times the normal dose, but thats hardly surprising, since you'd have to be insane to take that much in the first place. General warning - even for normal use, if you are depressed, it'll just amplify the depression, not lift it, and the chances of a bad trip are probably higher. Probably, the only way to kill yourself with this stuff is to drop two tonnes of it on yourself.

Calle: I don't quite believe in what Mike is saying about psychosis here. As far as I have been able to find out, LSD works by catalyzing certain substances in the brain, and thus vast overdoses have no more effect than merely large ones. Once all the stuff in your brain is used up, there will be no more effect.

A correspondent points out a case reported by The Journal of Clinical Toxicology where eight people snorted pure LSD Tartrate, believing that it was cocaine. The amounts ingested was estimated to be from 1000 to 10000 times an ordinary dose. Half of them lapsed into comas, but all of them came out of it without any treatment. Some were given Valium for anxiety afterwards.

On the whole, it seems that LSD is about as safe as a drug can be, despite much propaganda saying otherwise.

- **Heroin (morphine)**

Dosage:

120 to 500 mg in non-users.

Time:

unknown

Available:

From your friendly neighbourhood drug dealer.

Certainty:

unknown

Notes:

Combine it with alcohol, since a combination of alc & H is much more dangerous than alc or H alone.

- **Rotenone**

Dosage:

very low, similar to cyanide

Time:

depends on dosage

Available:

extremely difficult

Certainty:

probable

Notes:

Rotenone is used by microbiologists to kill potentially dangerous bacteria cultures. It is extremely poisonous.

Calle: A correspondent believes this entry to be erroneous, since in the litterature he consulted rotenone was mentioned as being used as an insecticide and not being all that toxic.

- **Mercury (salts, soluble)**

Dosage:

1 gramme of salts

Time:

unknown

Available:

unknown (what are the _soluble_ salts? how to make?)

Certainty:

good

Notes:

Note that contrary to popular opinion, pure mercury metal isn't all that poisonous. The soluble salts are, however. The "mad hatter" story refers to brain damage that hat makers used to get from using mercury salts.

- **Amobarbital (amytal, amal, eunoctal, etamyl, stadadorm)** [this entry from [1]]

Dosage:

4.5 grammes, typically 90 50mg tablets

Time:

unconscious in 5 -> 15 minutes, death in 20 -> 50 minutes

Available:

needs to be prescribed

Certainty:

very reliable

Notes:

use an airtight plastic bag, and a rubber band to get a very effective method. Alcohol speeds it up and makes it more reliable. Take an antihistamine about 10 minutes earlier. Empty stomach. Dissolve most of them in drink / food, and eat the remaining ones first so that it all peaks at the same time.

- **Butobarbital (secbutobarbitone, butisol, ethnor)**

Dosage:

3 grammes, typically 100 30mg tablets

Time:

unconscious in 5 -> 15 minutes, death in 20 -> 50 minutes

Available:

needs to be prescribed

Certainty:

very reliable

Notes:

use bag & band. Alcohol as well as antihistamine on an empty stomach

- **Codeine (combo. with Aspirin: Empirin compound no. I -> IV)**

Dosage:

2.4 grammes, typically 80 30mg tablets

Time:

unconscious in 5 -> 15 minutes, death in 20 -> 50 minutes

Available:

needs to be prescribed

Certainty:

reliable with plastic bag and rubber band

Notes:

use bag & band. Alcohol as well as antihistamine on an empty stomach. People can become tolerant to this drug, and it will no longer be effective.

- **Diazepam (valium, apozeepam, aliseum, ducene)**

Dosage:

500 milligrammes, typically 100 5mg tablets

Time:

N/A

Available:

needs to be prescribed

Certainty:

unreliable, use in combination with something else (alcohol?)

Notes:

use bag & band. Alcohol as well as antihistamine on an empty stomach. Valium is not effective by itself, but by mixing it with other drugs or alcohol it makes it more certain.

- **Flurazepam (dalmane, dalmadorm, niotal)**

Dosage:

3 grammes, typically 100 30mg tablets

Time:

N/A

Available:

needs to be prescribed

Certainty:

unreliable, use in combination with something else

Notes:

use bag & band. Alcohol as well as antihistamine on an empty stomach. This is not effective by itself, but by mixing it with other drugs or alcohol it makes the other drug more certain.

- **Gluthethimide (doriden, doridene, glimid)**

Dosage:

24 grammes, typically 48 500mg tablets

Time:

N/A

Available:

needs to be prescribed

Certainty:

unreliable, use in combination with something else

Notes:

use bag & band. Alcohol as well as antihistamine on an empty stomach. This is not effective by itself, but by mixing it with other drugs or alcohol it makes the other drug more certain.

- Chloral Hydrate (noctec, chloratex, somnox) **Dosage: >10+ grammes, typically 20+ 500mg tablets**

Time:

N/A

Available:

needs to be prescribed

Certainty:

unreliable, use in combination with something else

Notes:

use bag & band. Alcohol as well as antihistamine on an empty stomach.

This is not effective by itself, but by mixing it with other drugs or alcohol it makes the other drug more certain.

- **Hydromorphone (dilaudid, pentagone)**

Dosage:

100 -> 200 milligrammes, typically 50 -> 100 2mg tablets

Time:

unconscious in 5 -> 15 minutes, death in 20 -> 50 minutes

Available:

needs to be prescribed

Certainty:

very reliable with plastic bag and rubber band

Notes:

use bag & band. Alcohol as well as antihistamine on an empty stomach. People can become tolerant to this drug, and it will no longer be effective.

- **Meprobamate (miltown, equanil)**

Dosage:

45 grammes, typically 112 400mg tablets

Time:

N/A

Available:

needs to be prescribed

Certainty:

unreliable, use in combination with something else

Notes:

use bag & band. Alcohol as well as antihistamine on an empty stomach. This is not effective by itself, but by mixing it with other drugs or alcohol it makes the other drug more certain.

- **Methyprylon (noludar)**

Dosage:

15 grammes, typically 50 300mg tablets

Time:

N/A

Available:

needs to be prescribed

Certainty:

unreliable, use in combination with something else

Notes:

use bag & band. Alcohol as well as antihistamine on an empty stomach. This is not effective by itself, but by mixing it with other drugs or alcohol it makes the other drug more certain.

- **Meperidine (pethidine, demerol, dolantin)**

Dosage:

3.6 grammes, typically 72 50mg tablets

Time:

unconscious in 5 -> 15 minutes, death in 20 -> 50 minutes

Available:

needs to be prescribed

Certainty:

very reliable with plastic bag and rubber band

Notes:

use bag & band. Alcohol as well as antihistamine on an empty stomach. People can become tolerant to this drug, and it will no longer be effective.

- **Methadone (dolophine, adanon)**

Dosage:

300 milligrammes, typically 60 5mg tablets

Time:

unconscious in 5 -> 15 minutes, death in 20 -> 50 minutes

Available:

needs to be prescribed

Certainty:

very reliable with plastic bag and rubber band

Notes:

use bag & band. Alcohol as well as antihistamine on an empty stomach. People can become tolerant to this drug, and it will no longer be effective.

- **Morphine (in Brompton's mixtures)**

Dosage:

200 milligrammes, typically 14 15mg tablets

Time:

unconscious in 5 -> 15 minutes, death in 20 -> 50 minutes

Available:

needs to be prescribed

Certainty:

very reliable with plastic bag and rubber band

Notes:

use bag & band. Alcohol as well as antihistamine on an empty stomach. People can become tolerant to this drug, and it will no longer be effective.

- **Phenobarbital (luminal, gardenal, fenical)**

Dosage:

4.5 grammes, typically 150 30mg tablets

Time:

N/A

Available:

needs to be prescribed

Certainty:

unreliable, use in combination with something else

Notes:

use bag & band. Alcohol as well as antihistamine on an empty stomach. This is not effective by itself, but by mixing it with other drugs or alcohol it makes the other drug more certain.

- **Secobarbital (quinalbarbitone, seconal, immenox, dormona, secogen, == seral, vesperax (combo with brallobarbital))**

Dosage:

4.5 grammes, typically 45 100mg tablets

Time:

unconscious in 5 -> 15 minutes, death in 20 -> 50 minutes

Available:

needs to be prescribed

Certainty:

very reliable with plastic bag and rubber band

Notes:

use bag & band. Alcohol as well as antihistamine on an empty stomach. [Vesperax is Humphry's favorite]

- **Propoxyphene (darvon, dolotard, abalgin, antalvic, depronal)**

Dosage:

2 grammes, typically 30 65mg tablets

Time:

death in an hour or so. Does not make you unconscious

Available:

needs to be prescribed

Certainty:

suggest combine with something to make you sleep, then use bag

Notes:

use bag & band. Alcohol as well as antihistamine on an empty stomach. Since this one doesn't make you unconscious for a long time, try combining with one that does, so you can use the good old bag method.

- **Pentobarbital (nembutal, carbital only if in combo with pentobarbital)**

Dosage:

3 grammes, typically 30 100mg tablets

Time:

unconscious in 5 -> 15 minutes, death in 20 -> 50 minutes

Available:

needs to be prescribed

Certainty:

very reliable with plastic bag and rubber band

Notes:

use bag & band. Alcohol as well as antihistamine on an empty stomach.

Methods: other than poisoning

1. **asphyxiation (dangle on end of rope for 10 minutes)**

Time:

5 to 10 minutes

Available:

Rope, solid support 10 foot above ground

Certainty:

Fairly certain (discovery, rope/support snapping)

Notes:

Brain damage likely if rescued. Very painful depending on rope. Most common effective form of suicide in UK. See "Asphyxiation".

2. **breaking neck**

Time:

Should be instant if it does break. See previous if not

Available:

Rope, solid support, 10 foot space below, several above

Certainty:

Very certain if the rope/support doesn't break

Notes:

Minimal danger of discovery (depends on location). Painless if you drop far enough (8 foot is optimum). Make sure that the rope is tied securely to something STRONG!! It has to support your weight MULTIPLIED by the deceleration. Use a hangman's knot (with the knot at the back of your neck). It doesn't always work this well though, you might get a bust jaw / lacerations etc and then asphyxiate.

Call: I got this table of appropriate falling heights from a.s.h. long-time regular MegaZone (megazone@wpi.wpi.edu), who got it from a friend of his named Mark.

	Hanging Drop Heights...	Culprits Weight
Drop	14 stone (196 lbs)	8ft 0in
13.5 stone (189 lbs)	8ft 2in	13 stone (182)

lbs)	8ft 4in	12.5 stone (175 lbs)	
8ft 6in	12 stone (168 lbs)		8ft 8in
11.5 stone (161 lbs)		8ft 10in	11 stone
(154 lbs)	9ft 0in	10.5 stone (147 lbs)	
9ft 2in	10 stone (140 lbs)		9ft 4in
9.5 stone (133 lbs)		9ft 6in	9 stone (126 lbs)
lbs)	9ft 8in	8.5 stone (119 lbs)	
9ft 10in	8 stone (112 lbs)		10ft 0in

Source: Charles Duff, Handbook of Hanging (Boston: Hale, Cushman & Flint 1929)

Notes: This is for person of average build with no unusual physical problems. The Author (James "Hangman" Barry) noted that when executing "persons who had attempted suicide by cutting their throats...to prevent reoping the wounds I have reduced the drop by nearly half."

3. JUMPING OFF BUILDINGS

Time:

Instantaneous if you are lucky, minutes/hours otherwise

Available:

You need ten stories or higher, and access to the top floor windows/roof. Bring a bolt cutter to get onto the roof

Certainty:

90% for 6 stories, increasing after that

Notes:

Difficult to overcome fear of heights, many people can't do it. Totally painless if high enough, but very frightening. Easily discovered if seen on/near roof/windows. Access fairly easy in a city, otherwise difficult. Risk of spending the rest of your life in a wheelchair. Ever tried killing yourself if you are paralysed from the neck down? Email conversations suggest 10+ stories works ALMOST all of the time. Try to land on concrete. Quote - "9 out of 10 people who fall 6 stories will die". Note that it may take a while for many of those 90% to die.

4. SLITTING WRISTS OR OTHER (often not effective)

Time:

Minutes if major artery cut, eternity otherwise.

Available:

You really need a razor sharp knife. Razors are pretty tricky to hold when they are covered with blood.

Certainty:

possible if you cut an artery, improbable otherwise

Notes:

Painful at first. Danger of discovery. This is a very common suicide 'gesture' and hardly ever results in anything other than a scar. A lot of will power required to cut deeply into groin or carotid arteries, which are the only ones likely to kill you. Don't bother with this method. Cutting your throat is difficult due to the fact that the carotid arteries are protected by your windpipe (feel where your arteries are with your fingertips, & slice from the side). I've seen photos of people who have used this method - the depth of the cut required is amazing. If you want to cut your wrists, cut along the blue line (vein) on the underside of your wrist, but cut deeply so that the artery underneath is exposed. Cut this lengthways with a razor or similar. The traditional hot bath does help, since it keeps the blood flowing quickly, slows down clotting, and is nice to lie back and relax in. Position yourself so that your wrists don't fall inwards against your body, blocking off blood flow.

Calle: A posting to A.S.H. suggests using the kind of equipment they use when you give blood to a blood bank, i.e., a needle in a blood vessel and a piece of tubing. It sounds like it would remove several of the disadvantages of the ordinary slitting-wrists method.

5. BULLET

Time:

Microseconds unless you are unlucky (mins/hours)

Available:

Difficult in UK, easier in USA (get a shotgun)

Certainty:

Certain

Notes:

Painless if worked, otherwise painful & brain damage. Danger of discovery of weapon or ammunition. Not at all common in UK, more common in USA where guns available. Brain damage & other effects if you survive. Death either instantaneous, or prolonged. Lots of will power needed to fire gun ('hesitation marks' are bullets/pellets embedded in the wall, when you jerk the gun as you fire). Bullet can miss vital parts in skull, deflect off skull. If you have a choice, use a shotgun rather than a rifle or a pistol, since it is so much more effective. ("shotgun" entry later). Ammunition to use is: .458 Winchester Magnum, or soft-point slugs with .44 Magnum. Also you could use a sabot round, which is a plastic wedge with a smaller thing in it. These rounds are rather overkill, the phrase "elephant gun" has been used about the .458 Winchester, but if you're going to go, do it with a bang. Note, people usually survive single .22 shots to the temples. The other problem with guns is that it is bloody messy. Your next of kin will really _enjoy_ cleaning up after you, washing the coagulated blood & brains out of corners etc...

6. ASPHYXIATION

Time:

5 mins to unconsciousness, 10+ mins to brain death

Available:

Anywhere there's a rope and something solid to tie it to

Certainty:

Certain, if you don't get "rescued"

Notes:

Panic reaction is very likely (unless inert gasses used). One of the most effective and most used methods of suicide. Probable brain damage if you are "rescued". NOTE, this can only really be done in two ways: firstly, when you are unconscious (eg, sleeping pills), or secondly, by hanging. Combining with pure inert gasses is a very good suggestion. See "Nitrogen" in the poisons section

7. AIR IN VEINS (basically just a myth)

Time:

Couple of minutes claimed

Available:

Plenty of air about... Need a hypodermic & syringe

Certainty:

only 1 known case.. patient may already have been dead

Notes:

The only case I know about, it killed with 40cc of air. Smaller amounts are harmless. The case was the death of Abbie Borroto, who died in 1950 from a 40cc injection in New Hampshire. She died in minutes. This was the 1949 Dr H Sander case. He was found not guilty to murder on the grounds that the patient may already have been dead when he gave the injection. (A doctor and a nurse could find no pulse earlier the same day). The following 2 quotes are from [1]:

Prof. Y Kenis says: "... not a suitable method, nor a gentle death... extremely difficult to utilize as a method of suicide. .. possibly with very serious consequences, such as paralysis or permanent brain damage. .. this is only an impression, and I have no real scientific information on the subject."

Dr Pieter V Admiraal .. describes the theoretical air bubble method of suicide as impossible, disagreeable and cruel. "To kill somebody with air you would have to inject at least 100 -> 200 millilitres as quickly as possible in a vein as big as possible close to the heart. You would

have to fill the whole heart with air at once. The heart would probably beat on for several minutes, perhaps 5 -> 15 minutes, and during the first minutes the person may be conscious."

8. DECAPITATION

Time:

Couple of seconds before consciousness fades

Available:

Happen to have a train line nearby? Or a guillotine perhaps?

Certainty:

Very certain, unless you pull away just before

Notes:

See "jumping in front of trains". May be difficult to stop pulling your head out of the way - OD on sleeping tablets first

Calle: A news notice from California posted to alt.suicide.holiday tells the story of a man who committed suicide nearly cut his own head off with a chainsaw. Sounds like a grisly way to do it.

9. DISEMBOWELMENT (aka seppuku/hara kiri)

Time:

Minutes

Available:

Got a nice razor-sharp sword?

Certainty:

Fairly certain, assuming that you managed to gut yourself properly before passing out with the agony

Notes:

Painful, even the macho Samurai used a 'second' to decapitate them at the appropriate point, so don't expect to do much more than give yourself peritonitis. Trendy for insane martial arts fanatics and gay Japanese poets called Mishima.

10. DROWNING

Time:

Minutes (5 mins to die of drowning, 20 to die of hypothermia)

Available:

Anywhere there's deep, (cold) water in a remote spot

Certainty:

Good, just make sure you sink & can't swim

Notes:

Put stones in your pockets, tie your legs & hands together, and hop into the lake.. bit of a shock to the fisherman who finds your rotting corpse stuck in his brand new net. Also see entry for "hypothermia/freezing". However, remember that you can be revived from cold water drowning after several hours, because the cold slows down terminal brain damage. Warmer water doesn't have the advantage of hypothermia, but is more effective in making sure you *stay* dead.

11. ELECTROCUTION

Time:

Seconds / minutes

Available:

Anywhere with high-tension, high-current lines & a good earth

Certainty:

Somewhat dependant on luck & how much power goes through you

Notes:

Don't bother with 110 or 240 volt mains, its just not enough. Some people do get killed with household electricity, but only after several minutes. Use high tension lines, stand in bare feet on waterlogged ground (better still, put a piece of THICK copper cable into the nearest river). Works best if current path travels through your head, or through the heart. Just burns you badly otherwise.

NOTE: people have survived massive high-voltage, high-current shocks with nothing but 3rd degree burns to show for it. Sometimes paralysis, limbs amputated etc.

12. EXPLOSIVES

Time:

10 milliseconds, or similar (!)

Available:

Difficult to get hold of detonator & good explosives

Certainty:

Certain if detonator works properly

Notes:

DON'T USE GUNPOWDER or other 'slow' explosives (eg, homemade explosives). Use dynamite or 'Plastique', strap it to your forehead with the detonator, and BOOM! The main problem is with getting hold of high explosives (I know the recipe for Nitro-Glycerine, but home manufacture is extremely risky, and the product is unstable). If you can get a grenade, use it, it's probably the best way of doing this one.

Call: Recipies for creating explosives can be found, together with the appropriate warnings, in the rec.pyrotechnics FAQ.

13. FREEZING TO DEATH (hypothermia)

Time:

several hours (15 minutes in very cold water)

Available:

Got a large chest freezer? Is the outside temp < -10 degrees?

Certainty:

good if you don't get found

Notes:

Soak your cloths in water, get into freezer / outside somewhere where you won't be found. Helps to get pissed first - drink yourself silly. If you are near a very cold supply of water (eg, the North Sea, or similar) which is close to zero degrees, this is particularly good, since the average lifespan of someone in the water is 15 minutes.

[1] says: ".. have quietly ascended their favorite mountain late in the day .. above the freezing line.. wearing light clothing, they sat down in a secluded spot to await the end. Some have said that they intended to take a tranquilizer to hasten the sleep of death. From what we know of hypothermia, they would pass out as the cold reached a certain level and they would die within a few hours. Of course in a very cold climate there is no need to climb a mountain." [eg, UK in midwinter :-). There was a death in the middle of the city park here just this last winter ('90) where a lady stripped after the park closed for the night.] A problem with this method is that because it slows the metabolism, and prevents damage to the brain, people can be revived several hours after 'death' occasionally.

14. JUMPING IN FRONT OF TRAINS

Time:

Seconds (or hours if unlucky)

Available:

Anywhere near a HIGH-SPEED railway line

Certainty:

Depends on your timing & speed of train. Go for decapitation

Notes:

Probably better to put your neck on the line, since a glancing blow would probably break your spine (& cripple you). High speed trains need a kilometer to stop, so find a blind corner.

15. SELF-IMMOLATION

Time:

Seconds to days

Available:

Anywhere you can get petrol & a match

Certainty:

good as long as you are far away from medical help

Notes:

bloody painful - one of the most agonising ways to die. If you do survive, you will be disfigured for the rest of your life. Try mixing the petrol with an explosive like TNT or NG, this will make it burn MUCH quicker, even if the explosive is very dilute.

16. STARVING TO DEATH

Time:

40 days give or take. Depends on health.

Available:

Anywhere where you can't be force-fed

Certainty:

Good as long as no medical help & will power holds up

Notes:

Supposed to be easier after the first couple of days, since your appetite goes. In a UK prison, you can't be force-fed unless you give permission first, or are diagnosed insane, but I don't know whether this is the same in other countries. Beware - relatives might give permission on your behalf if you are unconscious. (living will / durable power of attorney helps). It may help if you use an appetite suppressant. Amphetamines, and some drugs (MDMA, AKA XTC, AKA ecstasy, AKA methylenedimethoxymethamphetamine is one such). The problem with these is that they are frequently illegal. I've also heard of something called Aminorex (4-methylaminorex) which was briefly prescribed as an appetite suppressant, but taken off the market since it had fatal side effects... which is hardly a problem!! [1] says:

".. after approximately 20 % of body weight loss, illness will begin to set in, notably severe indigestion, muscle weakness, and _worst of all_ mental incapacity. ... about 40 days before life is seriously threatened."

"In some cases self-starvation can be very painful. ... morphine had to be administered to kill the pain of fatal dehydration. .."

17. DRIVING INTO BRIDGE SUPPORT AT 100 MPH

Time:

Hopefully instantaneous

Available:

Fast car, motorway, unprotected bridge....

Certainty:

So-so, put a couple of cans of petrol on the passenger seat to make it certain, & USE YOUR SEATBELT

Notes:

Bridges are usually protected in the UK, don't know about USA. Avoid being thrown out of the car by using the seatbelt, and put petrol (in cans or just splashed about) near to the driver's seat just to make certain. Can be made to look accidental.

18. SHOTGUN

Time:

Instantaneous if you are lucky

Available:

Difficult in UK, easier in USA (due to gun laws)

Certainty:

Fairly certain

Notes:

12-gauge shotgun with 3 inch Magnum shells with #2 to #000 buckshot. See "Bullet" for other points. This is the recommended way to die by firearm. Apparently the shells suggested here are "extreme overkill", but that's the point really... problem here is that it's amazingly messy - who is going to pick the festering lumps of gore out of the carpet? Another problem is that it is possible to miss your brain entirely, and just blow off your face instead.

19. **ENLIST (silly)**

Time:

Jan 15 '91 or other conflict

Available:

Just pop down to the local army office & sign on as a squaddie

Certainty:

Be a "hero". Life expectancy in a battle is 20 minutes

Notes:

I don't think this is an entirely serious suggestion, particularly since only 10% ever see the front line, and only a few of those ever see combat.

Calle: You could always get employed as a mercenary. That way you'll at least see combat, improving your chances to die vastly. Still, a silly method.

20. **PENCILS UP YOUR NOSE, BANG DOWN ONTO TABLE (urban legend?)**

Time:

Seconds or never

Available:

All you need is a couple of sharp pencils and a table

Certainty:

Very uncertain

Notes:

This is a myth, I think, since the pencils would go into your frontal lobes, which are basically optional. This is the legendary "exam suicide". Fine if you want a DIY frontal-lobotomy rather than death!

Calle: This is an urban legend, see the alt.folklore.urban FAQ for more details.

21. **GETTING SOMEONE TO MURDER YOU**

Time:

Depends on method used

Available:

Know any murderous psychopaths? No, not the tax people...

Certainty:

Depends on method used, & dedication of murderer

Notes:

Forget it. Unless you contract someone to do it, the chances are that you are going to wake up in hospital without your wallet. If you do contract someone, how are you going to pay them? Can't take them to court for running off with your money and not doing the job.

22. **MAKE YOURSELF INTO AN H-BOMB (another silly one)**

Time:

Speed of light over 1/2 metre (couple of nanoseconds)

Available:

Nuke (fission OR fusion), 10 litres of heavy water

Certainty:

100%

Notes:

Drink the heavy water for several days, strap yourself to the nuke, and press the button. If you retained a couple of litres of the heavy water, the additional yield should be 6 megajoules (give or take a few orders of magnitude). Note that heavy water is a poison, so you might not survive that long anyway.

Calle: If I remember my physics correctly, there will be no reaction in your body no matter how much heavy water you have ingested. Not that it matters if you're sitting on an exploding hydrogen bomb!

23. MICROMACHINES/NANOCOMPUTERS (science fiction)

Time:

years or a fraction of a second - depends how you look at it

Available:

in 50 -> 1000 years time?

Certainty:

Good assuming that the technology is developed

Notes:

Basically, this involves a 'replicator' panel. You program it to replicate yourself, simplifying very slightly, with the exception of the urge to use this technique. After a while, you turn into a mindless zombie, trudging around from the exit of the machine to the entrance, for eternity. Strange philosophical implications.

Calle: If you postulate nanomachines, why not use the deconstructor kind? Take your body apart into its component molecules in less than a minute... A silly method, if you hadn't guessed.

24. SCUBA-DIVING (various fatal 'accidents')

Time:

see notes -most are minutes/hours

Available:

scuba diving gear, nobody around

Certainty:

see notes

Notes:

The first method is to rise 30 metres or so without releasing your breath. Assuming that you can do it, it should cause your lungs to burst. The second is the bends - stay under long enough for the nitrogen to dissolve (30 metres for 30 minutes). go up rapidly without decompression time. This is unreliable, and may cause brain / joint damage. The third way is Carbon Monoxide poisoning - fill your tank with it, and stay away from other divers. You will fall asleep fairly quickly. See CO in poisons section. The final way is oxygen poisoning - however, this means that you have to go very deep with an oxygen-rich mix, and there are problems associated with that. The advantage of these methods is that insurance companies / relatives will assume that it was an accident ('misadventure'), with the possible exception of the CO poisoning.

The source of this follows: (from the net) "Rising 30m without exhaling will usually result in an over pressured lung, possible subcutaneous emphysema, collapsed lung, death usually from drowning in your own blood. Rather painful and usually curable if you are rescued, but fair chance of dying if you aren't.

Building up a high residual nitrogen time (say 30m for 30 min) then coming up without decompressing will get you bent fairly nicely. You don't feel much, but your joints tend to start stiffening up after half an hour. Death is very uncertain, coming from a stroke. Brain damage, joint damage etc are most likely. Probably can be recued but some damage certain.

Oxygen poisoning, going down 50+m until the partial pressure of the oxygen reaches a toxic level. Difficult to accomplish, very painful to get down that deep, cold pressure etc, possibility of nitrogen narcosis and forgetting what you are doing. Probably get bent, good chance of rescue.

CO poisoning, mix a healthy batch of carbon monoxide in your tank as you dive, you tend to go to sleep under water, when combined with the above methods you have a pretty good winner, don't forget to forget your BCD."

25. SUCKING YOUR BRAINS OUT (silly)

Time:

Minutes

Available:

You'd need a Puma (TM) robot, & some other bits

Certainty:

certain, given proper programming

Notes:

You would need an industrial robot to do this properly. Give it a saw attachment, a sucking tube attachment, and program it. Make a head restraint. When you are fixed securely into the restraint, start the robot's program. It will drill a hole in your head, and stick the tube into the hole. Program it to wiggle the tube back and forth so that it doesn't miss anything. This might work better if you put a stream of water into the hole as well, so that the sucking attachment doesn't just suck air all the time. Debugging the program could be amusing.

26. MICROWAVES

Time:

?

Available:

Source of strong microwave emissions

Notes:

Cooking yourself. Point is to raise your core body temperature to fatal levels.

Calle: Does anyone have any information on this? All that I know is that standing in front of a Swedish coast surveillance radar (which happens to use exactly the same wavelength as your average microwave oven) is a Bad Thing.

27. DEHYDRATION

Time:

a week or so?

Available:

you need to be able to stop medical help.

Certainty:

certain if your will-power stands up to it.

Notes:

Don't eat or drink. Remember that food contains a high proportion of water. Avoiding medical help can be difficult. See 'starving to death'.

28. SKYDIVING 'ACCIDENT'

Time:

pretty damn quick.

Available:

need to join a skydiving club. Takes much time and money.

Certainty:

Fairly certain. People have fallen from extreme heights and survived. The resulting injuries are not fun.

Notes:

Join a skydiving club, continue to practise it for a while to clear off all suspicions and then once pack your parachute in a real mess (preferably knotted up, but not too clearly) and then jump. The para will not open and you will reach a terminal velocity of 220 km/h (160 mph/120 kn). Death is instant in the impact with the Planet Earth. This has the advantages of being 'accidental', and your family/ friends do not have the additional pain and guilt associated with suicides.

Calle: In addition to the above, you need to remove or disable your reserve parachute (which is not easy, I'm told). There are better "accidental" methods than this.

A correspondent who is a skydiver dislikes this entry, since if people use it it will give skydiving an undeservedly bad reputation.

29. DEATH BY A THOUSAND CUTS; MODERN VERSION (silly)

Time:

variable

Available:

a heck of a lot of razor-wire.. maybe a high-voltage supply

Certainty:

not very good

Notes:

This is a modern variant of the Arabic 'Death of a thousand cuts'. Basically, jump onto a stack of unravell'd razor wire, and roll around till you die.. it may help to connect a high- voltage, low current power supply to the wire, so that you have spasms, which should keep you getting cut even when you are unconscious. Also, you should make sure that you can't roll off the wire.

30. CRUSHING

Time:

seconds to minutes, depends on car press

Available:

a car press.. any good junkyard

Certainty:

certain as long as you can't escape

Notes:

This is an elegantly simple one.. get into a car, in a car press, and shortly afterwards be squashed to death as your body is converted into a red pulp. It may be tricky getting the press to trigger, but if you hide in the car someone may come along and activate it. There are other ways of getting crushed, this just happens to be the most effective I can think up on the spur of the moment. Getting yourself run over by a fully loaded articulated lorry is quite good. You should remember that people quite often survive the actual crushing; they die when the weight is taken OFF them.

31. WORLD WAR THREE

Time:

moments if you are near a militarilly significant site

Available:

happen to be one of the 'key-holders'? president maybe?

Certainty:

pretty certain

Notes:

All you have to do is trigger world war three. Fire an ICBM or three at the Chinese and the Russians... This method has the advantage that you take everyone else with you! Trouble is,

the number of people with the requisite access is minimal, and I sort of doubt that any readers of ASH can do this.

Calle: Lots harder since the collapse of the Soviet Union... Silly.

32. HEATSTROKE

Time:

4 hours or more

Available:

Very hot day; no disturbance from neighbours etc

Certainty:

depends on the weather

Notes:

Basically, the point is to give yourself extreme heatstroke. You should pass out after a few hours. Use some aluminium foil to direct the sun's heat onto you, to speed up the process a bit. Try to reduce the chance of being interrupted, take off the phone etc. Obviously, start in the morning! Helps if the outside temperature is >100F.

33. ACID BATH

Time:

depends on acid

Available:

a lot of a very strong acid

Certainty:

fairly good

Notes:

[from alt.suicide.holiday]

"summer heat got you down? Try the new and improved neighbourhood acid bath. Most metal working plants and some auto-repair shops will have a nice soothing acid bath. This, of course, is for those of you who enjoy extreme pain and don't want to make a mess for others to clean up. If you don't leave a note chances are they will never know what happened, aside from the shop / plant being broken into."

34. FAKE CAR BOMB

Time:

milliseconds

Available:

explosive

Certainty:

fairly good if enough explosive

Notes:

This is a modification of the basic use-explosives method. What you do, is make a homemade car bomb, and drive off happily after chatting with your neighbour about how well your life is going, apart from a few minor death-threats from an Iraqi death-squad.. To confuse the authorities even more, have a note in your pocket listing the telephone numbers of all the eastern foreign embassies in your pocket, together with a little line of random "code numbers" next to each., and a random but large amount of cash listed against each code number. :-) Oh yes, and a heavily annotated copy of Jane's Defence Weekly - Xhosa edition.

35. JUMPING OFF BRIDGES (slice and dice with piano wire)

Time:

9.87 ms⁻²; 4 to 10 meters; calculate it yourself!

Available:

Rope, pianowire and a high bridge.

Certainty:

Fairly certain

Notes:

Never been tried. Can also be used with a fairly high building, but then the art-motive will disappear.

Cut the rope and wire in various lengths. Each length must not be longer than the height of the bridge.

Tie one end of the ropes and wires to the bridge Tie the other part of the ropes to different bodyparts like thigh, calves, torso etc. Then tie the pianowires around your joints. (Don't forget your genitals..)

When you jump various parts of you body are whipped away by the pianowire nooses, and your bits are held up by the ropes swaying in the breeze. If you do this right you should end up with just your torso hanging by it's neck above the sea, highway, ground.

Do it with friends, and call it art.

36. **BEING EATEN ALIVE**

Time:

depends, but probably a couple of minutes

Available:

zoo, or live in Africa/wherever

Certainty:

not brilliant.. what if they're not hungry and don't finish?

Notes:

basically, find one or more hungry carnivores... tigers are nice. Also, sharks, lions, any of the big cats..

37. **BEING BURNED UP IN UNPROTECTED RE-ENTRY (silly)**

Time:

probably a few minutes

Available:

if you happen to be able to get into orbit

Certainty:

about as certain as you can get!

Notes:

Just go for a spacewalk in a low earth orbit, and decelerate enough to enter the atmosphere. You'll get a great view...

38. **ACQUIRED IMMUNE DEFICIENCY SYNDROME (AIDS)**

Time:

Incubation period 1 to 10 years, death within 2 years of diagnosis of AIDS, Can have HIV for years/decades

Dosage:

Just one intimate contact with an Infected person of any gender

Available:

Available to all for free

Certainty:

99.9% certainty AFTER infected

Notes:

[2]:

This is not painfree. This method may cost you alot of money if you allow others to get you medical attention. It may a little difficult to get infected as people who know they have it may not comply with your request. Could be great fun attempting to get infected depending upon your attitude (remember -any gender - you don't have to limit yourself - you're going to die, you might as well try it ;). Should be quite devastating to your family & close friends. You also get the satisfaction of leaving behind a virtual unrecognizable-as-you body ! This also gives

you the prime opportunity to point your finger at your dentist and say he did it for all the times you have suffered in their chair. Happy dying !

Calle: May not be so certain any more. Ten years may well be long enough for someone to develop a cure. Silly, IMHO.

39. AUTO-DECAPITATION BY CAR (added by Calle)

Time:

Real quick

Available:

You need access to a car and a rope

Certainty:

I wouldn't trust it

Notes:

Comes from alt.suicide.holiday. Basic idea is to tie one end of the rope around your neck, tie the other end to a real solid object, get into the car and accelerate away as fast as the car can manage. When you reach the end of the rope, your head gets torn off. Be sure to use enough rope and fasten your seat belt.

A posting to a.s.h. in July 1993 says that someone in Washinton State, USA actually used this method to commit suicide, so it can't be that bad. The posting said that 25 feet of rope were used (about 7.5 meters), which does sound a bit short. Perhaps he had a real awesome car.

40. DEATH BY PAINTING YOUR BODY (very silly, and wrong)

Dosage :

Less than 1 can of paint depending on your body type

Time :

? Probably less than 8 hours

Availability :

Very available ! You have a choice of greasepaint or House paint. You need a type of paint that will not allow your pores to breath in order to be successful at this. You also have a smashing selection of colors you can choose to die in ! Nile Green ? Blood Red ? Basic Black ? Or any combo you desire.. If you couldn't decide before what to wear to die in, this method will cause you considerable angst.

Certainty :

This is a sure method, provided you have a paint that will block your pores from breathing. Don't forget the bottom of your feet. You must paint every last bit of available skin. If your pores can breathe, you won't die.

Notes :

I read this in some theater journal 5 or so years ago, saying when you you do full body makeup, you must insure that parts of the body are left naked to breathe or the actor will die. Usually for full body makeup, they leave the bottoms of feet, and some patterns on the body, like lines so the actor doesn't suffocate.

Calle: This is an *extremely* silly one. It was in the "not yet edited" portion of Mike's file, and I think it is quite straight from an a.s.h. posting.

This method does not work. As you can check in most any book on human anatomy, the skin does not breathe. The only places in your body which absorbs oxygen are the lungs and the corneas, and the corneas only feed themselves.

You might get ill or even die if you use poisonous paint, though.

41. NITROUS OXIDE (N2O, Laughing Gas)

Dosage :

Several Liters uncompressed

Time :

unconscious in about 5 min, death 10 -> 15 min

Availability :

Dentists supply would be good, any other technical-gases supplier, cream charges (drugstore or something like that)

Certainty :

reasonable

Notes :

combination with marijuana recommended absolutely painless method! N2O is normally used as an analgesic, but may also be "mis"used as a drug (to get "high") or to "off" yourself. It may be purchased at a technical-gases supplier (if they ask for the purpose: tell them you need it for car-tuning (laughing-gas injection (no joke!))).

I asked for it at a German gas-supplier (Messer-Griesheim) and they told me that the smallest gas-bottle is about 8kg N2O (which is equal to 4m³). It would cost about 156,- DM per 8 kg (about 15\$ per 1kg, prices may differ). Recommended for more comfort: ask them about a pressure reducer (better control of gas-flow).

For best results, take something like a breathing-mask (anything similar will do) to make sure to still inhale the gas after becoming unconscious. You may start with a small N2O concentration (simply lift the mask a little so you get fresh air with the N2O) and increase it until you breathe pure N2O. By the way: N2O tastes sweet (but no calories I suppose :)

When 20mg N2O are solved in your blood (after about 10 breaths), the effect sets in. If you inhale the gas long enough, so that about 60mg N2O are solved in the blood, you will fade without the slightest pain from life to death.

60eam charges every time....! You may achieve this by filling the contents of the cream charges into a balloon (a big one!) and inhale and exhale into the balloon. The only problem is, that you get difficulties holding the balloon properly to your mouth after you inhaled some times!

Part of this information taken from:

"Suicide, Mode d'Emploi" Claude Guillon, Yves Le Bonniec
(pages 176/177 in the German edition)

Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

The only thing I can remember that has been asked for multiple times, besides the File itself, are the lyrics for "Suicide Is Painless" (the theme from M*A*S*H). Here it is:

"Suicide is Painless"

Words by Mike Altman

Music by Johnny Mandel

Through early morning fog I see

Visions of the things to be

The pains that are withheld for me

I realize and I can see that

Chorus: Suicide is painless

It brings on many changes

And I can take or leave it if I please.

I try to find a way to make

All our little joys relate

Without that ever-present hate

But now I know that it's too late, and

(chorus)

The game of life is hard to play

I'm going to lose it anyway

The losing card I'll someday lay

