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Global Trends: Mass Shootings

The United States experiences more mass shootings than any other developed nation. Each year, more than 39,000 people die as a result of gun violence in the US and 82% of all firearm deaths in the US, Australia, France, Italy, Spain, and the UK occur in this country.² The consistent and growing numbers of mass shootings is of great public health importance because of the number of lives taken, and because the risk factors often associated with shootings are public health crises on their own. Mental health, access to resources, health equity, and racial and gender inequality are all factors that play into the terribly high amounts of mass shootings in the US. Prevention is about more than just gun safety legislation, because easy access to weapons and shortage of mental health resources often take center stage on this issue.¹

The United States has a pro-gun culture which is at odds with the deeply rooted stigma surrounding mental health, making the issue of mass shootings in the US deeply rooted in our culture.² Conversations on mass shootings should be approached from a medical-psychological-social perspective as a public health priority within this country,¹ because mass shootings are a contagious disease, just like Ebola or COVID-19. The risk factors of violence can predispose individuals to homicide, suicide, and additional acts of violence.³

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Works Cited

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2. *Burden of Gun Violence.* https://www.apha.org/-/media/Files/PDF/factsheets/200221_Gun_Violence_Fact_Sheet.ashx
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