

POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISTRESS



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PTSD - What is it?

[Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder \(PTSD\)](#) is a psychological reaction that occurs after an extremely stressful event, such as physical violence or military combat.

Quick Check List:

1. Recurring memories of the stressful event
2. Anxious or scared even in the absence of danger.
3. Flashbacks and nightmares are common symptoms as well.
4. Chronic pain, especially low back
5. Nightmares or flashbacks
6. Sleeping difficulty
7. Irrational and persistent fear and avoidance of certain objects or situational “triggers” that cause extreme anxiety and depression
8. Withdrawal from social or favorite activities
9. Seeking out risky behavior
10. Intentional blockage of memories associated with a past event or experience
11. Emotional numbing
12. Constantly being on edge or jumpy with jitters
13. Irritability with constant fear and paranoia, indecisiveness, and total lack of concentration
14. Shame and guilt over the event that caused the PTSD
15. Change in behavior because of heightened debilitating emotions
16. Mood swings

17. Being on high alert at all times and being easily startled

Symptoms that last more than 3 months

SYMPTOMS

What are the 17 Symptoms of PTSD? *

Life is unpredictable. Unfortunately, for many of us, that means that grief and trauma can arise at any time. When a person is exposed to danger, violence, illness, or the threat of injury, they can potentially carry that trauma with them for years to come. Here are in-depth explanations of each of the 17 symptoms of PTSD.

1. Intrusive Thoughts

Intrusive thoughts are perhaps the best-known symptom of PTSD. What do intrusive thoughts look like? A person going about their day is suddenly confronted by unwelcome, distressing memories of what happened to them. This may happen in a related setting – for example, a person who has gone through a car accident may begin to panic in a vehicle – or out of the blue.

2. Nightmares

Trauma survivors regularly deal with nightmares. Approximately 71% to 96% of those with PTSD may have nightmares. Those with co-occurring mental illnesses are also at higher risk for vivid, disturbing dreams.

3. Avoiding Reminders of the Event

One of the major effects of trauma is avoidance. For example, someone who nearly drowned will probably avoid swimming again. However, they might even avoid taking baths or going to the beach because it reminds them too much of what happened. These avoidant behaviors can be debilitating.

4. Memory Loss

Traumatic events impact the brain's functioning. While many people assume that this is due to a physical brain injury, it's frequently a case of the body attempting to cope with what has happened. When something traumatic happens, memory loss occurs as a natural defense mechanism. Without proper treatment, these memories may resurface at any time, resulting in significant distress.

5. Negative Thoughts About Self and the World

People who have been through trauma see the world differently. They may feel hopeless and live with a "foreshortened future" – an inability to visualize future milestones or old age. It's also common for them to see themselves in a bad light, or a negative perception of the self and the world at large.

6. Self-Isolation; Feeling Distant

After something terrible happens, it's difficult to connect with others. People with PTSD may have a hard time being around people for a few different reasons. These include potential triggers, as well as an inability to relate to their friends. Some people may feel like your loved ones just don't understand.

7. Anger and Irritability

PTSD creates a state of hyperarousal. This means that the brain is kicked into a state of "fight or flight" at the slightest urging. Hyperarousal results in strong emotions like anger, as well as general irritability on a day-to-day basis. Those who have been traumatized may lash out at others, even if they don't fully understand why.

8. Reduced Interest in Favorite Activities

Negative life events make it difficult to enjoy once-loved activities. The mood changes, sleeplessness and avoidance associated with PTSD mean that a person might feel unmotivated and uninterested in their work and hobbies.

9. Hypervigilance

After a traumatic event, the body enters a state of hypervigilance. This increased alertness ensures that a person is always prepared for any other threats. However, this state of extreme awareness is exhausting and upsetting for trauma sufferers.

10. Difficulty Concentrating

Hyperarousal and anxiety also take away one's ability to concentrate.

Individuals who have undergone a traumatic event struggle to readjust at work, home, and school because their minds are often elsewhere.

11. Insomnia

Insomnia is another typical symptom of PTSD. To go to bed, a person must let their guard down, which is especially difficult for hypervigilant trauma sufferers.

Additionally, the nightmares they may face at bedtime can make sleep an unattractive proposition. Many people who have experienced trauma struggle to sleep, and they may turn to alcohol or drugs in order to calm their minds.

12. Vivid Flashbacks

Flashbacks are different from intrusive thoughts. Those who have flashbacks may feel as though the traumatic event is happening all over again. Memories can become so vivid that they seem to be happening in the current moment. This can cause people to panic, resulting in a sudden, aggressive response. They may be triggered by something as subtle as someone's cologne or a certain tone of voice. Those who have flashbacks are encouraged to ground themselves through the five senses – naming five things they can see can be a calming distraction.

13. Avoiding People, Places and Things Related to the Event

Any reminder of a traumatic event can catalyze a flashback. That's why many trauma sufferers become reclusive, avoiding people, places and things related to what happened. "Just trying not to think about it" is a coping mechanism that can actually worsen one's symptoms over time.

14. Casting Blame

Self-blame is especially common after a traumatic event. People with PTSD may blame themselves for what happened, especially if it resulted in the injury or death of a buddy or loved one. They may also assign blame to others who were associated with what happened. They might also assign blame themselves for not calling out or warning the buddy in time.

15. Difficulty Feeling Positive Emotions

Anger, sadness, and guilt are the emotions primarily associated with PTSD. However, this condition also dampens a person's ability to regulate positive emotions.

16. Exaggerated Startle Response

A key aspect of hypervigilance is an exaggerated startle response. One of the 17 symptoms of PTSD is caused by the constant feeling of being "on guard." A small noise may cause a victim of trauma to become jumpy.

17. Risky Behaviors

Finally, risky behaviors are especially common among those who have undergone trauma. Combat veterans fall into this category too – they have higher levels of addiction than the general population. Risky behaviors can include drug abuse, alcoholism, unsafe sex, high-adrenaline activities, and behavioral addictions (gambling, shopping, etc.).

***Cumberland Heights Foundation**

P.O. Box 90727 Nashville, TN 37209

<https://www.cumberlandheights.org/blogs/17-symptoms-of-ptsd/>

Caregiver Help

Call VA's Caregiver Support Line at **1-855-260-3274** to learn more about the support that is available to you and for assistance connecting with the Caregiver Support Coordinator at your local VA Medical Center. Feb 18, 2021

Caregiving Tips - PTSD

<https://www.caregiver.va.gov> › [Tips_by_Diagnosis](#) › PTSD

VA Eligibility for VA Caregiver Help

Veterans who were injured or experienced illness as a result of military service may require the help of a caregiver for activities of daily living. This is also true for veterans experiencing mental disorders like PTSD.

Caregivers of veterans are often family members who assist with home care, transportation to health care appointments, and other daily tasks. They often take on the role of a home health aide but lack the financial support.

To help support these family caregivers, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs offers the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers. This program provides VA health care benefits, monthly stipends, coverage of travel expenses, and other types of financial support to the caregivers of eligible veterans.

Those who are eligible for this program can receive a number of caregiver benefits. Click on link to read all benefits.

<https://www.hillandpontton.com/va-caregiver-program-veterans-eligibility-assessment/>

Family Member is Caregiver:

The Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC) is open to veterans who were injured or experienced an aggravated injury in the line of duty after September 11, 2001 **OR** on or before May 7, 1975. If a veteran qualifies for the program, their primary caregiver can receive a number of benefits, including:

- Caregiver stipends
- Education
- Health insurance
- Mental health services
- Beneficiary travel benefits
- Respite care
- Support resources
- Other caregiver services

Secondary caregivers may be eligible for benefits as well, including mental health counseling, beneficiary travel benefits, and respite care.

Caregivers may be eligible for health care benefits through the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs (CHAMPVA). These types of services can help a veteran's loved ones provide home care and support the well-being of the veteran.

[According to the VA](#), a family caregiver is a son, daughter, spouse, parent, stepfamily member, extended family member, or any person who lives with the veteran full time or is willing to do so if designated as a caregiver. So, veterans need to consider who their primary family caregiver is when applying for the program.

To apply for the caregiver program, veterans need to fill out [VA Form 10-10CG](#). This is the first step in the application process.

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/therapists/trauma-and-ptsd>

Then fill in your zip code

If you're looking for help with PTSD in 85395 or other zip code therapists who provide PTSD therapy and PTSD treatment click on the Psychology Today link. Assistance includes PTSD therapists, PTSD psychologists, PTSD psychotherapists and PTSD counselors. They can help with all aspects of post-traumatic stress disorder in 85395 or other zip codes, PTSD symptoms, veterans' PTSD and PTSD children.

Further Info – External/Community Help

Effects of caring for PTSD as a caregiver. More info may be found at Psychology today.

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-ostrich-effect/202004/caring-the-caregivers>

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