



# **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder**

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) may occur after experiencing a stressful or traumatic event during combat; deployment; serious motor vehicle accident; sexual, emotional or physical abuse; or assault. Although most people experience some stress related symptoms at one time or another following a traumatic event, symptoms that linger and disrupt your life may indicate a need for follow up with a medical professional or assistance from the health care system.

Developing PTSD following a traumatic event is dependent on many factors, including the intensity of the trauma, how long the traumatic event lasted, how physically close one was to the event, the amount of support received after the event, whether a loss was suffered as a result of the event, and how much control you had while the traumatic event was occurring.

PTSD can be manifested in many ways, including reliving the traumatic event, hyperarousal (feeling angry, irritable, or always on the alert for signs of danger), avoidance of situations or people that may trigger memories of the event, and emotional numbness. The person with PTSD may also lose interest in the activities they once enjoyed.

Tips	Strategies
Learn about PTSD	Learning about PTSD can help you develop a better understanding of what you are experiencing, possible symptoms, and expected course of recovery. It can also help you identify coping strategies.
Talk about your experiences with someone you trust	Sometimes you may need help and support from others. This can be a trusted friend, family member, chaplain, counselor, or medical provider.
Practice relaxation techniques	Relaxation and stress reduction techniques can include: practicing deep diaphragmatic breathing; trying a class in meditation/yoga; using the power of imagery to visualize a place or experience that relaxes and calms you; stretching; or mediating.
Participate in recreational and social activities	Social activity can help relieve stress, build connections with others, and ease the strain of missing family and friends.
Speak with your health care professional about your treatment options	The effective treatment of PTSD can include counseling, such as cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) and the use of prescription medications. CBT can help you understand how thoughts and beliefs about the trauma and your surroundings contribute to stress and continued PTSD symptoms. Prescription medications can help with managing symptoms and reducing anxiety.

***If you have thoughts of suicide, seek emergency care immediately. Go to the closest emergency room or call the Military Crisis Hotline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255).***



## Resources

### Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center

Description: The Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center's Wounded, Ill, and Injured program offers information and resources for the service member, families, and providers regarding PTSD, including common causes, symptoms, treatment options, and available support programs.

Website: <http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/health-promotion/Pages/Wii-ptsd.aspx>

### Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury PTSD Treatment Options

Description: The Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury (DCoE) offers in-depth information about the various treatment options available for those experiencing PTSD.

Website: [http://www.dcoe.health.mil/PsychologicalHealth/PTSD\\_Treatment\\_Options.aspx](http://www.dcoe.health.mil/PsychologicalHealth/PTSD_Treatment_Options.aspx)

### National Center for PTSD

Description: Visit the National Center for PTSD for information on who to call and where to go for help. Resources are also available for the family and friends of service members.

Website: [www.ptsd.va.gov/public/where-to-get-help.asp](http://www.ptsd.va.gov/public/where-to-get-help.asp)

### Real Warriors Campaign

Description: The Real Warriors Campaign is an initiative launched by DCoE to promote the processes of building resilience, facilitating recovery, and supporting reintegration of returning service members, veterans, and their families.

Website: <http://www.realwarriors.net/>

### PTSD Coach Mobile App

Description: Download the app for use as an adjunct to psychological treatment, or as a stand-alone education tool. Users can complete a self-assessment, manage symptoms, find support and learn about PTSD.

Website: <http://t2health.org/apps/ptsd-coach>

### Military Crisis Line

Description: The Military Crisis Line provides confidential support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. The Military Crisis Line, online chat, and text-messaging service are free to all service members, including members of the National Guard and Reserve, and Veterans.

Contact Information: 1-800-273-8255 (Press 1) or text 838255. In Europe call 00800 1273 8255 or DSN 118) or visit <http://www.militarycrisisline.net/>