

Reactions to Traumatic Events

At some time in your life, you or someone you know may experience a traumatic event. It is common to feel emotional aftershocks after a traumatic event. Sometimes aftershocks appear immediately, but they also can appear a few hours or even days later. In some cases, weeks or months may pass before stress reactions occur.

The signs and symptoms of a stress reaction may last days and occasionally months, depending on the severity of the traumatic event.

With understanding and support from family, friends and co-workers, stress reactions usually pass quickly. Occasionally, stress reactions can be so severe that professional assistance from a counselor may be needed. Below are some signs and symptoms of stress reactions.

PHYSICAL

- Fatigue
- Twitches
- Difficulty breathing
- Elevated blood pressure
- Rapid heartbeat
- Chest pain
- Headaches
- Nausea/vomiting
- Thirst
- Hunger
- Dizziness
- Excessive sweating
- Chills
- Fainting

MENTAL

- Tendency to blame others
- Confusion
- Inability to make decisions
- Heightened or lowered alertness
- Poor concentration
- Forgetfulness
- Trouble identifying known objects or people
- Increase or decreased awareness of surrounding
- Poor problem-solving
- Loss of a sense of time, place or person
- Disturbed thinking
- Nightmares



Contact Us

Your program provides access to tools and other resources online or call us directly to speak to a professional counselor who is available everyday and at any time to provide confidential assistance at no cost to you.

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EMOTIONAL

- Anxiety
- Grief
- Denial
- Survivor guilt/self blame
- Emotional numbness
- Uncertainty
- Loss of emotional control
- Fear of loss
- Intense anger
- Irritability
- Helplessness
- Mistrust
- Feelings of worthlessness
- Apathy/boredom

BEHAVIORAL

- Changes in normal activities
- Withdrawal from others
- Emotional outbursts
- Change in communication
- Suspiciousness
- Inability to rest
- Substance abuse
- Intensified startle reflex
- Decreased personal hygiene
- Appetite disturbance
- Accident proneness

Don't ignore these symptoms. If gone too long unnoticed there could be more harm done and depression, anxiety or other disorders may appear.

**US Army Reserve Psychological
Health Program**
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