

## What is Post-Traumatic Stress?

PTSD refers to the emotional and psychological reactions that occur after experiencing or witnessing a traumatic event. These events can include incidents such as natural disasters, serious accidents, assaults, or other situations that involve actual or threatened harm.

### Key Aspects of Post-Traumatic Stress:

1. **Trauma:** The event that triggers post-traumatic stress is typically one that involves intense fear, helplessness, or horror. It can disrupt a person's sense of safety and well-being.
2. **Stress Response:** The stress response to trauma includes a range of emotional, cognitive, and physical reactions. Common responses include anxiety, fear, anger, and guilt, as well as difficulties with sleeping, concentration, or emotional regulation.
3. **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD):** When these stress responses persist and significantly impact daily functioning, they can develop into PTSD. PTSD is a mental health condition characterized by:
  - **Intrusive Memories:** Repeated, involuntary memories or flashbacks of the traumatic event.
  - **Avoidance:** Avoiding reminders of the trauma or situations that are associated with it.
  - **Negative Mood:** Persistent negative emotions, distorted beliefs about oneself or others, and difficulties in experiencing positive emotions.
  - **Increased Arousal:** Heightened state of arousal, which can include symptoms like hyper-vigilance, irritability, difficulty sleeping, and being easily startled.
4. **Impact on Daily Life:** Post-traumatic stress can affect various aspects of life, including relationships, work, and overall well-being. It can lead to problems such as social withdrawal, impaired functioning, and an increased risk of other mental health issues.

Addressing post-traumatic stress involves recognizing the symptoms, seeking appropriate help, and developing coping strategies to manage the effects of trauma on your life.



A person who has experienced a traumatic event should seek professional help if they: don't feel any better, feel highly anxious or distressed, have reactions to the traumatic event that are interfering with home, work and/or relationships.

