

Common Symptoms of PTSD

Below are the common symptoms of PTSD that can develop after exposure to severely traumatic events. You do not need to have all of these symptoms for a diagnosis of PTSD.

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| Unwanted Memories | Repeated, disturbing and unwanted memories of the stressful event |
| Nightmares | Repeated and disturbing dreams related to the stressful event |
| Flashbacks | Feeling or acting as if the stressful event were actually happening again |
| Upset Feelings | Feeling upset or distressed when something reminds you of the stressful event |
| Physical Reactions | Physical reactions (heart racing/shortness of breath/sweating, etc.) when something reminds you of the stressful event |
| Avoiding Memories | Avoiding memories, thoughts or feelings of the stressful event (using distractions) |
| Avoiding Things | Avoiding people, places, activities, situations that remind you of the stressful event |
| Trouble Remembering | Trouble remembering important aspects of the stressful event |
| Strong Negative Beliefs | Having strong and persistent negative beliefs about yourself, other people or the world (i.e., "I am bad", "no one can be trusted", that began or worsened after the stressful event) |
| Exaggerated Blame | Blaming yourself or someone else for the stressful event when it does not make sense to |
| Strong Negative Feelings | Strong and persistent negative feelings such as fear, horror, anger, guilt or shame that began or worsened after the stressful event |
| Loss of Interest | Loss of interest in activities you used to enjoy |
| Feeling Distant | Feeling distant or cut off from other people |
| Lack of Positive Feelings | Persistent trouble experiencing positive feelings (for example, being unable to feel happiness or have loving feelings for people close to you) |
| Irritable Behavior | Irritable behavior, angry outbursts or acting aggressively |
| Reckless Behavior | Taking too many risks or doing things that could cause you harm like dangerous driving, excessive alcohol or drug use, injuring yourself |
| Hypervigilance | Being "super alert" or watchful or on guard |
| Startle Response | Feeling jumpy and/or easily startled to loud noises or sudden movements |
| Difficulty Concentrating | Trouble staying focused on general tasks or difficulty remembering |
| Difficulty Sleeping | Trouble falling or staying asleep, or getting less sleep than you need |