

## **Fact Sheet: Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)**

### **IMPORTANT FACTS ABOUT POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER<sup>1</sup>**

Post-traumatic stress disorder affects people who have experienced a traumatic event such as military combat, natural disasters, terrorist incidents, serious accidents, or personal assaults such as rape.

Symptoms include nightmares and flashbacks, difficulty sleeping, and feelings of detachment/estrangement. Symptoms can be persistent and severe enough to significantly impair a patient's daily life.

PTSD often occurs in conjunction with related disorders such as depression, substance abuse, and problems with memory and cognition. It may also affect a person's ability to function at work, in a marriage, or as a parent.

Those more likely to experience PTSD include:

- Those who experience greater stressor magnitude and intensity, unpredictability, uncontrollability, sexual (as opposed to nonsexual) victimization, real or perceived responsibility, and betrayal.
- Those with prior vulnerability factors such as genetics, early age of onset and longer-lasting childhood trauma, lack of functional social support, and concurrent stressful life events.
- Those who report greater perceived threat or danger, suffering, upset, terror, and horror or fear.
- Those with a social environment that produces shame, guilt, stigmatization or self-hatred.

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1. National Center for PTSD Fact Sheet