

PTSD Awareness: Accessing Resources and Getting Help

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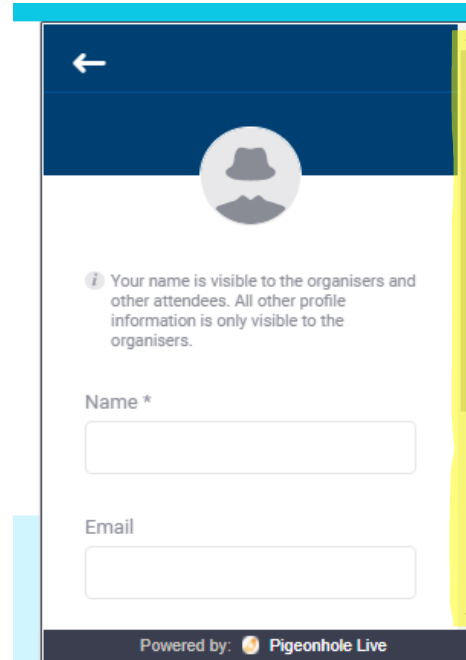
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CEU Credit Reminder



If you are seeking CEU credit for event:

- On the right side of screen select “You’re Anonymous. Profile” button and update with your full name and email address.
- There is a scrollbar on the right to scroll down and save.
- If you need to edit your name you may also select the name displayed on your home screen and an edit button will appear to update.

What is PTSD?

- ***Any experience that threatens your life or someone else's life can cause PTSD. Common examples include:***
 - Combat
 - Physical Assault
 - Sexual Assault
 - Child Abuse
 - Serious Accidents
 - Natural Disasters
- We sometimes call these experiences “traumatic events”, and they can result in different negative emotions compared to other stressful events.



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Common Reactions After Trauma

After experiencing these types of events, it is normal to have a stress reaction. Common reactions include:

- Upsetting memories
 - Difficulties with sleep
 - Feeling more fearful or “on edge”
 - Difficulties concentrating
 - Feeling sad or helpless
 - Stomachaches or other physical symptoms
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- Talking to trusted friends and family has been shown to help people recover.
 - However, if it has been longer than a few months and you are still having symptoms, you may have PTSD.

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When to Seek Help

If your emotional reactions are getting in the way of relationships, work, or other important activities, you may want to ask your doctor for a mental health referral.

- Common symptoms of PTSD include:
 - Feeling jumpy or getting startled by loud or unexpected noises
 - Disturbing dreams (nightmares)
 - Feeling very irritable or angry (getting in fights, road rage)
 - Feeling nervous, helpless, or fearful
 - Blaming yourself for things that happened
 - Difficulties with memory and concentration
 - Avoiding people, places, or things that remind you of your trauma

Often, these symptoms are first noticed by family members, as PTSD can make someone challenging to live with.

Prevalence of PTSD & Related Problems

How Common is PTSD?

- 1 in 10 men and 2 in 10 women who experience a trauma will develop PTSD
- There are currently about 8 million people in the United States with PTSD

Related Problems Associated with PTSD

- **Depression**
 - Depression is 3-5 times more likely in those with PTSD than those without
- **Substance Misuse**
 - Many individuals with PTSD try to cope by drinking or using other drugs
- **TBI, Chronic Pain, Grief, Suicide**

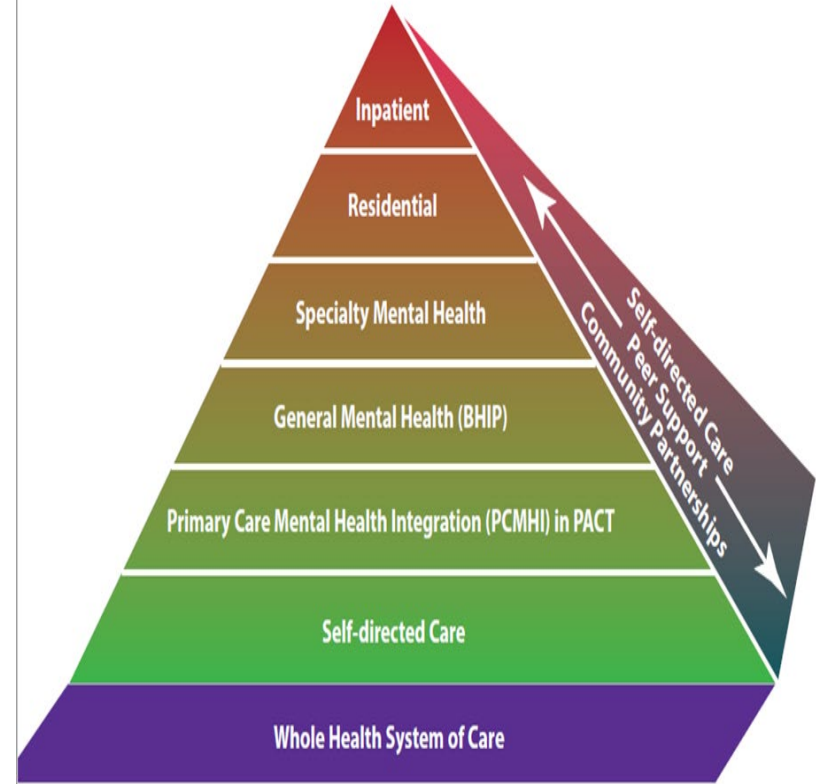


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PTSD Treatment

- Recovery from PTSD is possible – even if you’ve been struggling for years!
- Options to help you on your path to recovery are available throughout VA
- It is important to work with a mental health provider to determine which option may be best for you.



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PTSD Specialty Care

Prioritization of Gold Standard Treatments

- These are the psychotherapy treatments that have been proven to be most effective
 - Prolonged Exposure (PE)
 - Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT)
 - Eye-Movement Desensitization & Reprocessing (EMDR)

53 out of every 100 people who receive a trauma-focused therapy will no longer have PTSD after completion

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Additional Treatment Options

Most PTSD Specialty Programs offer Additional Services, Based on Veteran Interest & Need

- Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT)
- Interpersonal Psychotherapy (IPT)
- Written Exposure Therapy (WET)
- Person-Centered Therapy (PCT)
- Medications
 - *Psychotherapy has been shown to be more effective than medications
- Time-limited skills building groups

Importance of Seeking Help

Recovery from PTSD can mean different things, but ultimately people who get treatment improve their quality of life.

Treatment can help you:

- Reduce and sometimes even get rid of your symptoms
- Improve your relationships – reconnect with people you care about!
- Make sense of the trauma
- Cope with stressful situations better
- Reduce troubling thoughts of suicide and help prevent suicide
 - Veterans Crisis Line: 1-800-273-8255, press "1"

You may never feel completely ready to get help, but the outcome will be worth it!

Favorite Resources

National Center for PTSD: www.ptsd.va.gov

PTSD Program Locator

www.go.gov/directory/guide/PTSD.asp

PTSD Treatment Decision Aid

<https://www.ptsd.va.gov/apps/decisionaid/>

Family Support Resources

<https://www.ptsd.va.gov/family/getsupport.asp>

Mobile Apps

<https://www.ptsd.va.gov/appvid/mobile/index.asp>

About-face Videos

<https://www.ptsd.va.gov/apps/aboutface/>



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VISN 8: VA Sunshine Healthcare Network

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12552)

Orlando VA Medical Center (Orlando, FL)

Laura Meyers, PhD, ABPP: 407-631-2317

James A Haley Veterans' Hospital (Tampa)

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West Palm Beach VA Medical Center (West Palm Beach, FL)

Elizabeth (Liz) Bosarge, PhD: 561-422-1299
x6566

Miami VA Healthcare System (Miami, FL)

Gary Kutcher, PhD: 305-575-7000 x3813 or
x3669



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