

POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

June is National PTSD Awareness Month

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) affects between 7 and 8 percent of the population

Most people who have experienced a traumatic event may temporarily have a difficult time coping, but with time and self-care, they usually get better.

In instances where things become worse through time, the person may become more anxious and nervous. These symptoms can get worse, affecting daily functioning and well-being. Although PTSD can interrupt an individual's life for months or even years, proper treatment can help the individual recover.

Please use this guide as a resource for knowledge and understanding of PTSD causes and symptoms, diagnosis, and treatment.

01 | Causes and Symptoms

People can experience PTSD after a traumatic event or series of events. A traumatic event is an incident that triggers fear, shock, horror, grief or helplessness.

Examples of a traumatic event include:

- Sexual, physical, and verbal abuse
- Combat exposure
- Life-threatening illness
- Accident

PTSD symptoms may start within a month after a traumatic event, but they can also begin much later. Symptoms vary over time and from person to person. They usually persist longer than a month and are severe. There are four types of symptoms, categorized by:

- Intrusive memories
- Avoidance
- Changes in thinking and mood
- Changes in physical and emotional reactions

There may also be physical symptoms such as sweating, shaking, headaches, stomach problems, and aches and pains.

02 | Diagnosis

To diagnosis PTSD, have a discussion with your physician about your symptoms. Your doctor is likely to use the criteria set by the American Psychological Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders.

Diagnosis of PTSD requires exposure to trauma through direct experience, witnessing a traumatic event or exposure to details of a traumatic event.

03 | Treatment

Treatment of PTSD includes psychotherapy, medication, or a combination of both. Options for psychotherapy are cognitive therapy, which is a type of talk therapy, and exposure therapy, which is a type of behavioral therapy. Medication that can be prescribed to treat PTSD include antidepressants and anti-anxiety medication. Additionally, your physician may recommend joining a support group.

For additional resources on PTSD, please visit:

www.ptsdalliance.org

Did You Know?

Women are more likely to be affected by PTSD than men

References

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/post-traumatic-stress-disorder/symptoms-causes/syc-20355967>

<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/156285.php>