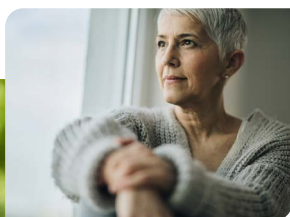




Information and advice on managing PTSD symptoms

Dealing with trauma can be challenging. For many people, it can mean addressing the deeply distressing symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

If you feel isolated or withdrawn from others, remember that you are not alone. There is plenty of support to help you address your symptoms, as well as to help process your thoughts and feelings.



Understanding the symptoms of PTSD

PTSD happens when someone experiences severe trauma or danger. It can develop hours or days after the event, but can sometimes take months or years to surface.

PTSD symptoms differ from person to person. They fall into four main categories:

- + **Recurring, intense reminders** – nightmares and flashbacks that can feel like an event is happening again, causing extreme emotional reactions such as panic attacks, uncontrollable shaking and heart palpitations
- + **Isolation and avoidance** – you may withdraw from other people, places or situations associated with a traumatic experience
- + **Changes in thoughts and mood** – you may feel unable to be positive, and may constantly feel fearful, guilty or shameful
- + **Constantly being on edge** – you may appear irritable, angry and irresponsible. You may also have difficulty sleeping and trouble concentrating

PTSD causes your fear response to stay switched on, leaving you on edge long after the trauma has ended. The memory stays at the forefront of the mind, causing flashbacks so vivid that individuals feel like they are reliving the trauma, complete with the tastes, smells, sights and sensations of the event.

Coping with PTSD and its symptoms

If left untreated, PTSD symptoms can become serious and affect many aspects of life. There are different strategies to help deal with PTSD:

- + Discuss how you are feeling with family and friends. They may find it tough to see you struggle, so tell them what you're going through then they can offer you the support you need
- + Doing something positive can help you to overcome feelings of helplessness, so try your hand at exercising or volunteering
- + Avoid drugs and alcohol as they will not help to solve the problem in the long term
- + Spend time outdoors in a relaxing environment, with positive people that you trust
- + Join a support group where you can meet people who are going through similar experiences

Treatment for PTSD

There are a number of treatments available for people diagnosed with PTSD. These include:

- + **Trauma-focused cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT)** - this can help you to understand your thought processes and how to change your feelings and reactions to symptoms
- + **Eye movement desensitisation reprocessing (EMDR) for PTSD** - EMDR combines exposure therapy and CBT with eye-movement techniques. This can help you through the healing process and improve your confidence
- + **Group therapy/supportive psychotherapy** - discussing your emotions and trauma with other PTSD sufferers can help you get a greater understanding of your condition and emotions
- + **Mindfulness** - this is a thought process allowing us to pay attention to what is currently happening in our lives
- + **Compassion focused therapy** - this is a system of psychotherapy combining CBT techniques with various other concepts, helping people to develop compassion for themselves and others



Contact us

Priory works with worldwide leading mental health professionals and our proven record of helping people to get their lives back on track is unrivalled.

For more information, please contact us by:

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Read more about treatment for PTSD by scanning the QR code.

