

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

PTSD is a type of anxiety that occurs in response to a traumatic event. It was first described in combat veterans. Now we know that PTSD occur in everyday life. PTSD has defined symptoms that are present for at least four weeks.

After a trauma, people may have some PTSD symptoms, but that does not mean they have PTSD. PTSD means having a certain number of symptoms for a certain length of time.

There are three types of PTSD symptoms

Type	Symptoms
Hypervigilance	Having a hard time falling asleep or staying asleep Feeling irritable or having outbursts of anger Having a hard time concentrating Having an exaggerated startle response
Re-experiencing	Having recurrent recollections of the event Having recurrent dreams about the event Acting or feeling as if the event were happening again (hallucinations or flashbacks) Feeling distress when exposed to cues that resemble the event
Avoidance	Avoiding thoughts, feelings, conversations, activities, places or people that are reminders of the event Less interest or participation in activities that used to be important Feeling detached; not able to feel

Only a mental health professional can diagnose PTSD, but if a friend or family member notices any of the symptoms, it may be a sign that help is needed.