

PTSD Self Screen*

Sometimes things happen to people that are unusually or especially frightening, horrible, or traumatic. For example, a serious accident or fire, a physical or sexual assault or abuse, an earthquake or flood, a war, seeing someone killed or seriously injured, or having a loved one die through homicide or suicide.

Have you ever experienced this kind of event?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please answer the questions below.

In the past month, have you:

- ☐ Had nightmares about the event(s) or thought about the event(s) when you didn't want to?
- ☐ Tried hard not to think about the event(s) or went out of your way to avoid situations that reminded you of the event(s)?
- ☐ Been constantly on guard, watchful, or easily startled?
- ☐ Felt numb or detached from people, activities, or your surroundings?
- ☐ Felt guilty or unable to stop blaming yourself or others for the event(s) or any problems the event(s) may have caused?

If you answered "yes" to 3 or more of these questions, talk to someone. Find a mental healthcare provider. Learn more about PTSD and PTSD treatment. Answering "yes" does not mean you have PTSD. Only a mental healthcare provider can tell you for sure. You may still want to talk to a mental healthcare provider if thoughts and feelings from the trauma are bothering you. Treatment may help — whether or not you have PTSD.

*Source: Department of Veterans Affairs



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PTSD

**What Every Veteran—And Every
Veteran's Family—Should Know**

What is PTSD (Post-traumatic Stress Disorder)?

PTSD is a trauma-related and stressor-related disorder that occurs after exposure to death, threatened death, actual or threatened serious injury, or actual or threatened sexual violence. These traumas can include military experiences; sexual or physical assault; serious accidents such as a car wreck; school shootings; natural disasters; and terrorist attacks. Post-traumatic stress is natural among those who have been exposed to these dangerous, frightening, and uncontrollable events.

Signs of PTSD* in individuals over the age of six:

- Unwanted, upsetting memories
- Nightmares
- Flashbacks
- Emotional distress after exposure to traumatic reminders
- Physical reactivity after exposure to traumatic reminders
- Avoidance of trauma-related thoughts or feelings
- Avoidance of trauma-related external reminders
- Inability to recall key features of the trauma
- Overly negative thoughts and assumptions about oneself or the world
- Exaggerated blame of self or others for causing the trauma
- Negative affect
- Decreased interest in activities
- Feeling isolated
- Difficulty experiencing positive affect
- Irritability or aggression
- Risky or destructive behavior
- Hypervigilance
- Heightened startle reaction
- Difficulty concentrating
- Difficulty sleeping

*Source: DSM-5

If after one month from the trauma exposure, you or a loved one are experiencing any of these symptoms, and they are creating distress in your social, occupational, or family life, we encourage you to seek treatment. Untreated PTSD may also have a negative impact on your family and loved ones. Remember, you are not alone, and help is available. It is not your fault. You can get treatment and it works! Take a step towards healing and reach out for help.

It should be noted that some medications, toxic exposures, substance use, illnesses, and traumatic brain injury can present with similar symptoms. It is essential to have a conversation with your health care provider about your whole health to avoid misdiagnosis.

There are, fortunately, several evidence-based treatments for PTSD. We encourage you to have an open discussion with your physician to determine the best course of available treatment. Many have found complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) treatments, such as equine therapy, yoga, and meditation, to be helpful in reducing symptoms of PTSD.

Vet Centers provide readjustment counseling and outreach services to all veterans who served in a combat zone or were exposed to military sexual trauma. Services are also available for family members for military-related issues. To locate a Vet Center near you online go to <https://vetcenter.va.gov/> or call 877-WAR-VETS (927-8387).

Where do I turn for help with PTSD?

The following organizations may provide assistance or referrals for PTSD help:

Vet Centers

877-WAR-VETS (927-8387) | vetcenter.va.gov

Veterans Affairs Medical Centers

800-827-1000 | va.gov
For an interpreter, 800-698-2411, Select 0

Mental Health America

800-969-6642 | nmha.org

Military One Source

800-342-9647 | militaryonesource.mil
(Available to active duty military, Reservists, National Guard, those within one year of their military separation, and their family members)

Vets4Warriors

855-838-8255 | vets4warriors.com

Wounded Warrior Project

877-TEAM-WWP (832-6997)
www.woundedwarriorproject.org
(Only available to Post 9/11 veterans)

VA Crisis Line

Dial 988, then Press 1 | Text 838255
Call TTY if you have hearing loss, 800-799-4889
veteranscrisisline.net

