



Reactions to Trauma

You have experienced a traumatic event such as an injury, the loss of a loved one, a serious threat, or any overwhelming emotional experience. Even though the event has passed, you may now be experiencing or may later experience strong emotional aftershocks.

Sometimes the emotional aftershocks (or stress reactions) appear immediately after the traumatic event. Other times they may appear a few hours or a few days later. In some cases, weeks or months may pass before the stress reactions appear. Individual people respond in different ways.

The signs and symptoms of a stress reaction may last a few days, a few weeks or a few months. Depending on the severity of the traumatic event, the duration may be longer. With understanding and support of loved ones the stress reactions usually pass more quickly. Occasionally the traumatic event is so painful that professional assistance from a counselor may be necessary. This does not imply craziness or weakness. It simply indicates that the particular traumatic event was just too powerful for one person to manage or process all of the issues alone.

Our EAP would like to share with you some of the common signs and symptoms of stress reactions. A variety of these may become evident in an individual or within a specific group of individuals who have responded to an incident. This is an incomplete list, but it may help in defining some of your own issues. An EAP counselor is always available via telephone by calling 800.327.4692. You can arrange to see an EAP counselor about your stress reactions. Contacts are confidential and available to employees and family members at no cost to you. Phones are answered 24 hours a day.

Physical	Thinking/Cognitive	Emotional	Behavioral
Nausea	Slower thought process	Anxiety	Changes in activity
Upset stomach	Difficulty making decisions	Fear	Speech pattern changes
Tremors	Difficulty in problem solving	Guilt	Withdraw into oneself
Profuse sweats	Confusion	Grief	Emotional outbursts
Chills	Disorientation (place/time)	Depression	Suspiciousness
Diarrhea	Difficulty calculating	Sadness	Loss/Increase appetite
Dizziness	Difficulty concentrating	Feeling lost	Alcohol consumption
Chest tightness	Memory problems (short or long)	Feeling abandoned	Inability to rest/relax
Rapid heart	Difficulty naming common items	Feeling isolated	Antisocial actions
Fast breathing	Seeing event repeatedly	Worry about others	Nonspecific body pains
Headaches	Distressing dreams	Wanting to hide	Hyper alert to settings
Sleep problems	Poor attention span (decreased)	Limited contact with others	Startle reflex intensified
Fatigue	Blaming	Intense anger	Pacing
Grinding teeth	Hyper vigilant	Irritability	Erratic movements
Visual Difficulty	Increased/Decreased alertness	Feeling numb all over	Changes in sex life
Thirst	Offensive/Defensive self-reviews	Denial/Uncertainty	Harsh with family
Twitching	Overwhelmed by normal routines	Agitation/Apprehension	Relationship difficulties

Please reach out to your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for help. The EAP is confidential and available 24 hours a day, at no cost to you. Call toll free 800.327.4692.