



NetCare Access is your connection to mental health and alcohol/drug addiction services in Franklin County.

If you or someone you know is in crisis, visit one of our crisis sites or call our 24-hour NetCare Access Crisis Hotline at (614) 276-C.A.R.E.

ACCESSING Information About

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

What is post-traumatic stress disorder?

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a debilitating condition that follows a terrifying event. Often, people with PTSD have persistent frightening thoughts and memories of their ordeal and feel emotionally numb, especially with people they were once close to.

PTSD, an anxiety disorder once referred to as shell shock or battle fatigue, was first brought to public attention by war veterans. But it can result from any number of traumatic incidents, including kidnapping, serious accidents such as car or train wrecks, natural disasters such as floods or earthquakes, violent attacks such as a mugging, rape or torture, or being held captive. The event that triggers it may be something that threatens the person's life or the life of someone close to him or her. Or it could be something witnessed, such as mass destruction after a plane crash. Symptoms typically begin within three months of a traumatic event, although occasionally they do not begin until years later. PTSD is diagnosed when symptoms last more than one month.

Anxiety disorders are the most common of all the mental disorders. They are not just a case of "the nerves." They are illnesses, often related to the biological makeup and life experiences of the individual, and they frequently run in families. Anxious feelings may be so uncomfortable that to avoid them one may stop some everyday activities.

Other types of anxiety disorders include panic disorder, specific phobias, social phobias, generalized anxiety disorder and obsessive-compulsive disorder.

Facts

- About 3.6 percent of U.S. adults ages 18-54 have PTSD during the course of a given year.
- About 30 percent of the men and women who have spent time in war zones experience PTSD.
- PTSD can occur at any age, including childhood.
- The disorder can be accompanied by depression, substance abuse or anxiety.
- Symptoms may be mild or severe – people may become easily irritated or have violent outbursts.
- In severe cases, people with PTSD may have trouble working or socializing.
- In general, the symptoms seem to be worse if the event that triggered them was initiated by a person – such as a rape, as opposed to a flood.
- Anniversaries of the event are often very difficult.

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Signs and Symptoms

People with PTSD may:

- relive the trauma in the form of nightmares and disturbing recollections during the day
- experience depression, feel detached or numb or be easily startled
- have trouble sleeping
- lose interest in things they used to enjoy
- have trouble feeling affectionate
- feel irritable, more aggressive than before, or even violent
- become distressed by seeing things that remind them of the incident
- avoid certain places or situations that bring back memories
- have feelings of intense guilt

Treatment

Research is helping scientists develop treatments and better understand the condition and how it affects the brain and the rest of the body. It is not uncommon for depression, alcohol or other substance abuse or another anxiety disorder to accompany PTSD. The likelihood of treatment success is increased when these other conditions are appropriately identified and treated as well. Common treatments include:

- Antidepressant medications
- Anxiety-reducing medications
- Psychotherapy
- Group therapy
- Exposure therapy
- Cognitive behavioral therapy
- Support from family and friends can help speed recovery

How to receive help

A person with PTSD can benefit from talking with a mental health professional, such as a psychologist, psychiatrist or social worker, who can assist in providing the individual and his or her family with additional approaches to treatment.

If you or someone you know has PTSD or is in a crisis, contact NetCare Access at (614) 276-C.A.R.E. Mental health assessments are provided at both of Netcare's crisis sites, located at 199 S. Central Avenue and 741 E. Broad Street, on a walk-in, first-come-first-served basis, Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

NetCare Access provides 24-hour crisis intervention and assessment services to Franklin County residents experiencing a mental health or alcohol/drug crisis. For more information on Netcare's services, contact us at:

Netcare Corporation
199 S. Central Avenue
Columbus, OH 43223

Administrative line: (614) 274-9500
Adult Assessment West (199 S. Central Avenue location): (614) 278-0122
Adult Assessment East (741 E. Broad Street location): (614) 278-0155
24-hour crisis hotline: (614) 276-C.A.R.E (2273)

www.netcareaccess.org