

Posttraumatic Stress Disorder: Patient Education and Self-Help Resources

Essential patient education concepts

- Reliving the trauma (eg, flashbacks, nightmares, response to triggers) is normal.
- Feeling benumbed, estranged from others, and disconnected at times is normal.
- Everything may seem dangerous; stimulation may be too much; you may be angry.
- Such reactions are a concern primarily if you are not healing gradually.
- Talking to others about what you are going through can be helpful.

- To better understand your experience, read about responses to trauma.

- Your sadness, guilt, or sleep disturbance may persist until you are truly depressed.
- If you are not healing, medication can help improve your symptoms and your sleep.
- Referral for counseling can help you face what has happened and its aftermath.
- Your avoidance of things related to the trauma will need to be faced gently.
- Be especially careful about using alcohol and drugs during your recovery.

Resources

Matsalcis A. *I Can't Get Over It: A Handbook for Trauma Survivors*. 2nd. ed. Oakland, Calif: New Harbinger Publications; 1996.

Matsalcis A. *Trust After Trauma: A Guide to Relationships for Survivors and Those Who Love Them*. Oakland, Calif: New Harbinger Publications; 1998.

Schiraldi GR. *The Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Sourcebook: A Guide to Healing, Recovery, and Growth*. Los Angeles, Calif: Lowell House; 2000.

Allen JG. *Coping with Trauma: A Guide to Self-Understanding*. Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Press; 1995.

Lord JH. *No Time for Goodbyes: Coping with Grief, Anger, and Injustice After a Tragic Death*, 5th ed. Oxnard, Calif: Pathfinder Publication of California; 2000.

Kushner HS. *When Bad Things Happen to Good People*. 20th anniversary edition. New York, NY: Avon; 2001.

Matsakis A. *The Rape Recovery Handbook: Step-By-Step Help for Survivors of Sexual Assault*. Oakland, Calif. New Harbinger Publications; 2003.

Heller LS, Heller DP. *Crash Course: A Self-Healing Guide to Auto Accident Trauma & Recovery*. Berkeley, Calif. North Atlantic Books; 2001.

Web sites: <http://www.NCPTSD.org>;
<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/posttraumaticstressdisorder.html>;
<http://www.PTSDAlliance.org>

Referrals: <http://www.ADAA.org>; <http://www.PTSDAlliance.org>