

## 1. Intrusive (Re-experiencing) Symptoms

Memories and images of the traumatic events may “intrude” into the minds of those with PTSD, occurring suddenly and without obvious cause.

They are often accompanied by intense emotions, such as grief, guilt, fear or anger.

Sometimes they can be so vivid the PTSD sufferer believes the trauma is actually reoccurring.

- Nightmares, night terrors
- Sleepwalking, sleep fighting
- Unwanted daytime memories, images, thoughts, daydreams
- Flashbacks, feeling like you’re reliving the traumatic event
- Somatic flashbacks (physical pain or a medical condition emerges, linked to the feelings or bodily states associated with the traumatic event)
- Fixated on war experience, living in the past
- Spontaneous psychotic episodes (the world vanishes, and you’re suddenly somewhere else, experiencing some sort of trauma)
- Panic attacks, undefined dread or fear
- Phobias

## 2. Avoidance Symptoms

Traumatized individuals attempt to avoid situations, people or events that remind them of their trauma.

They feel numb, emotionless, withdrawing into themselves trying to shut out the painful memories and feelings.

Friends and family feel rejected by them, as they are unable to show appropriate affection and emotion.

- Avoiding anyone or anything that reminds you of the traumatic event
- Physical/emotional reaction to things that remind you of the traumatic event
- Self-isolating, dread of social interaction
- Anxiety in crowds, traffic
- Despair, depression, sadness, emptiness, loneliness
- Inability to trust others
- Very reluctant to talk about your traumatic event
- Lack of interest or motivation regarding employment, recreation, former hobbies, sex, exercise
- Relationships that were once close and even intimate are now strained, cold, distant, requiring too much energy to maintain

- Emotional numbness, flat, can't get happy or sad, "dead" inside
- Substance abuse to "numb" yourself (drugs, alcohol, food)
- Suicidal thoughts
- Suicide attempts
- Physical fatigue
- Neglect/abandon personal care, hygiene, nutrition, exercise

### 3. Arousal Symptoms

Fearing further trauma, PTSD sufferers are always on the alert, on guard, jumpy, unable to sleep, angry, irritable.

Many also have concentration and memory problems.

- Anger, irritability, "short fuse," fits of rage
- Hypervigilance (always on guard), always need to be armed with knife or gun; could also include "emotional" hypervigilance
- Easily startled, react to loud noises, jumpy
- Substance abuse to "un-numb" yourself (drugs, alcohol, food)
- Reduced cognitive ability (slow thinking, confusion, problem-solving, concentration)
- Poor memory
- Trouble falling asleep or staying asleep, insomnia
- Night sweats
- Accelerated heart rate, rapid breathing, heart palpitations for no good reason
- Question/abandon faith, feeling of being betrayed or abandoned by God, mad at God
- Fear of becoming violent
- Becoming violent, provoking fights
- Homicidal thoughts
- Anniversary reaction (become anxious nearing the monthly or yearly anniversary of the traumatic event)
- Adrenalin junkie (taking risks, getting hyped-up)
- Self-mutilation, cutting, excessive tattooing

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