



NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE

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Commissioner

Seeking Help after Exposure to a Traumatic Event

People exposed to traumatic events often show symptoms of stress. Most of the symptoms are transient and disappear within several weeks. Some people continue to experience stress for an extended period, or their symptoms worsen. These people should consider seeking professional help to support coping and recovery. People who could benefit from professional help may not recognize their own need. You should seek professional help if your stress-related symptoms are worsening or severe, or if they persist for a month or longer.

Symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress

- Feeling guilty, hopeless and worthless
- Having little energy or feeling fatigued all the time
- Having little interest or pleasure in doing things you once enjoyed
- Having thoughts of death or suicide
- Having anxiety that disrupts daily functioning
- Feeling restless or irritable
- Having trouble falling or staying asleep; sleeping too much or too little
- Having poor appetite or overeating
- Having difficulty concentrating, remembering or making decisions
- Drinking more alcohol than usual, or using illicit substances
- Experiencing physical symptoms, such as chronic pain, that don't respond to treatment
- Feeling intense fear, horror and helplessness because of the event
- Reliving constantly the traumatic event through nightmares or vivid, painful memories
- Avoiding places, situations or conversations that remind you of the event
- Behaving as if you are still in danger; being constantly on guard and easily startled
- Feeling numb or detached from your surroundings and from other people

Where to find help

Anyone who needs help coping with stressful events can call LifeNet, a 24-hour, 7-day crisis hotline. LifeNet's mental-health professionals can offer help in a variety of languages: English 1-800-LifeNet (1-800-543-3638); Spanish 1-877-AYUDESE (1-877-298-3373); Asian languages 1-877-990-8585, Deaf/Hearing Impaired (TTY): 1-212-982-5284. You can also visit LifeNet online, at www.mhaofnyc.org.