



## PTSD 101

PTSD stands for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

### What is it?

- A real illness you can get after living through or seeing a traumatic event
- Can make you feel stressed and afraid after the danger is over
- Treatable

### Who gets PTSD?

- Anyone, at any age
- You don't have to be physically hurt to get PTSD. You can get it after you see other people get hurt
- Not everyone exposed to trauma develops PTSD

### What causes PTSD?

- Living through or seeing something that is upsetting or dangerous.

This can include:

- ❖ Being a victim or seeing violence
- ❖ War or combat
- ❖ Car accidents
- ❖ Hurricanes, tornadoes, fires
- ❖ Death or serious illness of a loved one
- ❖ Violent crimes

### How do I know if I have PTSD?

- Talk to your doctor or behavioral health professional if you have any of these problems:
  - ❖ Bad dreams
  - ❖ Flashbacks, or feeling like the event is happening again
  - ❖ Scary thoughts you can't control
  - ❖ Staying away from places and things that remind you of the event
  - ❖ Trouble sleeping
  - ❖ Feeling on edge
  - ❖ Angry outbursts
  - ❖ Thoughts of hurting yourself or others

### When does PTSD start?

- Starts at different times for different people
- May start soon after the frightening event and then continue
- Other people may develop new or more severe signs months or even years later

### How can I get better?

- A doctor or mental health professional trained in treating people with PTSD can help you
- Treatment may include medication or specific evidence-based therapies, or both
- Treatment may take 6-12 weeks or longer



- Treatment is not the same for everyone—what works for you, may not for someone else
- Drinking alcohol or using other drugs will not help PTSD go away and may even make it worse
- Although building resilience may not prevent PTSD, it helps
- Strengthen Comprehensive Airmen Fitness skills: Mental, Social, Physical, Spiritual

#### How do I help a Wingman who has PTSD symptoms?

- Don't judge them
- Be there to listen
- Express your support
- Help them understand what PTSD is and is not. Look at the link below and gather information.
- Encourage them to take action and speak with a professional
- If concerned about his/her safety, follow the A.C.E. concept:
  - ❖ Ask him/her if he is thinking about killing himself
  - ❖ Care – intervene
  - ❖ Escort them to a behavioral health professional, primary care physician, or chaplain

#### Where to Seek Help

- Airman & Family Readiness:
- Military Family Life Consultant:
- Chaplains:
- Director of Psychological Health:
- [www.MilitaryOneSource.com](http://www.MilitaryOneSource.com): 800-342-9647
- Veterans' Crisis Line, 24/7: 800-273-TALK (8255), option 1
- [www.Vets4Warriors.com](http://www.Vets4Warriors.com): 1-855-VET-TALK
- [www.WingmanProject.org](http://www.WingmanProject.org)
- Commander/Supervisor
- Physician

#### Wing Resource

References: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Health, NIH Publication No. TR-08-388.

[http://www.ptsd.va.gov/public/pages/help\\_your\\_veteran\\_get\\_needed\\_care.asp](http://www.ptsd.va.gov/public/pages/help_your_veteran_get_needed_care.asp)