

# How to Manage Trauma

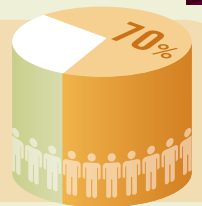
Trauma occurs when a person is overwhelmed by events or circumstances and responds with intense fear, horror, and helplessness. Extreme stress overwhelms the person's capacity to cope. There is a direct correlation between trauma and physical health conditions such as diabetes, COPD, heart disease, cancer, and high blood pressure.

## TRAUMA CAN STEM FROM



## HOW COMMON IS TRAUMA?

70% of adults in the U.S. have experienced some type of traumatic event at least once in their lives. That's **223.4 million people**.



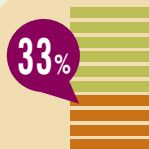
**+90%**

In public behavioral health, **over 90%** of clients have experienced trauma.

**Trauma is a risk factor** in nearly all behavioral health and substance use disorders.

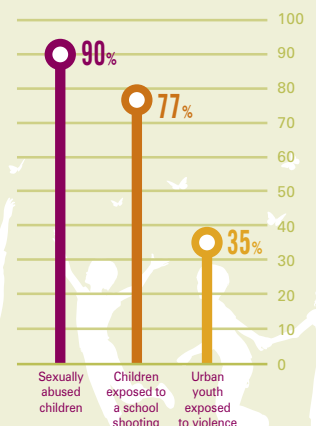


In the United States, a woman is **beaten every 15 seconds**, a forcible rape occurs every 6 minutes.



More than **33% of youths** exposed to community violence will experience Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, a very severe reaction to traumatic events.

Nearly all children who witness a parental homicide or sexual assault will develop Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Similarly, 90% of sexually abused children, 77% of children exposed to a school shooting, and 35% of urban youth exposed to community violence develop Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.



Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a mental health condition that's triggered by a terrifying event. Symptoms may include flashbacks, nightmares and severe anxiety, as well as uncontrollable thoughts about the event.

*People can and do  
recover from trauma*



## SYMPTOMS OF TRAUMA CHECKLIST

- Headaches, backaches, stomachaches, etc.
- Sudden sweating and/or heart palpitations
- Changes in sleep patterns, appetite, interest in sex
- Constipation or diarrhea
- Easily startled by noises or unexpected touch
- More susceptible to colds and illnesses
- Increased use of alcohol or drugs and/or overeating
- Fear, depression, anxiety
- Outbursts of anger or rage
- Emotional swings
- Nightmares and flashbacks — re-experiencing the trauma
- Tendency to isolate oneself or feelings of detachment
- Difficulty trusting and/or feelings of betrayal
- Self-blame, survivor guilt, or shame
- Diminished interest in everyday activities

## HOW TO TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR

- Make your doctor aware that you have experienced trauma, past or recent
- Help them understand what is helpful to you during office visits, i.e., asking permission to do a procedure, staying as clothed as possible, explaining procedures thoroughly, or having a supporter stay in the room with you
- Ask for referrals to therapy and behavioral health support



## HELPFUL COPING STRATEGIES

- Acknowledge that you have been through traumatic events
- Connect with others, especially those who may have shared the stressful event or experienced other trauma
- Exercise — try jogging, aerobics, bicycling, or walking
- Relax — try yoga, stretching, massage, meditation, deep muscle relaxation, etc.
- Take up music, art, or other diversions
- Maintain balanced diet and sleep cycle
- Avoid over-using stimulants like caffeine, sugar, or nicotine
- Commit to something personally meaningful and important every day
- Write about your experience for yourself or to share with others

## ASK YOUR HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL ABOUT TREATMENTS

### TRADITIONAL TREATMENTS

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy  
Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) Therapy  
Talk Therapy  
Exposure Therapy  
Group Therapy

### ALTERNATIVE TREATMENTS

Energy Processing  
Hypnotherapy  
Neuro-Linguistic Programming  
Massage Therapy  
Pet or Equine Therapy  
Trauma and Recovery Peer Support Groups  
Wellness Recovery Action Planning (WRAP)



**NATIONAL COUNCIL**  
FOR COMMUNITY BEHAVIORAL HEALTHCARE



For more information, interviews, and research on trauma check out the National Council's magazine edition on the topic

[www.TheNationalCouncil.org](http://www.TheNationalCouncil.org)