**Treatments for Post-Traumatic Stress Reactions (PTSR)**

Post-traumatic stress disorder can occur after a person has a very serious or life threatening traumatic experience. For veterans, this life-threatening event often occurs during combat. However, other noncombat related events – such a natural disasters, motor vehicle accidents, or sexual trauma – can also threaten life and can result in PTSR.

**Psychosocial rehabilitation services**

These services focus on improving functioning and enabling veterans to lead full and meaningful lives in the community of their choice. Psychosocial rehabilitation provide:

* Social skills training for veterans with serious psychological distress. These skills help the veteran relate to others, improve health, and function better at work and home.
* Education groups
* Illness management and recovery groups
* Wellness programs that explain the benefits of healthy living (regular exercise, nutritious diet, avoiding smoking/drugs/alcohol, etc.)
* Peer support services (help from other veterans with mental illness who can share their experience, strength, and hope)
* Family education programs

**How you can find the care you need**

If you, or someone close to you has or feels the symptoms described in this brochure, feel free to come to us or contact us by phone.

If there is interest, we will organize individual and group counseling and other forms of assistance.

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**Veterans**

It takes the strength and courage from a warrior to ask for help. Some wounds are invisible.

**How you know if you have a Mental Health Reaction?**

Sometimes it can be hard to tell. Since the brain and body affect one another, psychological problems can cause physical problems along with changes in thinking, feeling, and behavior. In addition to commonly recognized emotional problems, like feeling very sad or nervous, symptoms and signs of psychological health problems can include:

* Changes in sleep, appetite, weight, or sex life
* Headaches or other physical pain

 muscle tension and weakness

* Decreased energy, motivation, or interests
* Problems with attention, concentration, or memory
* Irritability, anger, or “short temper”
* Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, helplessness, or hopelessness
* Unhealthy behaviors (misusing drugs, alcohol, food, sex, or other behaviors like gambling or spending too much money to cope with stress or emotions)
* Problems functioning at home, work, or school

The most important thing to remember is to talk with your primary care physician or with someone else when you notice new symptoms or problems.

A veteran who feels anxious or depressed, may be drinking too much, has nightmares about combat, or feels something just isn’t right, should start by talking with a primary care provider or with someone who knows something about psychological health. This person, who may be a doctor, nurse, a counselor, or even a friend will listen and offer support. The person will help identify the problem and recommend treatment that might include medications, talk therapies, social support services, etc.

Family members may participate in treatment planning if desired by the veteran.

There is a range of treatments and services to improve the mental health of veterans. Exercise, good nutrition, good overall physical health, and enjoyable social activities are linked to positive mental health.

 For veterans with serious psychological distress, care should be tailored to help with their specific problems and to promote recovery. Serious psychological distress can include schizophrenia, depression or, posttraumatic stress reactions (PTSR), and substance use disorders (drugs or alcohol, or illegal substances).

These problems are usually treated with medications and individual or group psychotherapy (talk therapy). Programs that provide peer support are also very important.