

Can be described as a person's reaction to a traumatic event.

What to look for

Someone who has experienced severe trauma (eg: war, combat, natural disaster, physical or sexual abuse or witnessed violence, such as murder or physical abuse), may display one or more of these symptoms:

- repeated flashbacks or recurrent dreams of the event.
- traumatic dreams, sleeping problems.
- anger.
- intense worry if exposed to anything resembling the event.
- inability to relate to others.
- physical symptoms - pain, headaches, bowel problems.
- in young children, agitated behaviour, difficulty concentrating, or developmental regression in such things as toilet training or speech.
- no sense of a future; no expectation of having a family, career, living to old age.

Normally, if a person experiences traumatic and horrible events, they will experience fear, horror and other individual reactions. Some people do not experience much at all but this is not normally the case. This condition is considered a mental disorder resulting from any sort of deeply shocking experience. It may occur immediately or may occur months later.

If you receive treatment, you are more likely to overcome the disorder quicker.

People with PTSD also often suffer from various physical ailments, depression, drug abuse, phobias, or panic attacks as well.

Abused children will often suffer from this, as do abused partners and family members.

Causes

The cause of PTSD is severely traumatic event that initiates feelings of fear, horror, and helplessness. It depends upon the severity and duration of the exposure, whether the person will have PTSD and how long the disorder lasts, and how severe it is. If the trauma is chronic and ongoing, it is more likely that PTSD will be the result.

It is written that intense fear has physical repercussions in the part of the brain interprets fear and that this damage may contribute to the symptoms of PTSD.

It is necessary to consult a doctor or psychotherapist who will examine you and your full family history and the traumatic event before making a diagnosis.

Traditional Treatment

Antidepressant drugs, psychotherapy and reassurance are the usual treatments for PTSD.

Alternative treatments include a wide variety of techniques to help you overcome your reactions to the trauma you experienced.

When to seek further professional advice

- you or your child or other loved one shows any of the symptoms.