

Recognizing and Responding to Disaster-Related Stress



Important Things To Know About Disasters and Other Traumatic Events

If you were involved in a disaster such as a hurricane, flood, or even terrorism, or another traumatic event like a car crash, you may be affected personally regardless of whether you were hurt or lost a loved one. You can be affected just by witnessing a disaster or other traumatic event. It is common to show signs of stress after exposure to a disaster or other traumatic event, and it is important to monitor your physical and emotional health.

You may experience reactions such as:

- Having trouble falling asleep, staying asleep, sleeping too much, or trouble relaxing.
- Noticing an increase or decrease in your energy and activity levels.
- Feeling sad or crying frequently.
- Using alcohol, tobacco, illegal drugs or even prescription medication in an attempt to reduce distressing feelings or to forget.
- Having outbursts of anger, feeling really irritated and blaming other people for everything.
- Having difficulty accepting help or helping others.
- Wanting to be alone most of the time and isolating yourself.
- Having trouble remembering things
Having trouble thinking clearly and concentrating.
- Feeling confused.
- Worrying a lot.
- Having difficulty making decisions.
- Having difficulty talking about what happened or listening to others.



24-Hour Access
And Information Line
Call 800-510-9132

It's common to experience stress following a disaster or other tragic event regardless of whether you were hurt or lost a loved one.

There are many things you can do to cope with traumatic events:

- Understand that your symptoms may be normal, especially right after the trauma.
- Keep to your usual routine.
- Take the time to resolve day-to-day conflicts so they do not add to your stress.
- Do not shy away from situations, people and places that remind you of the trauma.
- Find ways to relax and be kind to yourself.
- Turn to family, friends, and clergy for support, and talk about your experiences and feelings with them.
- Participate in leisure and recreational activities.
- Recognize that you cannot control everything.
- Recognize the need for trained help, and call the Alliance Access and Information Center.

If you or someone you care about continues to show signs of stress and you are becoming concerned, you may want to reach out for help.

Call the Alliance Access and Information Center 24 hours a day at (800) 510-9132 and a licensed clinician will assist you in finding the right kind of help.



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