

## Common Reactions to Trauma

Below you will find some reactions and symptoms that are often experienced by individuals who have been through a trauma. These symptoms reflect your body's way of trying to cope and adjust to what has happened.

### Physical

Pounding Heart  
Sweating  
Flushed  
Shortness of Breath/Hyperventilation  
Chest Pains  
Nausea/Vomiting  
Upset stomach/Vomiting  
Loss of appetite or craving junk food  
Muscle tremors  
Loss of coordination  
Frequent headaches or migraines  
Missed menstrual cycle

Muscle soreness  
Rapid uncontrolled speech  
Difficulty sitting or relaxing  
Dizzy or fainting  
Dryness of mouth and throat  
Frequent need to urinate  
Grinding of teeth  
Inability to shake a cold  
Weight change (gain or loss)  
Insomnia/difficulty sleeping nightmares  
Feeling of exhaustion and fatigue

### Thoughts and Attitudes

Disbelief  
Horror  
Confusion  
Poor concentration  
Spaciness  
Poor decision making abilities  
Disorientation  
Poor memory  
Poor attention (not retaining information)  
Absolute thinking (I will never...)  
Negative/Critical judgments against self  
(I am such a failure)

Preoccupied with trauma memories  
Preoccupation with health  
Time distortion (time slows down or speeds up)  
Increased rigidity and closed thinking (inflexibility)  
Feeling omnipotent (unrealistic appraisal of situation)  
Cynicism or negativism  
Hindsight thinking (If only... Why I didn't)

### Emotions

Numb/Emotionally shut down  
Shocked  
Anxious  
Agitated  
Panicked or fearful (specific or general)  
Overwhelmed  
Anger (at self, others, God)  
Mood swings

Troubling dreams  
Sad  
Depression  
Helpless or inadequate feelings  
Sense of guilt  
Loss of sense of humor  
Less able to cope with new or continued emotional stress

### Risky/Self-destructive behaviors

Increased smoking  
Excessive spending

Sexual immorality  
Accident prone

### Relationships

Irritability  
Easily frustrated  
Insensitivity  
Loss of interest in others  
Isolating/Distancing (Avoiding fellowship)  
Insecurity  
Hypersensitivity

Avoidance of intimacy  
Suspicious  
Clingy  
Discord/Arguments  
Critical of others  
Scapegoating (a focal point for suppressed anger and depression)

### Behaviors

Losing or misplacing things  
Easily startled/Hyperalert to environment  
Tearful

Excessive talking  
Starts things but doesn't finish  
Excessive activity (or hyperactivity)

### Avoidance behaviors

Use of alcohol to numb  
Use of drugs (prescription or not) to numb  
Less productive

Abandonment of fun activities  
Overly involved in work