

# What to Expect After Trauma

## Reactions of Adults to Trauma

*Traumatic events are shocking and emotionally overwhelming. Adults who are exposed to trauma react in many different ways. It is important to recognize some changes are considered “normal” if they are brief in duration. If symptoms continue, you may consider seeking help.*

### Physical Reactions:

- Fatigue
- Chest pain
- Startled reactions
- Insomnia
- Hypersomnia
- Headaches
- Nightmares
- Exhaustion
- Weakness
- Hyperactivity
- Under activity
- Chills
- Rapid heart beat
- Nausea
- Dizziness

### Cognitive Reactions:

- Difficulty with concentration
- Making poor decisions
- Difficulty solving problems
- Memory problems/forgetfulness
- Blaming self or others
- Distorted time and place
- Difficulty with abstract thinking
- Flashbacks
- Overly alert and/or cautious
- Disturbed thinking
- Intrusive images

### Emotional Reactions:

- Anxiety
- Fear
- Guilt
- Denial
- Emotional numbing
- Severe panic
- Depression
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Irritability
- Agitation
- Amnesia for the event
- Uncertainty
- Feelings of helplessness
- Loss of emotional control
- Intense anger

### Behavioral Reactions:

- Change in activity level
- Withdrawal
- Emotional outbursts
- Suspiciousness
- Increase in use of alcohol or drugs
- Loss or increase in appetite
- Crying
- Inability to rest
- Pacing

## Things You Can Do to Help Yourself:

- Remind yourself that you are having normal reactions.
- Give yourself permission to feel depressed and overwhelmed.
- Moderate physical exercise.
- Relax.
- Structure your time (keep busy, but don't become fully immersed in work).
- Do not try to numb the pain with alcohol or drugs.
- Reach out to others.
- Talk about your feelings with others.
- Keep a journal – write about your feelings.
- Do things you enjoy.
- Allow yourself to make as many daily decisions as possible to regain a sense of control.
- Avoid making big life decisions for a few months.
- Live a healthy lifestyle – eat nutritious foods & maintain normal sleep patterns.
- Continue your daily routines.
- Be kind to yourself.

## Our Mission

Our mission is to strengthen individual, family and community wellness by providing exceptional, compassionate, inclusive, responsive and integrated behavioral health care.

## Our Services

Counseling — Individual, Group, Family  
Psychiatry  
Case Management  
Intensive In-Home Therapy  
Substance Abuse Treatment  
Criminal Justice Services  
Victim Services  
Bridge House Acute Treatment Unit  
Vocational & Social Rehabilitation  
School-Based Services  
Integrated Healthcare Services  
Pharmacy  
Speakers Bureau  
Education & Wellness Programs

## Contact Info

**Information & Admissions**  
**303 730 8858**

**Mental Health Crisis & Emergency Intervention**  
**303 730 3303**