# How to Manage Trauma

Trauma occurs when a person is overwhelmed by fear, horror, and helplessness. Extreme stress overwhelms the person's capacity to cope. There is a direct correlation between trauma and physical health conditions such as diabetes, COPD, heart disease, cancer, and high blood pressure.

#### **HOW COMMON IS TRAUMA?**

70% of adults in the U.S. have experienced some type of traumatic event at least once in their lives. That's 223.4 million people.



TRAUMA CAN STEM FROM

Childhood abuse or neglect

> Physical, emotional, or sexual abuse

Grief and loss



In public behavioral health, over 90% of clients have 90% experienced trauma.

Trauma is a risk factor in nearly all behavioral health and substance use disorders.

War and other forms of violence

> Accidents and natural disasters

a forcible rape occurs every 6 minutes.

In the United States, a woman is beaten every 15 seconds,

Medical interventions

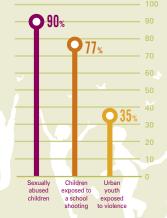
Witnessing acts of violence

Cultural, intergenerational and historical trauma



More than 33% of youths exposed to community violence will experience Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, a very severe reaction to traumatic events.

Nearly all children who witness a parental homicide or sexual assault will develop Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Similarly, 90% of sexually abused children, 77% of children exposed to a school shooting, and 35% of urban youth exposed to community violence develop Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.



Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a mental health condition that's triggered by a terrifying event. Symptoms may include flashbacks, nightmares and severe anxiety, as well as uncontrollable thoughts about the event.



# People can and do recover from trauma

#### SYMPTOMS OF TRAUMA CHECKLIST

- Headaches, backaches, stomachaches, etc.
- Sudden sweating and/or heart palpitations
- Changes in sleep patterns, appetite, interest in sex
- Constipation or diarrhea
- Easily startled by noises or unexpected touch
- More susceptible to colds and illnesses
- Increased use of alcohol or drugs and/or overeating
- Fear, depression, anxiety
- Outbursts of anger or rage
- Emotional swings
- Nightmares and flashbacks re-experiencing the trauma
- Tendency to isolate oneself or feelings of detachment
- Difficulty trusting and/or feelings of betrayal
- Self-blame, survivor guilt, or shame
- Diminished interest in everyday activities

## HOW TO TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR

- Make your doctor aware that you have experienced trauma, past or recent
- Help them understand what is helpful to you during office visits, i.e., asking permission to do a procedure, staying as clothed as possible, explaining procedures thoroughly, or having a supporter stay in the room with you
- Ask for referrals to therapy and behavioral health support

#### **HELPFUL COPING STRATEGIES**

- Acknowledge that you have been through traumatic events
- Onnect with others, especially those who may have shared the stressful event or experienced other trauma
- Exercise try jogging, aerobics, bicycling, or walking
- Relax try yoga, stretching, massage, mediation, deep muscle relaxation, etc.
- Take up music, art, or other diversions
- Maintain balanced diet and sleep cycle
- Avoid over-using stimulants like caffeine, sugar, or nicotine
- Commit to something personally meaningful and important every day
- Write about your experience for yourself or to share with others

#### ASK YOUR HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL ABOUT TREATMENTS

# TRADITIONAL TREATMENTS

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

Eye Movement
Desensitization and
Reprocessing (EMDR)
Therapy

Talk Therapy

**Exposure Therapy** 

**Group Therapy** 

## ALTERNATIVE TREATMENTS

**Energy Processing** 

Hypnotherapy

Neuro-Linguistic Programming

Massage Therapy

Pet or Equine Therapy

Trauma and Recovery Peer Support Groups

Wellness Recovery Action Planning (WRAP)





For more information, interviews, and research on trauma check out the National Council's magazine edition on the topic

www.TheNationalCouncil.org