

- ❖ There are many common reactions to combat experiences
 - Combat stress reaction
 - PTSD
 - Depression
 - Anger or aggressive behavior
 - Alcohol and/or drug abuse
 - Self-blame, guilt and shame
- ❖ Combat stress reactions usually decrease and normalize after returning home
- ❖ For some, these common reactions persist, even when the combat dangers are no longer present
- ❖ Combat reactions that don't shut off can interfere with...
 - job performance
 - relationships
 - ability to enjoy life
 - they may require medical assistance
- ❖ The earlier you seek help the easier it will be for health professionals to provide care and the quicker you will feel better.

www.va.gov/rcs

Vet Center Eligibility

World War II

Dec. 7, 1941 to Dec. 31, 1946

Korean War

June 27, 1950 to January 31, 1955

Vietnam War

Feb. 28, 1961 to May 7, 1975

Vietnam Era

Aug. 5, 1964 to May 7, 1975

Lebanon

Aug. 25, 1983 to Feb. 26, 1984

Grenada

Oct. 23, 1983 to Nov. 21, 1983

Panama

Dec. 20, 1989 to Jan. 31, 1990

Persian Gulf War

Aug. 2, 1990 to date to be determined

Somalia

Sep. 17, 1992 to date to be determined

Bosnia & Kosovo

Nov. 25, 1995 to date to be determined

Afghanistan

Sep. 11, 2001 to date to be determined

Iraq

Sep. 11, 2001 to date to be determined

Military Sexual Trauma: both men & women

Bereavement: parents, spouses, children of Armed Forces personnel who died in the service of their country.

Welcome Home



Readjustment Counseling
Services for men and women
veterans.

**Vet
Center**

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“Keeping the Promise”

What is Combat Stress?

It is a normal response to combat danger, uncertainty and the environment. Combat stress becomes a problem if it is prolonged, excessive, or prevents function.

Common Physical and Emotional Signs

Tension:	Aches, pains
Jumpiness:	Easily startled, trembling
Heart:	Pounding, may feel dizzy or light headed
Breathing:	Rapid, out-of-breath
Stomach:	Upset, may vomit
Bowels:	Diarrhea or constipation
Energy:	Tired, drained
Eyes:	Distant, "1000-yard" stare
Anxiety:	Keyed up, worrying
Irritability:	Complaining, easily bothered
Attention:	Hard to remember details
Thinking:	Trouble concentrating
Sleep:	Awakened by bad dreams
Grief:	Crying for dead or wounded
Guilt:	Self-blame for perceived errors
Anger:	Feeling let down

What is PTSD?

PTSD or Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, is similar to combat stress reaction, and lasts longer or develops after one month.

"Re-experiencing or Reliving"

- Having upsetting and intrusive thoughts about the event
- Having bad dreams or nightmares about the event or something similar
- Behaving or feeling as if the event were actually happening all over again ("flashbacks")

Avoiding Reminders of the Event

- Avoiding thoughts, conversations or feelings that remind you about the event
- Avoiding people, places, or activities that remind you of the event
- Having difficulty remembering some important part(s) of the event
- Have lost interest in, or just don't do things that used to be important to you
- Feel emotionally "numb"

Arousal

- Have a hard time falling or staying asleep
- Have been irritable and having problems with anger
- Have had a hard time concentrating
- Feeling "jumpy" and get startled easily

Other Common Reactions

- Depression
- Anger or aggressive behavior
- Alcohol and/or drug abuse
- Self-blame, guilt and shame

Ways These Reactions May Interfere with Your Life

Effects on Your Family Life

- Poor communication
- Withdrawal from family
- Increase family conflict
- Marital separation and divorce
- Spouse and/or child abuse

Effects on Work Function

- Poor communication
- Lack of interest in job
- Lack of respect for authority
- Fear of employment prejudice
- Conflict with co-workers

Effects on Other Functioning

- Financial problems
- Sleep disruption
- Effects on physical health