

Things To Try:



Understand that you're normal and having normal reactions; don't label yourself as "crazy".



Structure your time; keep busy; keep as normal a schedule as possible.



Talk to people; talking can be very healing medicine.



Be aware of numbing the pain with drugs or alcohol; you don't need to complicate this situation with substance abuse.



Keep a journal; write your way through those sleepless hours.



Do things that feel good to you and are safe.



Get plenty of rest, even if you can't sleep.



Eat well-balanced and regular meals even if you don't feel like it.



Make as many daily decisions as possible that will give you a feeling of control over your life— even small decisions like what to wear or eat are important.



Don't try to fight reoccurring thoughts, dreams, or flashbacks— they are normal and will decrease over time and become less painful.



Reach out; spend time with others.

Share your feelings.



Sunshine Community Health Center

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Sunshine Community Health Center can provide both medical and behavioral health treatment for people who have experienced and/or witnessed a traumatic event. Behavioral Health treatment can be provided in either individual or group sessions. Financial arrangements can be made for those who may not seek treatment because of financial issues.

To find information online,
scan the QR code below or
visit this webpage:

www.sunshineclinic.org/behavioral-health/acute-stress/



Acute Stress Reaction

Learn:

- What it is
- What are common symptoms
- What can you do to help



What is Acute Stress Reaction (ASR)?

ASR is a normal reaction by persons who have experienced or witnessed traumatic events. Strong physical or emotional reactions can occur either immediately or somewhat after the actual event. The signs and symptoms may last a few days, a few weeks, or longer depending on the severity of the event or whether other traumatic events have been experienced in your past.

Common Signs & Signals (Physical)

- Chills or sweats
- Fatigue / weakness
- Nausea and / or vomiting
- Elevated BP and / or rapid heart rate
- Chest pain
- Headaches
- Shakiness / trembling / twitching
- Visual difficulties
- Dizziness fainting
- Grinding of teeth
- Thirst

Any of these symptoms may indicate the need for medical evaluation. When in doubt, contact a medical provider.

Common Signs & Signals (Cognitive)

- Uncertainty/confusion
- Hypervigilance
- Nightmares/flashbacks
- Suspiciousness
- Disturbing images
- Blaming
- Poor problem solving
- Poor attention/decision-making
- Poor concentration/memory
- Disorientation of time, place, or person
- Difficulty identifying objects or people
- Increase or decreased attention
- Increased or decreased awareness of surroundings

Common Signs & Signals (Emotional)

- Feelings of powerlessness/ helplessness
- Fear/panic/anxiety
- Denial
- Grief
- Guilt
- Emotional outbursts or inappropriate emotional responses
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Agitation/irritability
- Depression
- Intense anger

Common Signs & Signals (Behavioral)

- Withdrawal
- Inability to sleep
- Inability to rest
- Intensified pacing
- Wanting to isolate or fear of being alone
- Change in speech patterns
- Loss or increase of appetite
- Hyperalert to environment
- Increased alcohol or drug consumption
- Change in usual communication
- Antisocial acts

The more trauma a person has experienced in their life prior to the current traumatic event, the greater the likelihood of experiencing a larger number of the cognitive, behavioral, and emotional symptoms. If the symptoms or signals begin to interfere with your daily life, it may indicate a need for a professional help. When in doubt, contact a Behavioral Health provider. Most people successfully work through ASR during the first few months following the traumatic event. When symptoms persist, this can become PTSD.

Sources:

- International Critical Incident Stress Foundation, Inc.
- MD guidelines for treatment of Acute Stress Reaction