

*Did You Know?*

## POST TRAUMATIC STRESS

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) can result from **experiencing, witnessing or participating in an overwhelmingly traumatic event**. Often, people with PTSD have **persistent frightening thoughts and memories** of their ordeal and feel emotionally numb, especially with people they were once close to.

- PTSD affects about **5.2 million adult Americans** (up to 10% of the population).
- Women are more likely than men to develop PTSD.
- It can occur at any age, including childhood.
- In those who do develop PTSD, **symptoms usually begin within 3 months of the trauma, and must last more than a month to be diagnosed**.
- The disorder is **often accompanied by depression, substance abuse, or one or more other anxiety disorders**. In severe cases, the person may have trouble working or socializing.
- Ordinary events can serve as reminders of the trauma and trigger **flashbacks or intrusive images**. Anniversaries of the traumatic event are often very difficult.

People with PTSD can be effectively helped with psychotherapy and medication.

\*Facts from Active Minds, the National Institute of Mental Health & the American Psychiatric Association