



Remember: Experiencing distress after a trauma is common. Seeking support from friends and family can be helpful. Professional services are also available to help you to process the experience.

Memories of the experience, like memories of any experience, will diminish but remain with you. Counseling can help you manage those memories and your response to them in a healthy way

Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS) is available for consultation without an appointment. Call 575-5276 for days and times.

Mission Statement

The Pat Walker Health Center, University Health Services provides professional and comprehensive medical care, mental health care, health education, and health promotion for a diverse community of students, faculty, and staff. We, the University Health Services Staff of the Pat Walker Health Center, have a commitment to physical, mental, spiritual, social, and emotional health, the highest standards of quality, and appreciation of the value of each individual. Through these endeavors we support the educational mission of the University of Arkansas and the growth of each individual.

Pat Walker Health Center University Health Services

525 N. Garland Avenue
Fayetteville, AR 72701

(479) 575-4451
TTY (479) 575-4124

Website: health.uark.edu



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**Accreditation Association
for Ambulatory Health Care**

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UNIVERSITY of ARKANSAS

1871



University Health Services

Common Reactions to Traumatic Experiences



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Common Signs & Symptoms

Trauma can be a catastrophic experience for anyone. Regardless of personal background, life experiences, or history, anyone can develop symptoms of acute stress after experiencing or witnessing a traumatic event. **So, even the strongest of us can have problems after a traumatic event.**

After witnessing or experiencing a trauma, individuals often experience a range of symptoms. Everyone does not experience the same symptoms, nor does anyone experience all of them. The most commonly reported are listed to the right. **It is expected and normal to experience some of these symptoms.** The symptoms may begin during, soon after, or not-so-soon after the event.

While many individuals who witness or experience a traumatic event experience some of these symptoms, which ones you experience will be unique to you.

Experiencing a set of these symptoms does not mean that you are going crazy. It does not mean that you are weak.

Physical

- Fatigue or tiredness
- Nausea or vomiting
- Shaking or muscle twitching
- Rapid pulse
- Pounding heart
- Clenched jaw or grinding teeth
- Heavy sweating
- Chills
- Passing out or fainting

Mental

- Blaming someone
- Confusion
- Concentration or attention problems
- Indecision
- Poor decisions
- More alert than usual
- Less alert than usual
- Forgetfulness
- Unwanted images or thoughts
- Denial



Emotional

- Anxiety, Fear, or even panic
- Grief
- Guilt
- Shock
- Uncertainty
- Depression
- Feeling loss of emotional control
- Overwhelmed
- Angry, irritable, agitated

Behavioral

- Tearfulness
- Withdrawal
- Emotional outbursts
- Suspiciousness
- Easily startled
- Pacing
- Changes in...
 - amount or type of activities
 - speech
 - communication
 - appetite/hunger
 - eating
 - alcohol consumption
 - sexual function

These symptoms **do respond** to treatment. Symptoms respond best if you seek support or counseling sooner rather than later.

