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*