

While approximately 8 million Americans live with post-traumatic stress disorder in any given year, PTSD has long been particularly insidious for the military community.

However, your friend or loved one doesn't need to fight that battle forever. As a veteran or service member, PTSD isn't their destiny, nor should they simply accept it as part of their service.

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## HOW COMMON IS PTSD?

- Recent studies show that 87% of veterans were potentially exposed to traumatic events during their service, regardless of their combat experience.
- Estimates of PTSD rates in the veteran population vary, but many studies (including DoD data) indicate that the percentage is generally between 31-34%.
- Recent DoD data shows that PTSD is most prevalent in Vietnam veterans with a rate of about 30%.

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## HOW CAN YOU HELP A FRIEND OR LOVED ONE BATTLING PTSD?

- Learn as much as you can about PTSD
- Plan enjoyable activities with family and friends, but let them go at their own pace
- Offer to go to the doctor with them to provide support or take notes on treatment options
- Tell them that you want to listen, but that you understand if they don't feel like talking
- Work together to formulate a crisis plan
- Check in often so you can see what is and isn't working, and recognize what's most helpful to them

## WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE WARNING SIGNS OF PTSD?

- Intrusive memories, including flashbacks or nightmares of the traumatic event
- Avoiding talking about the traumatic event, or avoiding people, places or things that can remind them of the event
- Negative thoughts about themselves or others
- Memory problems, including aspects of the traumatic event
- Difficulty maintaining close relationships or feeling positive emotions
- Being easily startled or frightened, or always being on guard for danger
- Self-destructive behavior, such as substance abuse
- Irritability, angry outbursts or aggressive behavior
- Trouble sleeping
- Overwhelming guilt or shame

## HOW CAN YOU HELP KIDS IMPACTED BY A FRIEND OR LOVED ONE'S PTSD?

- Share age-appropriate information about PTSD and the challenges it causes
- Make it clear that it's not their fault and it's not their job to fix it
- Encourage them to share their feelings with you
- Express hope for the future

## HOW CAN YOU TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF WHEN A FRIEND OR LOVED ONE IS BATTLING PTSD?

- Maintain your sleep, diet and exercise routines, and don't let your medical appointments fall by the wayside
- Do the things you like to do when you need to recharge your batteries
- Set realistic boundaries about how much you can do or how much you can help
- Make sure you have someone you can talk to about what you're experiencing

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## HOW WE HELP

PTSD is never easy, but we're here for the fight. We have extensive experience working with veterans and service members who experience PTSD - over the last year, nearly 60% of the clients we've served have had a PTSD diagnosis. Our only focus is on helping you overcome your trauma and build a better future.

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### WHAT WE'LL DO

- Pair you with a Wellness Coordinator who will create a Crisis Response Plan and roadmap for care tailored specifically to you
- Keep your information, identity, and experiences safe and confidential
- Help you fully address the trauma you experienced and uncover the impacts it has made on your life
- Help you figure out what you need to feel like yourself again
- Empower you with the right resources and tools for you, no matter where you are in your journey
- Stick by your side for as long as you need us

### WHAT WE WON'T DO

- Treat you like a case number or statistic
- Pass you off to another call center or crisis line
- Share your information with your chain of command, the DoD or the VA
- Put a band-aid on a bigger problem and send you on your way
- Send you a bill for our services

**When you're ready, we're here.**  
Contact us by phone 24/7 at  
(844) 613-0403 or submit an online  
request at any time.

#### SOURCES