

WHAT IF YOU OR A BROTHER WAS INVOLVED IN A CRITICAL INCIDENT/ACCIDENT IN THE WORK PLACE?

HOW DOES POSTTRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER (PTSD) DEVELOPE?

All people with PTSD have lived through a traumatic event that caused them to fear for their lives, see horrible things, and feel helpless. Strong emotions caused by the event create changes in the brain that may result in PTSD. Most people who go through a traumatic event have some symptoms at beginning. Yet only some will develop PTSD.



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It isn't clear why some people develop PTSD and others don't. How likely you are to get PTSD depends on many things:

- How intense the trauma was or how long it lasted
- If you lost someone you were close to or were hurt
- How close you were to the event
- How strong your reaction was
- How much you felt in control of events
- How much help and support you got after the event

Many people who develop PTSD get better at some time. But about 1 out of 3 people with PTSD may continue to have some symptoms. Even if you continue to have symptoms, treatment can help you cope. Your symptoms don't have to interfere with your everyday activities, work, and relationships.

US Department of Veterans Affairs

WHAT ARE SOMETHING'S YOU COULD LOOK FOR?

- Be aware of numbing the pain with overuse of alcohol or other drugs
- Talk with people you trust. Reach out — people do care and talk is the most healing medicine.
- Don't be afraid to set limits with others when you don't feel like talking. You don't have to discuss the incident or your feelings when you don't want to.
- Maintain as normal a schedule as possible.
- Help your co-workers as much as possible by sharing feelings and checking out how they are doing.
 - Give yourself permission to feel rotten and share your feelings with others.
 - Don't make any big life changes or major life decisions at this time.
 - Get plenty of rest.
 - Recurring thoughts, dreams or flashbacks are normal — don't try to fight them — they'll decrease over time and become less painful.
 - Eat well-balanced and regular meals.

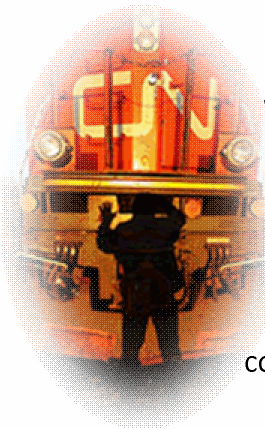


Materials adapted from the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation sources: www.icsf.org

Be aware that you should not ask people to talk about the event if they are unwilling to. For some people, talking about what happened can be useful, and they can do this. For people who do not want to talk about it voluntarily, do not force them. This can re-embed the incident in their minds. Give them time, so they can discuss it when they are ready to be able to handle the distress that may accompany such a conversation.

It is important to offer access to an Employee Assistance Program, or an Employee Support Service, and make this available to those people who request it. This will provide professional services to those who need it, in a confidential way. Making these services available to those who want to use them is crucial following an incident.

Devilly, G. J., & Cotton, P. *Psychologist*



WHAT ARE BLOOBBORNE PATHOGENS?

Blood borne pathogens are microorganisms in the blood or other body fluids that can cause illness and disease in people. The most common examples are HIV, hepatitis B, hepatitis C and viral hemorrhagic fevers. These microorganisms can be transmitted through contact with contaminated blood and body fluids.

HOW LONG DO THE HEPATITIS B, HEPATITIS C, AND HIV VIRUS SURVIVE OUTSIDE THE BODY HOST?

To a lesser extent, indirect contact with blood-contaminated surfaces can also transmit the hepatitis B virus. The virus may be stable in dried blood for up to 7 days at 25°C. HIV virus can't survive out of the body/host for more than 10 minutes depending on the volume of the blood and the temperature. The Hepatitis C virus can survive outside the body at room temperature, on environmental surfaces, for at least 16 hours but no longer than 4 days.

U.S. Department of Labor
Occupational Safety & Health
200 Constitution Ave., NW,
Washington, DC 20210

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PTSD (POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER) AND A NORMAL RESPONSE TO TRAUMA?

The traumatic events that lead to post-traumatic stress disorder are usually so overwhelming and frightening that they would upset anyone. Following a traumatic event, almost everyone experiences at least some of the symptoms of PTSD. When your sense of safety and trust are shattered, it's normal to feel crazy, disconnected, or numb. It's very common to have bad

dreams, feel fearful or numb, and find it difficult to stop thinking about what happened. These are normal reactions to abnormal events.

For most people, however, these symptoms are short-lived. They may last for several days or even weeks, but they gradually lift. But if you have post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), the symptoms don't decrease. You don't feel a little better each day. In fact, you may start to feel worse.

WHAT IS AN EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)?

Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) are employee benefit programs offered by many employers, typically in conjunction with a health insurance plan. EAPs are intended to help employees deal with personal problems that might adversely impact their work performance, health, and well-being. EAPs generally include assessment, short-term counseling and referral services for employees and their household members.

BROTHERS, YOU ARE ALL PROFESSIONALS WITHIN THE INDUSTRY WE WORK IN.

If you are involved in an incident/accident, ask to be relieved. If you need a few days to clear your head, ask for time off. If things start to get complicated for you, utilize the EAP Program. It is the utmost importance to maintain a stable and safe working environment for ourselves, other employees, and for the general public.

Throughout this entire process, the carrier should be treating you with the professional respect that you deserve.



At the end of the day, let's all make it back safe and sound.

*****This is for informational purposes only*****

From The WC/CN General Committee of Adjustments

Photos by William Beecher