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What's Stopping You? Overcoming Barriers to Care

The decision to get care for PTSD symptoms can be difficult. You are not alone

- Believing you will get better on your own
- Problems getting care, like finding a therapist, transportation, or cost
- Not knowing that PTSD treatments work
- Thinking that services are for other people, not you
- Stigma

if you feel nervous. It is not uncommon for people with mental health conditions like PTSD to want to avoid talking about it. But getting help for your symptoms is the best thing you can do. PTSD treatments can work.

Getting better" means different things for different people, but people who get treatment improve their quality of life. In many cases, PTSD treatment can get rid of your symptoms. For some, symptoms may continue after treatment, but you will have learned skills to cope with them better. Treatment can also help you: learn skills to better handle negative thoughts and feelings and reconnect with people you care about. It can help set goals for activities, like work or school, that you can handle.

Barriers specific to military context

When you are in the military, there are other things that may get in the way of seeking help. Military members may worry that talking about PTSD with doctors, other soldiers, or commanding officers will hurt their career. You may think if people in your unit learn you have PTSD they will see you as weak, or not trust you to be able to protect them. Or, you may feel that your medical records will be opened for other people to see.

Being afraid that seeking treatment will damage your career leads you to avoid getting help at a time when you need it most. Many don't get help until their return from deployment, or when their family tells them there is a problem. But you don't have to wait.

You may think that avoiding your PTSD is critical to keeping your job. But if your PTSD symptoms are getting in the way of doing your duties, it is better to deal with them before they hurt your military career. Getting help for PTSD is problem solving. (Continued on page 2)



22%
of veterans suffer from
post-traumatic stress disorder
or major depression



34%
suffer from other
mental concerns



1 out of 3
of these people seek help

What are barriers to care?

There are many different barriers, or things that might stop you from seeking help for PTSD. Part of PTSD is avoiding thinking about the trauma. So, it makes sense that people with PTSD may want to avoid getting treatment. Some reasons people might not seek care right away are:



A website to provide access to resources to support recovery, rehabilitation and community reintegration for wounded warriors, service members, Veterans, and their families.





When Veterans Come Home

By: Adrienne Traub

Conversations with returning service members can be difficult for civilians to know how to navigate. The boundary between positive conversation and sensitive topics is not always clear or intuitive. What can a civilian do to help bridge the gap when a service member comes home? It comes down to civility, situational awareness, and common sense.

Listen. A person's time in the military is a complex subject and only parts are open for frank conversation. Instead of asking a lot of questions, listen to what they volunteer to talk about. It can be a guide for what they are willing to discuss.

Have an Open Mind. Service members have a huge variety of backgrounds and life experiences. Recognize that stereotypes, just as with any group, are often false and hurtful.

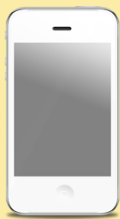
Try to Learn Something New. If you ask a Veteran about their experiences, start by learning the geography and history of where they served. A little research can go a long way in building appreciation and respect for service members.

Don't Assume Everyone has PTSD. It's easy to have misconceptions about mental health, this is a chance to realize that a common health issue is extremely individual and personal. Many face invisible wounds from their experiences, but making assumptions about a person's mental health is unhelpful and damaging to all aspects of life.

Joining the military can have a profound impact on those who served. Being respectful, aware, and thoughtful can help close the gap for Veterans.

**With respect
and gratitude,
Thank you Veterans!**

Veteran's Day November 11th, 2015



App of the month

Sleep Pillow Sounds Life (Free), from Jenna Kahn. "My roommate got me hooked on white noise in our dorm room. Since being home, I have started using this app to play ambient sounds before going to bed. I love the variety of sounds to choose from, and I am considering upgrading to the full version of the app. You can set a timer or keep the sound playing. Right now the water/rain sounds are my favorite." See more at: <http://bit.ly/1RidOPT>

Barriers Continued

How can I overcome barriers to care?

There are always reasons for people to put off seeking help, especially with PTSD. It is hard to find a therapist, hard to get time off from work, and hard to find the money to pay for treatment. Facing your problems can be scary. It is even harder if you don't know what to expect. But if you learn about PTSD treatments, find social support, and get started in treatment, you can feel more in control.

You can't change what others think about PTSD, but you can stop it from getting in your way.

Here are some steps you can take and resources to get help for PTSD:

- Learn about PTSD and treatments. Knowing that treatment helps and your options is important.
- Take the first step and find out where to get help. Check out NRD.gov to get started.
- Talk to someone you trust. Whether you talk to a family member, doctor, chaplain or clergy, or another service member or Veteran, getting support is key to getting better.

Source: www.ptsd.va.gov



What is Traumatic Brain Injury?

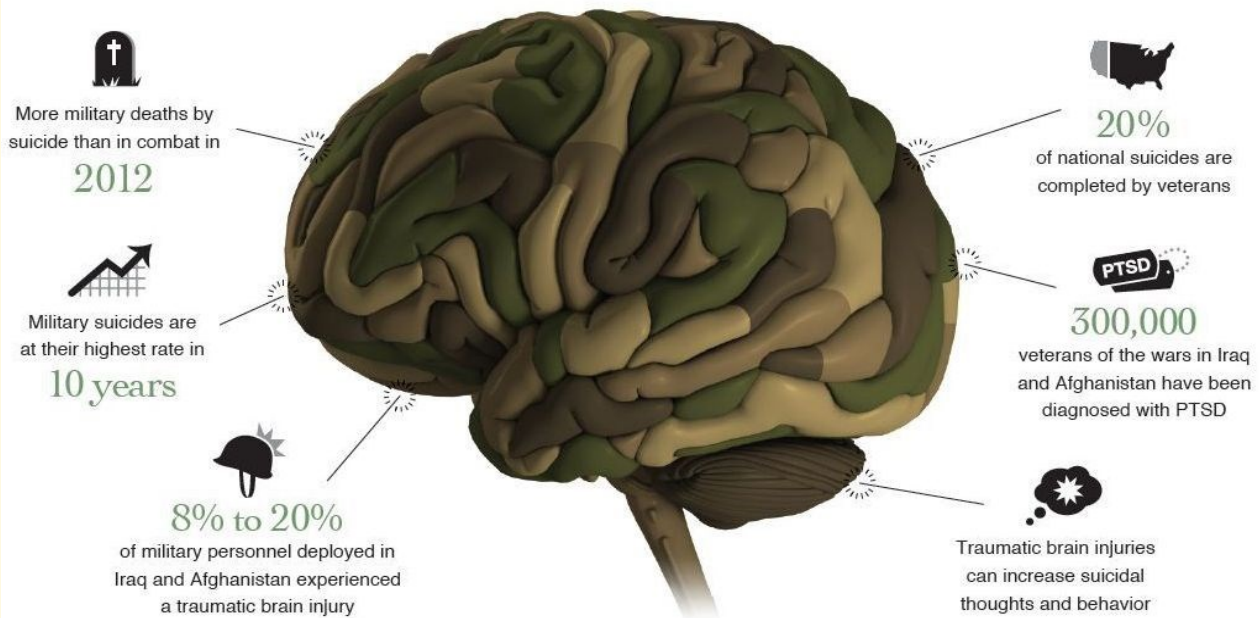
Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) is often called the signature wound of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. It occurs when a sudden trauma or head injury disrupts the function of the brain. 12-23% percent of service members returning from Operations Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom, and New Dawn experienced a TBI while deployed.

Symptoms can appear immediately or weeks to months following the injury. Depending upon the severity of the wound, TBI injuries are categorized as mild, moderate, severe or penetrating. It can cause a number of difficulties for the person who is injured, including physical changes, changes in the person's behavior, or problems with their thinking skills. Those who are at a higher risk for sustaining TBIs are young people who are performing military duties, or have a history of prior concussion and/or substance abuse. Source: www.ninds.nih.gov



MORE THAN
313,816
SERVICE MEMBERS
have sustained a TBI in
training or combat.

A VETERAN'S WORST WOUNDS MAY BE THE ONES YOU CAN'T SEE.



Recognizing mental illness is the first step toward recovery. Show returning soldiers that seeking help is a sign of strength. Learn more at psychiatry.org/mentalhealth



Questions, comments, or feed-
back on the MHA Newsletter?
We appreciate your thoughts!

EMAIL OPTION:

If you'd like to receive
the MHA Newsletter electronically
in color as a PDF, please send
your full name and email to:
erin@sevenvalleyshealth.org

Addressee

Community Events & Support



Parents & Change Support Group



This support group is for parents and caregivers
of children, teens, and adults with mental health
conditions. Meetings are from 6:00pm to 7:30pm
at 90 Central Avenue in Cortland.

2015 Meetings: November 23; December 21

For more information, contact Beckey Tripp at
parentsandchange@yahoo.com.

**"Mental Health is nothing to be ashamed of.
Neither is talking about it"**



November 9, 7:30pm
Veterans Day Celebration
Homer Masonic Lodge
(open to the public)

November 15, 3 pm
A Salute to Our Veterans
Cortland Grace Christian Fellowship Church

Survivors Of a Loved One's Suicide (SOLOS) Support Group



Come join us in a safe, comfortable environment to talk
about your lost loved one(s). Meetings are held the first
Thursday of every month from 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm.
For more info please contact Family Counseling Services
at 607-753-0234.



If you have an upcoming community event you would like considered for admission to
the MHA Newsletter, send your announcement to **erin@sevenvalleyshealth.org**

Disclaimer: The information presented here does not constitute professional medical advice. Individuals respond to treatment for
mental health conditions in different ways, and treatment plans often need adjustment over time. Patients should work closely with
their doctor and other health professionals in order to achieve optimal control of symptoms.