

How do I know if I need professional help?

In general, professional support is a good idea if you're having trouble coping on your own.

Strong feelings that won't go away, that last longer than a few weeks, or are interfering with normal functioning may be symptoms of depression, anxiety, or a post-traumatic reaction.



Many people do not seek professional help because they blame their symptoms on personal weakness or feel that they should deal with their problems on their own. But many people find that counseling helps them deal with their feelings more effectively.

You will find a list of professional help resources on the back of this brochure.

RESOURCES

The University of Pittsburgh Counseling Center
412-648-7930 - 334 William Pitt Union

Sexual Assault Services : 412-648-7856
Mary Koch Ruiz - Coordinator
926 William Pitt Union

Campus Ministry : 412-682-1051

On-campus emergencies (24 hrs) : 811

Campus Police Non-Emergency Number (24 hrs)
412-624-2121 - G1 Posvar Hall

Pittsburgh City Police (24 hrs) : 911

Student Health Service : 412-383-1800
3708 Fifth Avenue

Center for Victims of Violent Crime (24 hrs) :
412-392-8582

Magee-Womens Hospital (Emergency Room) :
412-641-4933

UPMC Presbyterian (Emergency Room) :
412-624-2000

National Center for Post-Traumatic Stress
Disorder: www.ncptsd.org

National Mental Health Association:
1-800-969-NMHA



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Counseling Center

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For more information visit our website at:
<http://www.pitt.edu/~counsel>

University of Pittsburgh
Counseling Center

A Division of Student Affairs

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WITH A TRAUMATIC EVENT

Have you experienced a traumatic event?

A traumatic event is a situation that threatens your safety or the safety of others in your environment. Whether



you are directly or indirectly impacted by trauma, you may experience intense feelings of fear, hopelessness, or anxiety.

Common traumatic events include:

- ◆ Physically violent acts such as rape, mugging, or domestic violence
- ◆ Acts of terrorism
- ◆ Adult or childhood physical, emotional, or sexual abuse
- ◆ Car, plane, or train accidents
- ◆ Carjackings
- ◆ Natural disasters such as floods, tornados, or hurricanes
- ◆ Involvement in a combat or war situation
- ◆ Witnessing an accident, assault, or suicide
- ◆ Unexpected death of a loved one



COMMON REACTIONS TO TRAUMATIC EVENTS

- ◆ Strong emotions including shock, fear, anger, grief, confusion, and horror
- ◆ Feelings of helplessness, disbelief, powerlessness, disconnectedness, or aloneness
- ◆ Feelings of guilt or worthlessness
- ◆ Difficulties sleeping
- ◆ Nightmares or disturbing dreams
- ◆ Intrusive or upsetting thoughts or memories of the event
- ◆ Having strong reactions to things that remind you of the event
- ◆ Problems with concentration, learning, and decision-making
- ◆ Extreme mood swings, irritability, restlessness, outbursts of anger
- ◆ Headaches, stomachaches, rashes or other allergic reactions
- ◆ Feelings of foreboding or impending doom, or feelings of fear about the future
- ◆ Increased concern about the safety of loved ones or about your own safety
- ◆ Thoughts of death or suicide, persistent feelings of pessimism or worthlessness



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- ◆ Stay connected to friends and family --many people find it helpful to talk with others about what happened, but even those who prefer not to talk can find comfort in being with loved ones
- ◆ Take care of yourself. Eat well, get enough exercise and sleep. Do activities you enjoy or find relaxing.
- ◆ Avoid excessive drinking -- remember, alcohol is a depressant
- ◆ Try to get back to your normal routine, but be aware that you may need to do some extra self-care
- ◆ Don't make big life-changing decisions for several months.
- ◆ Take time to grieve -- traumatic events often leave us with a sense of loss
- ◆ Do something positive to help others -- give blood, donate food, volunteer
- ◆ Ask others directly for what you need and want
- ◆ Act on facts about what has happened, not speculation or rumors