

# Could I have Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder?

Here are a few things to help determine if this is what you are experiencing. Check any that apply to you. Even if it's not PTSD, this may still help you identify what's going on. PTSD is only diagnosed by a licensed professional using a manual called the *DSM-5\**. This is to help you pinpoint and discuss your symptoms, but is not intended to give you a diagnosis. This is a tool you can use to give to your doctor, therapist, coach, school counselor, or loved one in order to take the first step toward feeling like yourself again. Visit [thewatchdogproject.org](http://thewatchdogproject.org) for more info. Remember, trauma can affect *anyone* with a brain. Take care of yours.

## MIND: Check All That Apply

- Identify with at least one of WATCHDOG events (to the right)
- Distressing memories of the event(s)
- Avoiding things that are reminders of the event(s)
- Flashbacks
- Hard time remembering the event(s)
- Persistent negative beliefs about oneself or the world
- Feel guilt, shame, or blame
- Hypervigilance (increased alertness, feeling of danger)
- Reckless or self-destructive behavior
- Angry outbursts and/or unprovoked aggression
- Memory or concentration impairment
- Sometimes the world feels distant or dreamlike
- No interest in activities that were previously enjoyed

- **W: war (includes events witnessed in service)**
- **A: assault (i.e. rape, violent home invasion, hate crime)**
- **T: tragic event (i.e. natural disaster, 9/11)**
- **C: childhood or familial neglect (for LGBT+ can include after coming-out)**
- **H: health condition (i.e. waking up during surgery, child's cancer diagnosis)**
- **D: domestic abuse (physical or verbal)**
- **O: occupational hazard (i.e. police collecting human remains, hearing/seeing details of horrific crimes)**
- **G: grief/sudden loss (not of natural causes)**



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## BODY: Check All That Apply

- Insomnia
- Irritable bowel syndrome
- Clenching or grinding teeth (bruxism)
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Infertility
- Sexual dysfunction
- Nightmares/night terrors
- Physical illness diagnosed as *idiopathic* because the cause was unknown
- Turn to alcohol, illicit drugs, or narcotics to try to feel better
- Other concern:

**Any of these have lasted for longer than 1 month**

Note: MIND symptoms are from the *DSM-5\** and are specific to individuals over age 6. See website citations for BODY symptoms.

\*American Psychiatric Association. (2013). Post-traumatic stress disorder. *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (5th ed.), p 271-280. Washington, DC: Author.