

POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

PTSD after a burn injury



What is Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder After Trauma (PTSD)?

PTSD is a mental health condition that may develop after trauma and can cause:

- **Distressing memories**
- **Avoidance**
- **Heightened anxiety**
- **Difficulty feeling safe.**

These symptoms are normal and will improve with time. But if your symptoms last for more than a month and affect your quality of life, you should talk to a mental health professional.

To manage mild symptoms, you can try these techniques below.

PTSD Symptoms and Strategies to Manage Them



Nightmares

- If you wake up, remind yourself it was a dream and that you are safe.
- Try deep breathing, muscle relaxation, or calming music to help you fall back asleep.
- Rewrite the nightmare's ending. Imagine or journal a better outcome to regain control.



Flashbacks

- Use grounding techniques to remind you to stay in the present moment. Name five things you can see, four things you can touch, three things you hear, two things you smell, and one thing you taste.
- Take slow, deep breaths to calm your body.
- Remind yourself: "This is not happening now. I am safe."

PTSD Symptoms and Strategies to Manage Them



Anxiety & Fear Response

- Try breathing exercises. Inhale for 4 seconds, hold for 4, exhale for 4, and rest for 4.
- Take part in relaxation techniques that are based on movement. This includes yoga, stretching, walking, and exercise.
- Use progressive muscle relaxation. Tense and relax each muscle group from your head to your toes. Be aware of where you hold tension in your body.



Avoidance

- Gradually expose yourself to situations you fear. The longer you avoid what you are afraid of, the stronger the fear may become.
- Pair this exposure with relaxation. This includes deep breathing, grounding, or mindfulness.
- Exposure therapies can help you work through your triggers in a controlled and safe environment. Seek guidance from a mental health professional to do it safely.

Did you know?

Post-traumatic growth (PTG) is the positive psychological change that can occur after trauma. PTG can lead to greater resilience, deeper relationships, new viewpoints, and a stronger sense of purpose.



For more information about Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) After Burn Injury, visit: [Posttraumatic Stress Disorder \(PTSD\) After a Burn Injury](#) | MSKTC

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