



NeuRA

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POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER Factsheet

August 2021

How do personal characteristics impact on risk for PTSD?

Personal characteristics, such as age, can influence one's degree of risk for developing PTSD. How such personal characteristics may affect the development of PTSD would be influenced by other personal characteristics as well as differences in the trauma experience itself.

What is the evidence for effects of age on risk for PTSD?

Moderate to high quality evidence found small associations between *younger age* and more PTSD symptoms in women following childbirth, and in professionals indirectly exposed to trauma through their therapeutic work with trauma victims.

Moderate quality evidence found small associations between *older age* and more PTSD symptoms following burn injuries, and following earthquakes. There was a medium-sized effect of more PTSD symptoms in older adults (>60-65 years) than younger adults (<60 years) following exposure to any natural disaster. However, there was also a medium-sized effect of less severe PTSD symptoms in older adults following exposure to any man-made disaster. Review authors suggest the disparity in findings between natural and human-induced disasters may be explained by older adults being less likely to receive advanced warnings or to evacuate during a natural disaster, and therefore may experience greater disruption or perceived loss, while previous experiences may better prepare older people to cope with man-made disasters.

There were no effects of age on risk of PTSD after a fall in elderly people (age 65 to 90 compared to over 90 years), following a traumatic brain injury at any age, and in combat-exposed military personnel and veterans.

For more information see the technical table



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NeuRA (Neuroscience Research Australia) is one of the largest independent medical and clinical research institutes in Australia and an international leader in neurological research.

Diseases of the brain and nervous system pose the greatest health, economic and social burden of any disease group because they are chronic, debilitating and have no known cures.

Medical research is the cornerstone of efforts to advance the health and wellbeing of families and the community. Our dedicated scientists are focussed on transforming their research into significant and practical benefits for all patients.

While we hope you find this information useful, it is always important to discuss any questions about PTSD and its treatment with your doctor or other health care provider.

HOW YOUR SUPPORT HELPS

We are able to make significant advances due to the generosity of countless people. Your donation allows us to continue to work towards transforming lives. For information on how you can support our research, phone **1300 888 019** or make a secure donation at neura.edu.au/donate