

POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER Factsheet

August 2021

What is memory?

Memory involves encoding, storage and retrieval of information. Short-term memory is the ability to remember information after several seconds or minutes; and long-term memory is the ability to remember information over a longer duration. Semantic memory is memory for general facts, episodic memory is memory for personal events, prospective memory is memory for future actions, and retrospective memory is memory for past events. Working memory involves information being temporarily held as well as manipulated.

What is the evidence for memory ability in people with PTSD?

Moderate quality evidence finds small to medium-sized effects that people with PTSD had poorer memory (episodic and prospective) than controls. There were medium to large effects of poorer verbal episodic and working memory in people with PTSD, with similar effects found in children and adults. Visual episodic memory was impaired only in children with PTSD.

Moderate to low quality evidence finds large deficits in autobiographical memory in people with PTSD. Review authors explain an autobiographical memory deficit in PTSD as having difficulty recalling specific details of personal events and a tendency to recall an overall, general impression of events instead.

For more information see the technical table



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