



## POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER Factsheet

March 2022

### How is illness onset relevant to PTSD?

Differences are observed in the age at onset of mental disorders, which may be influenced by genetic and/or environmental factors. While most individuals develop symptoms of PTSD within three months of the trauma, some symptoms can appear later and persist for months and sometimes years. Understanding the factors associated with the onset of symptoms could lead to better understanding of the disorder and earlier and improved intervention strategies for patients.

### What is the evidence for illness onset of PTSD?

Moderate to high quality evidence finds the average age at onset of PTSD is 26.6 years, with no differences between males and females. The median age at onset is around 30 years.

The overall median prevalence of PTSD tends to reduce over time, from 28.8% at one-month post trauma to 17% at 12 months post trauma. Median prevalence post non-intentional (accidental) trauma also decreases over time (30.1% to 14%), while median prevalence post intentional (non-accidental) trauma is lower initially and increases over time (11.8% to 23.3%).

Around 24.5% of people diagnosed with PTSD had a delayed onset of illness, with most experiencing earlier milder symptoms. The prevalence of delayed-onset PTSD is highest in professional groups and those who experienced combat trauma.

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](https://neura.edu.au/donate)