

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder:

What is it and how can it affect us as healthcare providers?

Matthew Zinder, MS, CH, CRNA

PTSD Definition

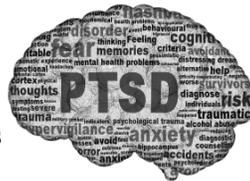
A disorder that develops in some people who have seen or lived through a shocking, scary, or dangerous event.



What is Traumatic Stress?

• Daily Hassles:

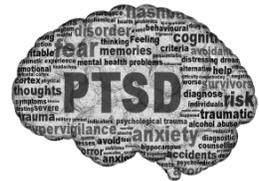
- Car breaking down
- Paying bills
- Work related stresses



What is Traumatic Stress?

• Major Life Events

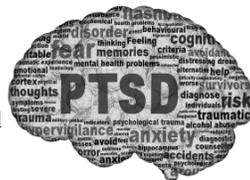
- Losing a job
- Divorce
- Buying a new home/moving
- Getting married



What is Traumatic Stress?

• Serious Traumatic Events

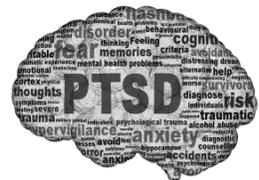
- A situation where someone feels that their lives, or the lives of someone they know could be threatened
- Could be witnessed or experienced directly
- Could be an event that happened to someone close to you



What is Traumatic Stress?

• Serious Traumatic Events

- War Zone Exposure
- Physical or sexual assault
- Serious accidents
- Child sexual or physical abuse
- Natural disasters
- Torture



According to the DSM-V

- Diagnosis for PTSD requires specific types of trauma exposure:
 - Directly experiencing a traumatic event
 - Witnessing, in person, an event that happened to someone else
 - Learning about the violent or unexpected death of a friend or family member
 - Experiencing repeated or extreme exposure to aversive details of traumatic events

According to the DSM-V

- Does NOT include:
 - Exposure to electronic media like television, movies, or photographs
 - (unless this exposure is work-related)



Dissociative symptoms and numbing

- **Acute Stress Disorder:** dissociative symptoms during or immediately after the distressing event: amnesia, depersonalization, derealization, decreased awareness of surroundings, numbing, detachment, or lack of emotional response
- **PTSD:** dx not made because of initial reactions at the time of the trauma but is based on characteristic symptoms that occur 1 month after the trauma.

Symptom Clusters

- **At least 1 Re-experiencing symptom**
 - Recurrent recollections of event
 - Recurrent distressing dreams
 - Acting or feeling as if event is recurring (flashbacks)
 - Psychological distress to cues resembling event
 - Physiological reactivity to cues resembling event



Symptom Clusters

- **At least 1 Avoidance Symptom**
 - Avoidance of thoughts or feelings that are reminders of the event
 - Avoidance of activities, places, people, or conversations that are reminders of the event



Symptom Clusters

- **At least 2 Persistent negative alterations in cognitions and mood**
 - Markedly diminished interest in significant activities
 - Feelings of detachment from others
 - Inability to experience positive emotions
 - Inability to recall important aspects of the trauma



Symptom Clusters

- **At least 2 Persistent negative alterations in cognitions and mood**

- Negative emotional state
- Exaggerated negative beliefs or expectations
- Distorted blame of self or others about the trauma



Symptom Clusters

- **At least 2 Hyperarousal**

- Sleep disturbance
- Irritable behavior and outbursts of anger
- Problems with concentration
- Hypervigilance
- Reckless or self destructive behavior
- Exaggerated startle response



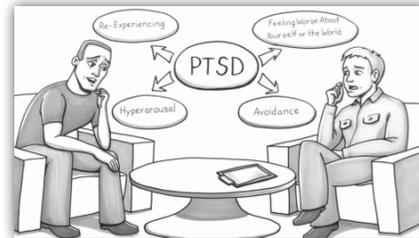
Anesthesia & Analgesia Article

- Gozoni et al. study
 - Sample of 1200 anesthesiologists
 - 84% acknowledged involvement in at least 1 unanticipated death or serious injury of a patient
 - 70% experienced symptoms of guilt, anger, depression, repetitive reliving of event, and loss of confidence
 - 88% required time to recover emotionally from the event
 - 12% considered a career change
 - 67% believed that their ability to provide anesthesia was compromised
 - Only 7% were given time to collect their thoughts immediately following the event
 - 5% admitted to the use of alcohol or drugs as a result of the event



Treatment

- Cognitive Behavioral Therapies-Now considered the gold standard for PTSD treatment due to significant success
 - Prolonged Exposure Therapy
 - Cognitive Processing Therapy



Treatment

- Prolonged Exposure

- Evidenced based treatment
- 8-12 weeks
- Repeated exposure to trauma memories
- Confronting things that one is afraid of secondary to trauma in a safe environment over time



Treatment

- Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT)

- Evidenced based treatment
- Examine thoughts in order to change behavior
- Perform writings about thoughts and behaviors
- Writings are analyzed and processed to change behaviors to better cope with surroundings and past trauma



APSF Article

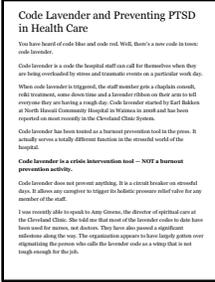
- What can be done to help the “second victim”
 - Create an open, understanding environment for colleagues to discuss mistakes
 - Senior staff should be supportive of the affected provider by encouraging dialogue regarding the events and the resulting emotions
 - Departmental and institutional policies and procedures, that are not punitive, should be in place to facilitate formal psychological counseling when indicated



Code Lavender

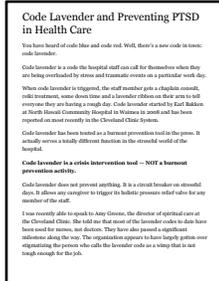
Medical Blog, Dike Drummond, M.D.

- Started by Earl Bakken at North Hawaii Community Hospital in Waimea in 2008 and has been reported on most recently in the Cleveland Clinic System.
- Code lavender is a code the hospital staff can call for themselves when they are being overloaded by stress and traumatic events on a particular work day.
- When code lavender is triggered, the staff member gets a chaplain consult, reiki treatment, some down time and a lavender ribbon on their arm to tell everyone they are having a rough day.



Code Lavender

- Can be used as a tool to prevent PTSD
 - Code lavender institutionalizes the support, ensures you will be rallied around in the case of a bad outcome
 - As long as the stress is recognized and the code called appropriately.



Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

PTSD, as defined by the **International Statistical of Health**, is an anxiety disorder that can be experienced after meeting or being through a dangerous or traumatic event. It is important to your health to recognize symptoms of PTSD and take resources for seeking help (see below).

Veterans and PTSD

Without personal because of the nature of their work and exposure to war, disaster, and trauma are especially vulnerable to PTSD.

The **U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs National Center for PTSD** is the nation's leading provider of care for PTSD with nearly 250,000 veterans currently in treatment. VA has many entry points to care through the use of veterans treatment counseling centers, the **Veterans Crisis Line (1-800-273-8255, press 1)**, and integration of mental health services in the primary care setting. Since 2007, VA has seen a 35 percent increase in the number of veterans receiving mental health services, and a 41 percent increase in mental health care.

Online at www.ptsd.va.gov, the VA raises awareness of PTSD and provides resources to individuals, families, and communities designed to help those who may be at risk. These include:

- **Free PTSD Coach mobile app** (iPhone, Android)
- **Veterans talk** about living with PTSD and how treatment turned their lives around
- **PTSD info page** to raise awareness (PDF)
- **PTSD info materials** to print and share
- **Professional resources for diagnosing and treating PTSD**

CRNAs and PTSD

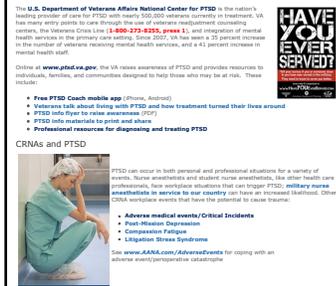
PTSD can occur in both personal and professional situations for a variety of events. Home earthquakes and disaster cause devastation, like other health care professionals, face workplace situations that can trigger PTSD: **military service experiences** in service to our country can have an increased likelihood. Other CRNA workplace events that have the potential to cause trauma:

- **Adverse medical events/Critical Incidents**
- **Post-Incident Depression**
- **Compassion Fatigue**
- **Litigation Stress Syndrome**

See www.AANA.com/AdverseEvents for coping with an adverse event/traumatic catastrophe

Links to online PTSD information:

- **The National Institute of Mental Health**: Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
- **MayoClinic.com**: Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder



Resources

- ptsd.va.gov
- ptsdinfo.org
- aana.com
- National Institute of Mental Health:
 - PTSD resources page
 - www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/post-traumatic-stress-disorder-ptsd/index.shtml
- Medically induced trauma support services
 - mitss.org



You are not alone - for assistance contact

AANA Professional Practice Division

(847) 655-8870

Comments, concerns, or recommendations can be emailed to wellness@aana.com