

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

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Diagnosis

- ★ Exposure to actual or threatened death, serious injury, or sexual violence.
 - Directly
 - Indirectly
 - Repeatedly
 - learning
- ★ Presence of one of the following intrusion symptoms associated with the traumatic event, beginning after the traumatic event has occurred.
 - Recurrent, involuntary, and intrusive distressing memories of the traumatic event.
 - Recurrent distressing dreams
 - flashbacks.
- ★ Persistent avoidance of stimuli associated with the traumatic event
 - Avoid distressing memories, thoughts, or feelings
 - Avoid people, places, conversations, activities, objects, situations
- ★ Negative alterations in cognitions and mood associated with the traumatic event
 - Inability to remember
 - Persistent and exaggerated negative beliefs
 - Blaming himself/herself or others.
 - fear, horror, anger, guilt, or shame
 - Feelings of detachment

Diagnosis (continued)

- ★ Marked alterations in arousal and reactivity associated with the traumatic event.
 - Irritable behavior and angry outbursts.
 - Reckless or self-destructive behavior.
 - Hypervigilance.
 - Exaggerated startle response.
 - Problems with concentration.
 - Sleep disturbance.
- ★ Duration of the disturbance.
- ★ The disturbance in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning.
- ★ The disturbance in physiological effects of a substance (medication, alcohol) or another medical condition.

If you do meet this criteria you may fall under the PTSD diagnosis.

Prevalence / Risk Factors

- ★ PTSD is a universal phenomenon
- ★ Adolescents are more likely to develop PTSD than children or adults
- ★ Risk factors include experiencing the following:
 - Natural disaster
 - Sexual or physical assault
 - *Repeated instances increase your risk of developing PTSD*
 - Combat or exposure to war zone
 - Lack of social support
 - Previous psychiatric history

Nursing Interventions

- ★ Medications (Prozac, Zoloft, Paxil)
- ★ Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR)
 - Concentrate on something positive while watching a moving hand or a flashing light
- ★ Stress inoculation training
 - Relaxing of the body by massage or breathing techniques
- ★ Prolonged exposure therapy
 - 8-15 sessions lasting 90 minutes each to ease anxiety, then progress to communicating the traumatic event
- ★ Cognitive Processing Therapy
 - 12 week course lasting 60-90 minutes each session, processing the traumatic event - talking about it, then writing it down on paper and seeing how it affected your life

Theory

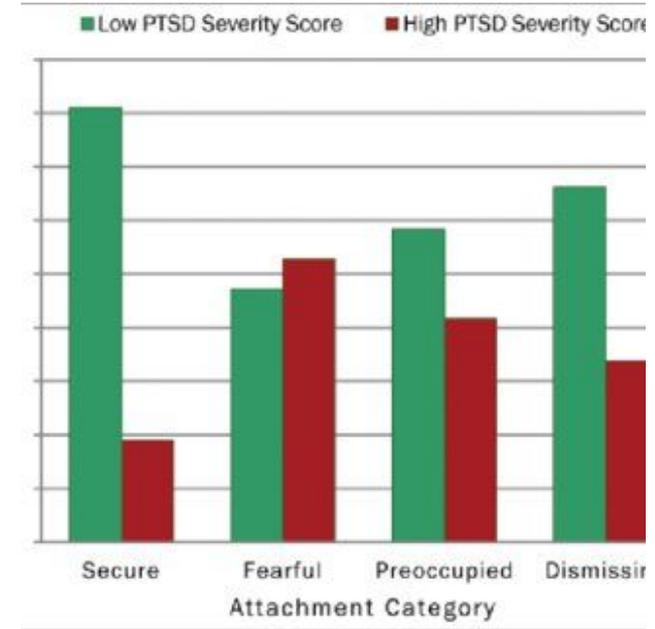
Theorist- John Bowlby (1907-1990)

- ★ **Attachment theory**- There is increasing evidence that adult attachment plays a role in the development and perseverance of symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD).
- ★ Adult attachment refers to patterns of expectations, beliefs and emotions concerning the response and availability of people who are close during stressful times or events.
- ★ Research suggests that how we attach ourselves to specific beliefs or situations shape mental representations of events which in turn influence how individuals perceive and cope with objective and subjective threats (NCBI, 2015)

Theory (continued)

Individuals who have fearful attachment score the highest on the PTSD severity scale.

Fearful attachment- individuals desire closeness with people but are fearful of being close. We see this with soldiers who do not want those whom they are close with to be put in harm's way (healthline,2020)



References

- ★ American Psychiatric Association. **Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders. 5th ed.** Arlington, VA: American Psychiatric Association; 2013.
- ★ Ogle, C. M., Rubin, D. C., & Siegler, I. C. (2015, July). *The relation between insecure attachment and posttraumatic stress: Early life versus adulthood traumas*. *Psychological trauma : theory, research, practice and policy*. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4493437/>.
- ★ PhD Rn, S. V. L. (2019b). *Psychiatric-Mental Health Nursing* (8th ed.). LWW.
- ★ **6 Common Treatments for PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder).** (2020, January 21). Retrieved from <https://www.webmd.com/mental-health/what-are-treatments-for-posttraumatic-stress-disorder>