

## **Traumatic events can cause the following symptoms:**

- Intrusive thoughts (nightmares, flashbacks, memories)
- Avoiding reminders of the trauma
- Experiencing strong emotional and physical reactions when reminded of the trauma
- Detachment from others
- Irritability
- Feeling numb/empty
- Hypervigilance
- Racing thoughts
- Shame and blame
- Feeling anxious and/or depressed
- Trouble sleeping

## **How do I know it is time to get help?**

Sometimes, natural coping allows for traumatic stress reactions to diminish. Taking care of your basic needs and connecting with friends/family can be helpful. But if symptoms continue for more than a month, it is time to seek professional counseling. It is also time to seek counseling if attempts to deal with trauma lead to unhealthy coping behaviors such as excessive drinking and/or drug use.

## **Some examples of traumatic events can include (but are not limited to):**

- Near drowning
- Sexual abuse
- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Childhood neglect
- Physical attack
- Military combat
- Sexual assault
- Kidnapped/Hostage
- Car wreck
- Natural disaster
- Animal attack
- Serious medical illness
- Being a victim of stalking

People can experience traumatic events on a regular basis that is not tied to one particular event. This can lead to what is referred to as **Complex PTSD** or **Developmental PTSD** where survival mode has become a way of life.

Helpful Links: National Center for PTSD | [www.ptsd.va.gov](http://www.ptsd.va.gov)  
American Psychological Association | [www.apa.org](http://www.apa.org)