

How Trauma Can Affect You

Feeling scared

The trauma has taught your mind and body that bad things can happen. It is normal to feel scared or anxious for some time afterwards. You might notice your heart racing, feel sweaty, or feel shaky.



Flashbacks

Memories of your trauma can 'pop' – unwanted – into your mind. It can feel like the trauma is happening again right now. Memories can be of sights, sounds, smells, tastes, or body feelings.



Looking out for danger

You might find that you are quick to notice anything or anyone that could hurt you. After a trauma, your brain is 'programmed' to stay on the lookout just in case there is more that could hurt you.



Difficulty trusting people

After you have been hurt by others it can be very difficult to trust anyone, even if they are not the same people who hurt you. You might feel uncomfortable being around other people.



Wanting to avoid danger

After being hurt, you might want to avoid things that remind you of what happened:

- People
- Places
- Thoughts
- Memories



Blaming yourself

Many people blame themselves for what happened to them, even though it clearly wasn't their fault. You might find yourself thinking about ways that you could have prevented it.



Dissociation

Dissociation means feeling strangely separate from your body, or the world. During a trauma your body may automatically freeze (go still) and your mind may go somewhere else (zone out). This can happen after a trauma too.



Feeling angry

You might find that you get frustrated or lose your temper easily. You might feel annoyed by the way that other people behave, or you may get cross with yourself.



Nightmares and sleeping badly

Having bad dreams or nightmares about your trauma is common. It is not unusual to wet the bed. You might find it difficult to get to sleep, or you might wake up in the night.



Feelings in your body

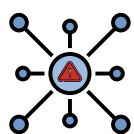
You might feel strong feelings in your body:

- Headaches.
- Stomach-aches.
- Unexplained pains.
- Feelings like you had during your trauma.



Problems concentrating

Any of the problems listed on this page can make it difficult to concentrate and pay attention. Do you recognise which ones affect you most?



Feeling sad

You might feel sad about the things that have happened to you. You might feel hopeless about your future. You might feel sad without even knowing why.

