**Signs and Symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder**

0 = Not at all; never.  1 = sometimes; a little.  2 = Moderately.  3 = strongly; nearly all the time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Symptoms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Y / N  | Have you experienced or witnessed a traumatic or life-threatening event such as an assault, rape, seeing someone badly injured or killed, combat, accidents, or natural or man-made disasters?  
If patient responds yes, proceed with the following questions. |
|        | Have you recently experienced any of the following **physical responses:**  
- Excessive alertness, on the look-out for signs of danger  
- Easily startled by movements or noise  
- Difficulty sleeping  |
|        | Have you recently experienced any of the following **emotional responses:**  
- Feeling numb, detached or cut-off from other people  
- Fear of the event happening again, or something else bad happening to you  
- Easily irritated with others  
- Difficulty concentrating  
- Feeling guilty about what you did (or did not do), or simply surviving better than others  
- Feeling distress when reminded of any aspect of the event  |
|        | Have you been reminded of or **re-experienced** the event in any of the following ways:  
- Intrusive thoughts and memories of the event  
- Visual images of the event  
- Nightmares  
- Felt like you were reliving the event  |
|        | Have you experienced any of the following **behavioural responses:**  
- Avoidance of places or activities that are reminders of the event  
- Avoiding thoughts and feelings associated with the event  
- Wanting to be alone and feeling detached from others  
- Difficulty remembering important aspects of the event  
- Feeling uninterested in your usual activities (for example, work or family commitments)  |
Guidelines for use

It is normal to experience many of these symptoms following a traumatic event. For many people these symptoms will subside shortly after the event.

If a patient scores greater than 6 and has been experiencing these symptoms for greater than one month, this indicates high symptom levels and a probable diagnosis. The client will probably benefit from a referral to a fully qualified clinical psychologist skilled in trauma.

If a patient scores between 1-6 and has been experiencing these symptoms for less than one month then we suggest that you monitor and reassess in another month.

Patients may benefit from psycho-education on how to manage psychological trauma (see our information sheet on “Managing psychological Trauma”) and relaxation exercises. They may need advice about avoiding alcohol or major decisions at this time.

National treatment guidelines for PTSD suggest that CBT is the treatment of choice. Early ‘debriefing’ is not necessarily helpful. SSRI’s can be helpful (sertraline has the most research support), although benzodiazepines are contraindicated.

If you wish to discuss treatment with a fully qualified psychologist, you can call Basten & Associates, Clinical Psychologists on 9891-1766.
Chatswood    Sydney    Westmead
www.bastenpsychology.com.au