

# let's talk

## Understanding trauma

Trauma is a response we can have after we see, hear about or go through something very distressing. Everyone experiences trauma differently, there is no 'normal' way. Most people start to feel themselves again with the help and support of friends and family. However, some people may need the help of a mental health professional.

### What trauma might feel like

#### Physical

- Being easily scared
- Having trouble sleeping
- Having trouble concentrating or remembering things
- Having tense muscles
- Avoiding places where the event happened
- Not wanting to be around family and friends
- Loss of interest in enjoyable activities

#### Emotional

- Feeling numb or no longer connected to people in your life
- Feeling stressed or anxious
- Fear
- Guilt or shame
- Sadness
- Anger
- Having memories or nightmares of the event
- Panic

### How to take care of yourself

- Spend time with friends and family, don't isolate yourself
- Take breaks and get lots of sleep
- Try to get back to a routine but don't push yourself
- Limit how much media coverage and social media you see and hear about the event
- Ask for support when you need it
- Know that others are going through trauma too, you are not alone
- Express your feelings in your own time and way
- Try not to take big risks or make life-changing decisions until you are ready
- Write down your worries and concerns
- Know that you won't have all the answers
- Accept help if people are offering it
- Eat well and limit alcohol

Remember, it can take time to grow through trauma.

Give yourself enough time for recovery and let yourself feel a range of emotions - they are all normal

If you or someone else is in immediate danger call 000 or go to your nearest hospital emergency department.

# When to get help

You should see a mental health professional if you are experiencing:

- Extreme feelings of distress
- Emotional reactions that last longer than a few weeks
- Distress that stops you doing your day-to-day activities
- Not wanting to be around your loved ones
- Avoiding enjoyable activities
- Feelings of extreme fear for no reason
- Panic symptoms (e.g. racing heart, light-headedness, breathing difficulties)
- Avoiding things that bring back memories, so much that you can't do normal activities
- Feelings of extreme guilt or sadness
- Using alcohol or other substances to cope
- A loss of interest in the future
- Thoughts of self-harm or suicide

# Where to get help

## General Practitioners (GPs)

for advice and treatment. GPs also provide Mental Health Treatment Plans and referrals

## Specialised mental health clinicians and services

such as psychologists, social workers, mental health nurses or psychiatrists (can be referred by a GP)

## Telephone support services

NSW Mental Health Line 1800 011 511 (24 hours)

Lifeline 13 11 15 (24 hours)

Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800 (24 hours)

Suicide Callback Service 1300 659 467 (24 hours)

MensLine 1300 78 99 78 (24 hours)

National Association for Loss and Grief 02 6882 9222

Beyond Blue Support 1300 224 636

## Online information and counselling services

National Association of Loss and Grief:

[nalag.org.au](http://nalag.org.au)

Black Dog Institute: [blackdoginstitute.org.au](http://blackdoginstitute.org.au)

Head to Health: [headtohealth.gov.au](http://headtohealth.gov.au)

Mental Health Online:

[mentalhealthonline.org.au](http://mentalhealthonline.org.au)

This Way Up: [thiswayup.org.au](http://thiswayup.org.au)

Phoenix Australia: [phoenixaustralia.org](http://phoenixaustralia.org)

**Support group for those affected by shark attacks and bites:**  
[beyondthebite.org](http://beyondthebite.org)

# Contact your local RAMHP Coordinator

RAMHP has Coordinators based across NSW who provide specialist knowledge and support for people experiencing mental health concerns

VISIT [www.ramhp.com.au](http://www.ramhp.com.au)

Prepared in consultation with the National Association for Loss and Grief, NSW's leading provider of support and education for communities, families and individuals impacted by loss, grief and trauma.

**NALAG**  
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Loss and Grief (NSW) Inc

  
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RURAL ADVERSITY  
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