

Domestic Abuse and Trauma

Trauma is common when there is domestic abuse. Trauma is also common when a person has a problem with mental health, alcohol or drugs. If these things happen all at once, it can be a lot for a person to manage. Trauma can affect kids and adults.

Trauma can be caused by an event that happens only one time. Trauma also can be caused by events that keep happening over a period of time. Causes of trauma related to domestic abuse may be:

- Sexual or physical abuse
- Mental or emotional abuse
- Neglect
- Isolation
- Denial of freedom or choices
- Denial of food or medicine
- Forced use of drugs or alcohol
- Witness to abuse

Trauma affects people in different ways. To cope with trauma, a person may use drugs or alcohol. This is not a safe way to cope with trauma. A person may lose a home or job because the trauma reduces the ability to work. Traumatic events may cause urgent health issues such as diseases, bruises, broken bones or burns. Physical or mental health problems may be ongoing as a result of trauma. These may include:

- Diabetes
- Heart or stomach problems
- Feeling suicidal
- Starvation
- Eating disorders
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Paranoia
- PTSD
- Taking sexual risks

These effects of trauma can be life long. With good support, the effects of trauma may be reduced or last only a short time. Coping with trauma should not be only the victim's burden. The person who is causing the trauma must also seek help and stay away from the person he or she is hurting.

To find the domestic abuse program nearest you, visit <http://pcadv.org> and click on *Find Help* or use the *Find Help* map on the home page.

To reach the National Domestic Violence Hotline, call 1-800-799-SAFE.
For TTY 1-800-787-3224.