THE BEST TREATMENT FOR PTSD: The evidence is in.

Trauma-focused psychotherapy is the first-line treatment for PTSD.
It lasts only about three months, and research shows that for most people its effects last long after treatment is over.

Did You Know?

✓ Trauma-focused Psychotherapy

54 OUT OF 100 people who receive trauma-focused psychotherapy will no longer meet the diagnostic criteria for PTSD after about 3 months of treatment.

✓ Medication

47 OUT OF 100 people who take medication will no longer meet the diagnostic criteria for PTSD after about 3 months of treatment.

✗ No Treatment

BUT ONLY 12 OUT OF 100 people who don’t get treatment will no longer meet the diagnostic criteria for PTSD after about 3 months.

ESTIMATES ARE BASED UPON ASSUMED 50% MILITARY AFFILIATION OF SAMPLE.

Hamblen et al. (2021). https://doi.org/10.1002/jts.22808

Trauma-focused Psychotherapy Works Best

Now more than ever, there are effective treatments for PTSD.

- Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT)

CPT teaches you how to change the upsetting thoughts and feelings you have had since your trauma.

- Prolonged Exposure (PE)

PE teaches you to gradually approach trauma-related memories, feelings and situations that you have been avoiding since your trauma.

- Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR)

EMDR helps you process and make sense of your trauma while paying attention to a back-and-forth movement or sound (like a finger waving side to side, a light, or a tone).

Medication Can Help

If you prefer to take medication, you have four good options. But remember: you will need to keep taking medication in order to keep feeling better.

- Sertraline
- Paroxetine
- Fluoxetine
- Venlafaxine

PTSD Treatment Decision Aid
www.ptsd.va.gov/apps/decisionaid

AboutFace: Veterans talk about PTSD and PTSD treatment
www.ptsd.va.gov/apps/aboutface/

National Center for PTSD
www.ptsd.va.gov

June 2022