



English - Adults & Children brochure

You come from a war zone

What are the ways to identify, prevent
and relieve psychological trauma?
Whom should I contact?

Identify:

What are the effects of war on me and those around me?

In the hours following the shock _____

Intense emotional reactions are usual. The stress and fear experienced may cause distressing manifestations:



Agitation



Trembling



Bodily
sensations



Accelerated
heart rate



Shortness of
breath

...which usually decrease with time and a return to a calm environment. These are normal reactions to an abnormal event

In the following days and weeks _____

Experiencing war can cause difficult emotions, stress, and anxiety. It is not uncommon to experience:



- Certain situations **remind you of the event and promote stress or fear.**
- Wanting to **avoid everything that reminds you of the event.**
- **Feeling lost, disoriented by the circumstances.**
- **Loosing appetite.**
- **Feeling on guard**, startling at the slightest noise, having difficulty sleeping or nightmares.
- **Feeling sad, angry, irritable.**

Preventing, relieving :

8 practical tips

Although everyone may experience the same event differently, some tips can **help adults and children recover better and avoid the continuation of specific difficulties**. Here are the most important ones:



1. Inform your relatives

Surrounding yourself with supportive and caring people is an essential factor. Isolation, although sometimes felt to be necessary, is most often detrimental.



2. Eat well and stay hydrated

It is common to lose your appetite and forget to drink in the days following a difficult event. It is better to eat little than not and drink regularly.



3. Protect your sleep

Favor a calm environment without light and adopt regular rhythms. Choose a fixed time to get up rather than a specified time to sleep. You can lie down and stay calm to rest even without sleeping.



4. Foster reassuring routines, mutual aid, and solidarity.

As best you can, carry out your usual tasks and focus on pleasurable activities. Practice mutual aid with those affected and, if you wish, contribute to offered charity.



5. Avoid prolonged contact with the media or social networks

Media or social networks can show images, give information that is difficult to bear. Keep yourself briefly informed of the situation (e.g., 1-2 times a day) and limit the time spent on screens.



6. Avoid harmful substances

Alcohol and drugs are extremely harmful and can reinforce symptoms.



7. Prefer your doctor to self-medication

Always seek the advice of a health care professional before taking any medication.



8. Consult specialized professionals if necessary

If symptoms persist or develop after several days, contact mental health professionals in your country/territory.

Discuss:

How do you talk to your children about war?

Stressful reactions are expected in a climate of fear and uncertainty related to war. It is essential to differentiate between your child's reactions and your own experiences in this context. To talk about war with your child, you can:

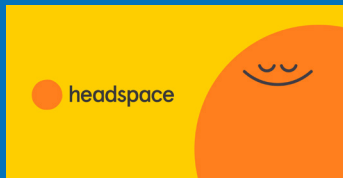


1. Create a supportive environment where your child can **ask questions** without forcing them to do so.
2. Suggest that your child **shares with you what he or she has heard, seen, or thought about the war.**
3. **Focus on factual information** and build on the protective aspects.
4. **Put the event in perspective:** *'war is essentially between soldiers; when there are armed conflicts, there are also individuals who act for peace.'*
5. **Protect your child from overexposure to screens and media, and/or accompany him/her in choosing and deciphering information.**
6. **Inform your child of the existing solidarity and mutual aid** and if he/she wishes, help him/her get involved (make a drawing, a donation).
7. **Favor usual and pleasant activities** and restore reassuring rituals in the family's daily life.

How to Relax ?

If you feel the need, some mobile applications can help you find calm:

Meditation and relaxation: Meditopia, Headspace



Cardiac coherence : Respirelax




Whom should I contact?

Contact local emergency professionals (Red Cross, Médecins du Monde, etc.) and ask for advice. The organization of emergency mental health services may differ depending on where you are.

In case of emergency, dial 112.



This leaflet was coordinated by Dr. Amaury Mengin, MD, and Dr. Julie Rolling, MD.  @CRPGrandEst
In association with Pr. Pierre Vidailhet, MD, PhD, Dr. Dominique Mastelli, MD
Graphics and illustrations by Thomashuard.com