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**To:** [Undisclosed recipients:](#)  
**Subject:** Assessment: Is it PTSD? February - PTSD Monthly Update  
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## PTSD Monthly Update



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February 2014 Issue

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Forward this to others so they can **subscribe** to the PTSD Monthly Update or other products by the [VA's National Center for PTSD](#).

### Feature Topic

#### Assessment: Is it PTSD?

Sometimes the signs are obvious. Sometimes they're not so easy to see. Hear Veterans talk about "[How I knew I had PTSD](#)" in the AboutFace videos that show how treatment turned their lives around.

Following trauma almost everyone experiences some [common reactions](#). If after the first few weeks your emotional reactions are getting in the way of your day-to-day life, talk to a counselor or your doctor.

Proper [assessment](#) is important because effective treatments for PTSD exist. Learn more:

- [How is PTSD Measured?](#)
- [What Can I Do if I Think I Have PTSD?](#)

VA's My HealtheVet offers a confidential [questionnaire to screen for PTSD](#). A positive screen does not mean a person has PTSD. It means that a person should be assessed further by a mental health provider.

#### Revised PTSD Criteria

PTSD has not changed, but the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) has been updated to more clearly capture the disorder based on what we now know. Read about the [Symptoms of PTSD](#).

#### New Mobile App

[Concussion Coach](#) is designed for people who have symptoms after a concussion, or mild traumatic brain injury. This self-help app may be more helpful when

used along with professional treatment.

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## For Providers

The National Center for PTSD provides comprehensive information on a variety of [assessment measures](#) used to evaluate trauma exposure and PTSD.

### Obtain DSM-5 Validated Measures

The Center is working to revise and validate a number of [DSM-5 PTSD assessments](#). Currently, these instruments have been updated:

- [Clinician-Administered PTSD Scale for DSM-5 \(CAPS-5\)](#), an in-depth interview known worldwide as the gold standard for PTSD assessment.
- [PTSD Checklist for DSM-5 \(PCL-5\)](#), a widely used PTSD self-report instrument.
- [Life Events Checklist for DSM-5 \(LEC-5\)](#), a self-report measure used to screen for potentially traumatic events.

Use the [Assessment Request Form](#) to obtain measures created by the Center.

### Training in Assessment

Learn about the purpose of screening, tools for diagnosing PTSD, and the evaluation of comorbidities in these PTSD 101 courses:

- [Practical PTSD Assessment](#)
- [Comprehensive PTSD Assessment](#)

These courses will be updated for DSM-5 later this year. A course on the CAPS-5 is also under development.

### Save the Dates

Stay tuned for From the War Zone to the Home Front: a free series of live, online trainings to support the mental health of Veterans and families. Free CE/CMEs will be offered.

Thursdays at 11:30 am-12:30 pm ET, March 20-May 22

## Professionals Using Social Media

Do you Tweet? Then start following the [National Center for PTSD @VA\\_PTSD\\_Info](#) on Twitter today! Help us reach people who would benefit from PTSD tools and educational products.

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## For VA Providers

### 2014 VA PTSD Consultation Program Lecture Series

Subscribe: Learn about our PTSD Lectures

VA staff, please [sign up for VA Staff PTSD Updates](#) to receive monthly notices that include a registration link and instructions for joining the live lectures.

Next Lecture in the Series

- **2 pm ET: 2/19 - Ariel Lang, PhD** on *Complementary and Alternative Approaches to PTSD Care*

Mark your calendar for the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 2 pm ET.

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Free PTSD consultation for anyone working with Veterans.  
Call 866-948-7880 or  
Email [PTSDconsult@va.gov](mailto:PTSDconsult@va.gov).

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## Research at the Center

### Mobile Apps

Results of the first evaluation of the PTSD Coach App are out! Read more about [PTSD Mobile Apps](#):

- [Preliminary Evaluation of PTSD Coach](#), a Smartphone App for Post-Traumatic Stress Symptoms (PDF)
- ["PE Coach" Smartphone Application](#): An Innovative Approach to Improving Implementation, Fidelity, and Homework Adherence During Prolonged Exposure

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## PTSD in the News

**Herald Investigates: PTSD and Violence.** Despite reports of combat veterans getting into shoot-outs with local police, posttraumatic stress shouldn't be blamed, experts say. [Read more.](#)\*

**The PTSD Crisis That's Being Ignored: Americans Wounded in Their Own Neighborhoods.** Those who endure street violence in high-crime neighborhoods are prone to develop PTSD. [Read more.](#)\*

**Finding Simple Tests For Brain Disorders Turns Out To Be Complex.** Learn about challenges in the search to find a biomarker for PTSD. [Read more.](#)\*

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Be sure to forward this update to others so they can [subscribe](#). We send only one update per month to keep you informed of the latest PTSD developments.

**Feature Topic next month:** PTSD Provider Types and Careers

The Staff of VA's National Center for PTSD

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