

Treatment Options for Adjustment Disorder

A person with an adjustment disorder may consider several treatment options. Mental health professionals can help make the appropriate choice.

Therapy

Psychotherapy can be very helpful in alleviating ongoing symptoms of an adjustment disorder if it becomes disabling. People with adjustment disorder often participate in traditional individual counseling or "supportive" psychotherapy.

People enduring stressful circumstances such as divorce, a heart attack, HIV/AIDS or diabetes, for example, may benefit from group therapy with others experiencing similar difficulties. Professional or peer-facilitated groups can address the implications of specific issues.

After natural disasters or other large-scale traumatic events, area agencies may provide services for the people most affected.

It is very uncommon for people with adjustment disorder to be hospitalized. If they are hospitalized, it is often for another condition. The adjustment disorder may occur in response to that illness or injury.

Medication

People with adjustment disorders generally are not prescribed medication. However, if the person experiences severe symptoms, he may be given either anti-anxiety or antidepressant medications. In those cases, medications are typically used in addition to other forms of treatment.

Regardless of the type of treatment, the primary goals are to relieve symptoms and assist the person with the disorder in achieving a level of adaptation comparable to functioning before the stressful event.

Resources

American Psychiatric Association
www.psych.org

American Psychological Association
www.apa.org

National Institute of Mental Health
www.nimh.nih.gov

National Mental Health Association
www.nmha.org

Drug Therapy and Adjustment Disorders by Sherry Bonnice. Mason Crest Publishers, 2003.

By Chris E. Stout, PsyD, MBA
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