

## When and where to seek further advice:

Generally after six weeks the feelings and symptoms described here will subside. There are people you can talk to, or go to for advice and assistance at any time after experiencing a traumatic event. If you are still experiencing any of these feelings and symptoms after six weeks and you have not sought further assistance, it would be advisable to consider it.

## Who can you contact?

Your GP

Cruse National:

02089 404818

Cruse North Wales Area:

08702 402758

E-mail:

[crusebereavementcare.org.uk](http://crusebereavementcare.org.uk)

Team Contact:

## Who Should Read This?

These notes have been written as a guide for people who have been involved either directly or indirectly with a traumatic incident. This includes witnesses, and the family and friends of people involved.

By their nature mountain accidents can be very distressing and may affect people in different ways. The following notes are designed to help you understand what might be a normal reaction

Produced from notes provided by Phil Benbow  
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# Traumatic Incidents

## Coping with Trauma

Produced and sponsored by:  
North Wales Mountain Rescue Association  
(NWMRA)  
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*You don't need to react to  
be normal . . .*

*. . . but it is normal to react.*

# For Yourself

After being involved with or dealing with the aftermath of an accident, you are likely to experience some of the following reactions:

- Sadness
- Anger
- Fear
- Guilt
- Dreams about the event
- Not wanting to be reminded of the event
- Loss of enthusiasm
- Fatigue
- Emotional withdrawal
- Restlessness
- Poor sleep patterns
- Repeated, intrusive recollections of the event, e.g., flashbacks with can be triggered by everyday events.

**It is important not to bottle up your thoughts and feelings.**

# What can you do?

Trying some of the following may help alleviate the emotional strain:

- Talk through your experience with someone (this may be family, friends, and/or one of the contacts at the end of this leaflet)
- Keep active
- Eat and rest well
- Establish the facts
- Keep busy

In order to put the experience into a more realistic context, you may find it helpful to know what actually happened, and to talk through the experience with other involved.

# What can family and friends do:

## Provide Support

If a friend, colleague or family member has witnessed or been involved in a traumatic event the most valuable thing you can do is to encourage them to talk through

their experience. Listen, avoid clichés, giving advice, or making judgements. They may feel angry about what has happened. Some people also feel fearful or even guilty.

Usually the person will settle and come to terms with the event within about six weeks. During this time you need to be very supportive, tolerant and aware of any changes in their moods and general character.

## Symptoms to look out for include:

- Mood swings
- Behavioural changes
- Loss of enthusiasm
- Sadness or depression
- Irrational behaviour
- Irritability
- Poor sleep patterns
- Excessive use of drugs/alcohol

As a close friend or family member you are most likely to be aware of the long-term effects of a traumatic event on your loved one. It is therefore you who is likely to have the dilemma of whether or not to seek further advice.