

Table 1

Risk factors for the development of PTSD

Patient-related factors

- Acute stress reaction
- Family or personal history of mental disorder
- Perceived seriousness of physical injury*
- Past experience of trauma
- Age, race and gender (predictive in certain populations only)
- Early life adversity

Trauma-related factors

- Trauma severity
- Sudden, unexpected events
- Manmade rather than natural events
- Prolonged exposure
- Perceived threat to life*
- Multiple deaths and/or mutilation
- Personally relevant factors, e.g. the involvement of a child
- Proximity to the trauma

Environmental factors

- Lack of social support (or inability to utilise it)
- Ongoing life stresses
- Economic resources
- Lower educational and socioeconomic levels

* It is the patient's (not the clinician's) perception that is important and predictive