

Your participation in the Research Program at the World Trade Center Health Program plays a vital role in the treatment of your condition and improves care for all members .

Coping with PTSD in the World Trade Center (WTC) Health Program

Potential Impact: We completed a study that looked at ways to cope with the impact of 9/11 and their recovery work in WTC responders. Learning more about which coping strategies are frequently used by WTC responders who are less distressed (feeling better) can help focus treatment for PTSD in the WTC population and lessen PTSD symptoms. It may also help guide future treatment for PTSD in rescue and recovery workers.

Research: People exposed to 9/11 can have a range of PTSD symptoms. These may include: upsetting memories, nightmares, feeling detached from others, fears of another attack, or having trouble sleeping. We are interested in ways to cope that might lessen PTSD symptoms. Our current new research

looks at writing therapy for WTC responders, assisted by a therapist online, to see if it can help cope with PTSD symptoms.

Population: The first study used an Internet-based survey an average of 12 years after 9/11. Over 4,000 WTC rescue and recovery workers who had done at least three health monitoring visits at the WTC Health Program took the survey. The current study compares two online writing therapies for WTC rescue and recovery workers who continue to have PTSD symptoms. People in the study work with a personal therapist, who interacts with them in writing through the Internet.

Findings: In the first study, WTC responders who were less distressed (had fewer PTSD symptoms) were more likely to use certain ways of coping with stress and trauma. Some of these ways of coping include coming to terms with the effects of the trauma (for example, coming to terms with having illnesses from WTC exposures), being able to look for something positive even during stressful times (for example, feeling closer to others, helping each other, finding one's personal strengths), and finding or regaining a sense of purpose in life.

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Learn More. Call 1-888-982-4748 or visit www.cdc.gov/wtc

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