

## World Mental Health Day: sources for information sheet

### The role of physiotherapy in trauma rehabilitation

#### What is trauma?

**Trauma is an emotional response to a distressing event or series of events, such as abuse, a bad accident, rape or other sexual violence, combat, or a natural disaster. Trauma can be either acute or chronic:**

**Acute emotional trauma is the emotional response that happens during and shortly after a single distressing event.**

**Chronic emotional trauma is a long-term emotional response a person experiences from prolonged or repeated distressing events.**

American Psychological Association. [Trauma](#).

Ashley Olivine, PhD. [What Is Trauma? Emotional Trauma, Psychological Trauma](#). Published on 4 January 2022

**Exposure to any form of trauma, particularly in childhood, can increase the risk of mental illness and suicide; smoking, alcohol and substance abuse; chronic diseases like heart disease, diabetes and cancer; and social problems such as poverty, crime and violence.**

World Health Organization. [Fact sheet: Injuries and violence](#). 19 March 2021

**Symptoms of trauma can be both emotional and physical. This can impact a person in terms of attitude, behaviour and functioning. Symptoms can include: anger; depression or anxiety; guilt or shame; social withdrawal; loss of interest in activities; increased heart rate; body aches or pains; difficulty sleeping; fatigue.**

Paul A. Sandifer, Robert-Paul Juster, Teresa E. Seeman, Maureen Y. Lichtveld, Burton H. Singer. [Allostatic load in the context of disasters](#). Psychoneuroendocrinology, Volume 140,2022, 105725, ISSN 0306-4530

HelpGuide. [Emotional and Psychological Trauma](#)

#### How can physiotherapy help?

**Physiotherapists in mental health use physical oriented approaches to achieve personal lifestyle modifications that are relevant and sustainable. These strategies empower individuals towards greater independence and self-management of personal health and wellbeing.**

International Organization of Physical Therapy in Mental Health. [Policy statement: The role of physical therapists within mental health and psychiatry](#). May 2019

Amie Wallman-Jones, Pandelis Perakakis, Manos Tsakiris, Mirko Schmidt, [Physical activity and interoceptive processing: Theoretical considerations for future research](#). International Journal of Psychophysiology, Volume 166, 2021, Pages 38-49, ISSN 0167-8760,