

# Women in their 50s more prone to PTSD than men

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Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) rates peak in women later than they do in men. Researchers writing in BioMed Central's open access journal *Annals of General Psychiatry* found that men are most vulnerable to PTSD between the ages of 41 and 45 years, while women are most vulnerable at 51 to 55.

Ask Elklit and Daniel N Ditlevsen, from the University of Southern Denmark and Odense University Hospital, Denmark, collected data from 6,548 participants in previous Danish or Nordic PTSD studies in order to investigate the gender difference in the lifespan distribution of PTSD. According to Elklit, "People now live for an increased number of years compared to that of previous generations, and as a result individuals have more years in which they can be affected by the negative consequences that can follow traumatic experiences. It is therefore important to pay attention to the risk of PTSD in relation to different stages in the lifespan".

The researchers found that the total prevalence of PTSD was 21.3% and, as expected, PTSD was twice as common in [women](#) as in men. Most importantly, men and women peaked in the risk of PTSD a decade apart from each other during their respective lifespan. Elklit said, "This difference is of particular interest and needs to be investigated further in future research in order to develop more thorough explanations for the effect".

**More information:** The combined effect of gender and age on post

traumatic stress disorder: do men and women show differences in the lifespan distribution of the disorder? Daniel N Ditlevsen and Ask Elklit Annals of General Psychiatry (in press). [www.annals-general-psychiatry.com/](http://www.annals-general-psychiatry.com/)

Provided by BioMed Central

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