

# Book offers resources for PTSD sufferers

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Close to 5.2 million adults experience post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) every year. And it can affect anyone—from war veterans and abuse victims to persons directly or indirectly traumatized by violence, natural disaster or other catastrophes. In her latest book, *What Nurses Know . . . PTSD*, Binghamton University researcher, Mary Muscari, provides a holistic view of this potentially debilitating illness, providing PTSD sufferers and their friends and family with a better understanding of the disorder and what to do about it.

"Dealing with PTSD is like riding a rollercoaster, " said Muscari, an associate professor in the Decker School of Nursing at Binghamton University. "The swing of emotions can have a huge impact on relationships, [work environment](#) and social activities. And in addition to disrupting the lives of the victims, PTSD often has a ripple affect, throwing relationships with family members, friends and colleagues into complete turmoil. But help is out there and this book offers individuals with PTSD and their families the tools to recognize the problem and know how and where to get assistance."

According to Muscari, the key is to get treatment as soon as possible after PTSD symptoms develop so that it doesn't become a long-term condition.

"Treatments for PTSD can involve [psychotherapy](#) or medications, or a combination of both," said Muscari. "It's all about support, dialogue and education. But because everyone is different, there is no substitute for treatment provided by a mental healthcare professional experienced in

treating PTSD – someone who is trained to figure out what's going to work best. And while my book cannot replace therapy, it can be a valuable resource for sufferers and family."

In addition to covering all the current available treatments, *What Nurses Know....PTSD* goes to the root of the condition, examining the causes and its impact on victims and their families. It also looks at associated problems such as substance abuse and offers tips for managing stress. For instance, Muscari urges PTSD sufferers to use time-management techniques such as learning how to say 'no' and delegation as ways to manage every day stresses.

Muscari also examines PTSD in children and adolescents, focusing on what makes this disorder so challenging in young sufferers.

"Kids with PTSD may experience many of the same symptoms as adults," said Muscari. "But they often have greater difficulty talking about their thoughts and feelings. Children and teens also tend to have different types of recollection experiences than adults. We're talking frightening dreams and even behavioral problems. If not treated properly, a child's sense of security can be severely impacted, which in turn, influences brain function and development."

According to Muscari, the goal of *What Nurses Know....PTSD* is to show victims and their friends and families that they are not alone in their struggle.

"PTSD sufferers have a real illness, one that is as real as high blood pressure or diabetes," says Muscari. "But it can also be seen as merely a barrier in our life's journey. And a successful journey begins with a plan and this book can be the map," says Muscari.

Provided by Binghamton University

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