

# Major trauma centre (MTC) psychology

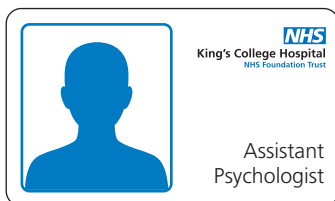
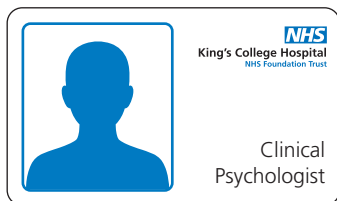
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**Psychological support for  
individuals impacted by major  
trauma**

## Who are we?

We are a team of clinical and assistant psychologists who support patients impacted by major trauma.

We offer support during your hospital stay.  
If you feel you need support and we haven't met you yet, please ask the ward staff.



## How can we help?

We provide advice and support for patients and their families. We support patients:

- to understand and manage emotional responses linked to traumatic experiences, for example, anxiety, low mood and stress
- with unwanted and distressing thoughts, images or nightmares linked to traumatic experiences
- to adjust to physical injury and learn to manage pain
- with pre-existing mental health needs
- with concerns about leaving hospital and offer guidance post-discharge

## What can I expect?

- A member of the psychology team may meet you at your bedside or in a quiet room on the ward.
  - We will ask you how you are feeling and how you are coping with your injury and hospital stay.
  - With your agreement, we can also check in with your family or carers.
  - Your medical team on the ward may suggest a psychology referral if it could be helpful.
  - You do not have to discuss anything you do not want to, and all conversations are guided by what feels comfortable for you.
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- If you need follow-up support after discharge, outpatient appointments will take place by phone, online or in person near King's College Hospital.

## Common responses

Traumatic events are distressing and emotionally overwhelming situations.

They may bring up upsetting thoughts and feelings, which can be difficult to manage.

Some people experience:

- unpleasant thoughts or images about the event popping into their mind
- flashbacks
- sleep difficulties and nightmares
- feeling helpless, angry or irritable
- not wanting to talk about what happened
- feeling guilty or to blame for what happened
- concentration difficulties and problems with memory
- headaches and bodily pain
- feeling tearful or sad
- fear and anxiety
- feeling numb or detached

These experiences are normal after a traumatic event. Being aware of them is the first step in learning to manage them.



## Coping after a major trauma

Some people recover from a traumatic experience after days or weeks, while others may experience long-term effects.

Even if trauma symptoms reduce, emotions might feel heightened and adjustment might be challenging, especially in response to memories and reminders of the event.

These difficulties align with our natural stress responses as our brains have evolved to react to a perceived threat and try to keep us safe, for example, our flight or fight response.

This is when our body gets ready to fend off or run far away from danger, to protect ourselves from harm. It does this by releasing adrenaline, increasing our heart rate and making us breath faster.

After a traumatic event, our brain can continue to feel under threat, even if the direct threat has passed.

Dealing with this alone can be overwhelming at times, which is why we are here to support you.

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# What will happen after discharge?

Coping in the community following a major trauma can bring challenges and leave us wondering who we can turn to.

Our Psychology Team supports your care even after discharge.

We will either link you into a service we know will be supportive, or in some cases we will follow you up directly via text message.

## Additional contacts

- If you think you need medical help or help to keep yourself safe, call **111** or visit **111.nhs.uk**
  - In an emergency call **999**
  - Call the National Suicide Prevention Helpline UK on **0800 689 5652**
  - Mind supports people with mental health problems: call **0300 123 3393** or visit **www.mind.org.uk**
  - Shout provides urgent mental health support: call **85258** or visit **www.giveusashout.org**
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- Samaritans is a suicide prevention charity:  
call **116 123** or visit **[www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)**

This QR code will give you access to helpful information and resources



## **PALS**

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) is a service that offers support, information and assistance to patients, relatives and visitors. They can also provide help and advice if you have a concern or complaint that staff have not been able to resolve for you. They can also pass on praise or thanks to our teams. The PALS office is located on the ground floor of the Hambleton Wing, near the main entrance on Bessemer Road - staff will be happy to direct you.

PALS at King's College Hospital, Denmark Hill,  
London SE5 9RS

Tel: **020 3299 4618**

Email: **[kings.pals@nhs.net](mailto:kings.pals@nhs.net)**

**If you would like the information in this leaflet in a different language or format, please contact our Interpreting and Accessible Communication Support on 020 3299 4618 or email [kings.access@nhs.net](mailto:kings.access@nhs.net)**