

Female soldiers with PTSD get a raw deal as veterans

Women and men are not equal when it comes to PTSD (post traumatic stress disorder).



In general, research indicates that women not only are more likely to experience PTSD symptoms than men, but also may respond differently to PTSD.

From her clinical experience as the medical director of the Timberline Knolls treatment center, Dr. Kimberly Dennis identifies four PTSD gender differences

1. Men are prone to feeling angry and have anger management issues
2. Women are prone to more nervousness, tend to feel less emotion and avoid trauma reminders
3. Recovery time from PTDS is longer for women than men
4. Problems related to PTSD are likely to last four times longer for women than men

Besides these gender differences, female soldiers face even greater challenges in dealing with their PTSD as veterans. Upon returning from service, female veterans encounter a lack of understanding, ignorance and stereotyping according to New York Times writer Damien Cave.

Cave goes on to chronicle that not only do these women lack support services but they have to deal with “ ... **the fact that many people don't see them as 'real' veterans** ...”

The repercussions are such that many female veterans dealing with their PTSD brain trauma

- **isolate themselves** from others and retreat into “hiding”
- develop **relational and intimacy issues**
- **feel guilty about lacking coping mechanisms**, especially anger and aggression which are not perceived as acceptable even though male veterans are given greater leeway
- suffer the **indignity of not being given not given combat recognition** for their support to male units
- **constantly have to explain their role and constantly prove their PTSD**

And, most damning of all they have come home to “... a society that expects them to be feminine nurturers, not the nurtured.”

<http://www.examiner.com/women-s-health-in-chicago/ptsd-women-s-oldiers-combat-stress-or-rape#ixzz1RfWrDgnq>

<http://womenslawproject.wordpress.com/2009/11/05/female-soldiers-and-ptsd-%E2%80%9Cpeople-underestimate-what-these-women-have-been-through%E2%80%9D/>