

Veterans' reaction to their PTSD diagnosis



POSITIVE (26%*)

- Feelings of relief or validation
- Better understanding of problem
- Hopes for treatment

NEUTRAL (64%*)

- Confirmation of prior intuition
- Confusion
- Acceptance

NEGATIVE (42%*)

- Denial, skepticism
- Shock, unpleasant surprise
- Fear of stigma

*Some Veterans had mixed reactions (for example, negative and positive together), so percentages do not add up to 100%.

CONCLUSION: "Low-treatment-engaging veterans receiving a PTSD diagnosis often had complicated reactions, mixed feelings, and concerns about their diagnosis. Neutral reactions . . . were the most commonly reported, but these were often mixed with negative [and positive] reactions. These reactions often changed over time after the initial shock, and patients described the process of coming to terms with their diagnosis and what it could mean for them."

Based on interviews with 50 Veterans who declined or dropped out of PTSD psychotherapy at one VA clinic. "A qualitative study of veterans' mixed emotional reactions to receiving a PTSD diagnosis," *Psychological Services*, July 30, 2018. Infographic by VA Research Communications, August 2018.

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