Posttraumatic Stress Disorder and Stress-Related Disorders

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Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a prevalent anxiety disorder. Symptoms present shortly after an exposure to a traumatic event, abate with time in the majority of those who initially express them, and leave a significant minority with chronic PTSD. PTSD may be treated with pharmacotherapy or psychotherapy. Treatment of the early expressions of the disorder constitutes a separate domain of theory and research. Treatment of chronic PTSD often stabilizes the condition but rarely produces stable remission. This article reviews the empirical evidence on the treatment of acute and chronic PTSD, outlines similarities and differences between PTSD and other Axis I disorders, evaluates new therapeutic approaches, and discusses the implications of current knowledge for the forthcoming DSM-V.