

# Stress Inoculation Training

## What type of treatment is this?

Stress Inoculation Training, or SIT, is a psychotherapy for PTSD. It is one specific type of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT). By teaching you coping skills, SIT can help you find new ways to deal with PTSD symptoms. These skills can also help you manage other stressful situations or events in your life.

## How does it work?

People with PTSD are often under a lot of stress and may have a hard time coping with their symptoms. SIT teaches you skills to react differently to stressful situations and to manage your PTSD symptoms. You will consider how different situations, thoughts, and behaviors

could be making it hard for you to deal with your PTSD symptoms. With your provider, you will learn how to develop more helpful ways of coping. With practice, you will become more confident in your ability to use the coping skills to manage your PTSD symptoms.



*Deep breathing "circle breathing" helps a bunch. Focus, close the eyes and slowly imagine the breath cycle as a circle."*

*Tyler B.*

## What will I do?

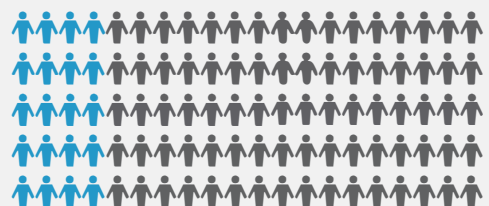
During the first phase of SIT you will learn about PTSD symptoms and identify the sources of your stress. You will talk about your usual ways of coping with PTSD symptoms. You will also learn how to keep track of your stress level. The next phase involves learning and practicing new problem solving strategies and coping skills that can help you relax your body and your breathing, stop upsetting thoughts, and stay in the moment. You will practice each skill in session, and then at home on your own. You also discuss whether you can change any of the things in your life causing you stress—or at least change how you react to them. Towards the end of treatment, you will review your progress and make a plan for how to handle stressful situations that could come up in the future.

## Is it effective?

Yes, Stress Inoculation Training is one of the most effective PTSD treatments.

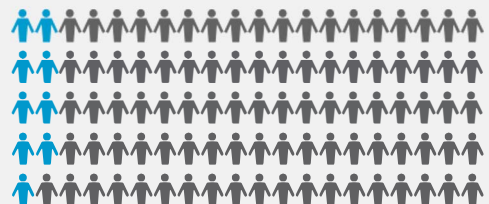
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For every 100 people who receive Stress Inoculation Training, 20 will recover from PTSD after treatment.



9

For every 100 people who do not receive PTSD treatment, 9 will recover naturally from PTSD after about three months.



## **How long does treatment last?**

About 3 months of weekly 60-90 minute sessions. You may decide to meet with your provider less often (for example, every other week) towards the end of treatment. Many people notice improvement after a few sessions.

## **Group or individual?**

SIT is often done in a group with one or two providers and other people who also have PTSD. SIT can also be done individually, where you meet one-to-one with a provider.

## **Will I talk in detail about my trauma?**

No, SIT does not require you to talk in detail about the trauma. In fact, you may be asked not to mention any details of your trauma at all.

## **Will I have homework?**

Yes, you will practice using stress management skills learned in therapy.

## **How available is this in VA?**

Low. SIT is not common in the VA. However, many VA hospitals and clinics offer anxiety management groups that teach some of the same skills that you would learn in SIT. These anxiety management groups may not require that everyone in the group has PTSD.

## **Does VA have an app for that?**

No, currently the VA has not developed an app for SIT.