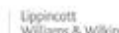


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[South Med J.](#) 2013 Jan;106(1):115-9. doi: 10.1097/SMJ.0b013e31827cd091.

Mental health aspects of disasters.

[Oldham RL.](#)

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Abstract

Disaster preparations and responses are incomplete without addressing the mental health aspects of disasters. Unpleasant mental states can be a natural and even adaptive human response following a disaster; however, disasters also can contribute to the development of mental illnesses and substance use disorders or exacerbate existing disorders for disaster survivors, response personnel, and even families and close contacts of survivors and responders. Disaster-related psychopathology can mimic or negatively affect other disaster-related illnesses and can impair health professionals and others who must respond to catastrophic events; however, disasters also can encourage tremendous human coping, perseverance, and resilience and can even enhance personal and collective feelings of purpose, connection, and meaning. Integrating mental health promotion and care into disaster planning and response has the potential to mitigate psychiatric and medical consequences of a disaster and may preserve the mission readiness of disaster response personnel and promote healing among communities traumatized by disaster.

PMID: 23263326 [PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE]

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