

According to the National Center for PTSD, approximate 60% of men and 50% of women will experience at least one traumatic event in their life.

**Almost three-fourths of individuals who receive treatment for substance abuse also have a history of exposure to trauma.** Conversely, individuals who have suffered assault or sexual abuse are three times as likely to abuse drugs and/or alcohol.

Trauma Increases the Likelihood of Substance Abuse On the one hand, a person experiencing a trauma is at greater risk for drug and/or alcohol abuse. People turn to intoxicating or illicit substances in times list substances in an attempt to "self-medicate", as they try to deal with the negative emotions and symptoms associated with PTSD.

According to the National Child Traumatic Stress Network, **a person will begin using drugs and alcohol after experiencing a trauma up to 76% of the time. Up to 59% of people with PTSD will develop a problem with alcohol and/or drugs.**

Post-traumatic stress disorder can also make it harder for an individual to stop drinking or using drugs, because any reminders of the trauma can trigger cravings.

Substance Abuse Increases the Likelihood of Trauma Conversely, **substance abuse will precede traumatic exposure up to 66% of the time.** This direct link is because alcohol and drug use leads people to engage in risky behavior that may result in injury to themselves or others – • driving under the influence • fighting • placing themselves in dangerous situations • unsafe sexual behavior • increased risk-taking • self-harm Substance Abuse Interferes with Recovery from Trauma Because of the cognitive, psycho-social, and behavioral impairment associated with long-term alcoholism and drug addiction, individuals with substance abuse disorders are often unable to properly cope after experiencing a traumatic event. For example, adolescents who abuse alcohol and/or drugs are twice as likely to experience symptoms of PTSD following a traumatic event than their peers who use neither.

<https://www.ashwoodrecovery.com/blog/the-connection-between-trauma-and-addiction/>

The National Child Traumatic Stress Network

[www.NCTSN.org](http://www.NCTSN.org)