

Dealing with the aftermath of terrorism

Aetna Resources For LivingSM

Terrorism is the use of force, violence or fear in the name of political, social or other goals. Terrorism isn't new: it's been used as a weapon for hundreds of years.¹ How does it affect you?

How you can be affected

If you've been through a terrorist attack, then you've gone through an event that may challenge your beliefs about the world. You could feel shaken and confused. You may notice that you feel:

- Fearful, confused or angry
- Worried about new threats
- Concerned about your own safety or that of others
- Irritable
- Forgetful or unable to concentrate

And stress can show up in your body. So you may notice:

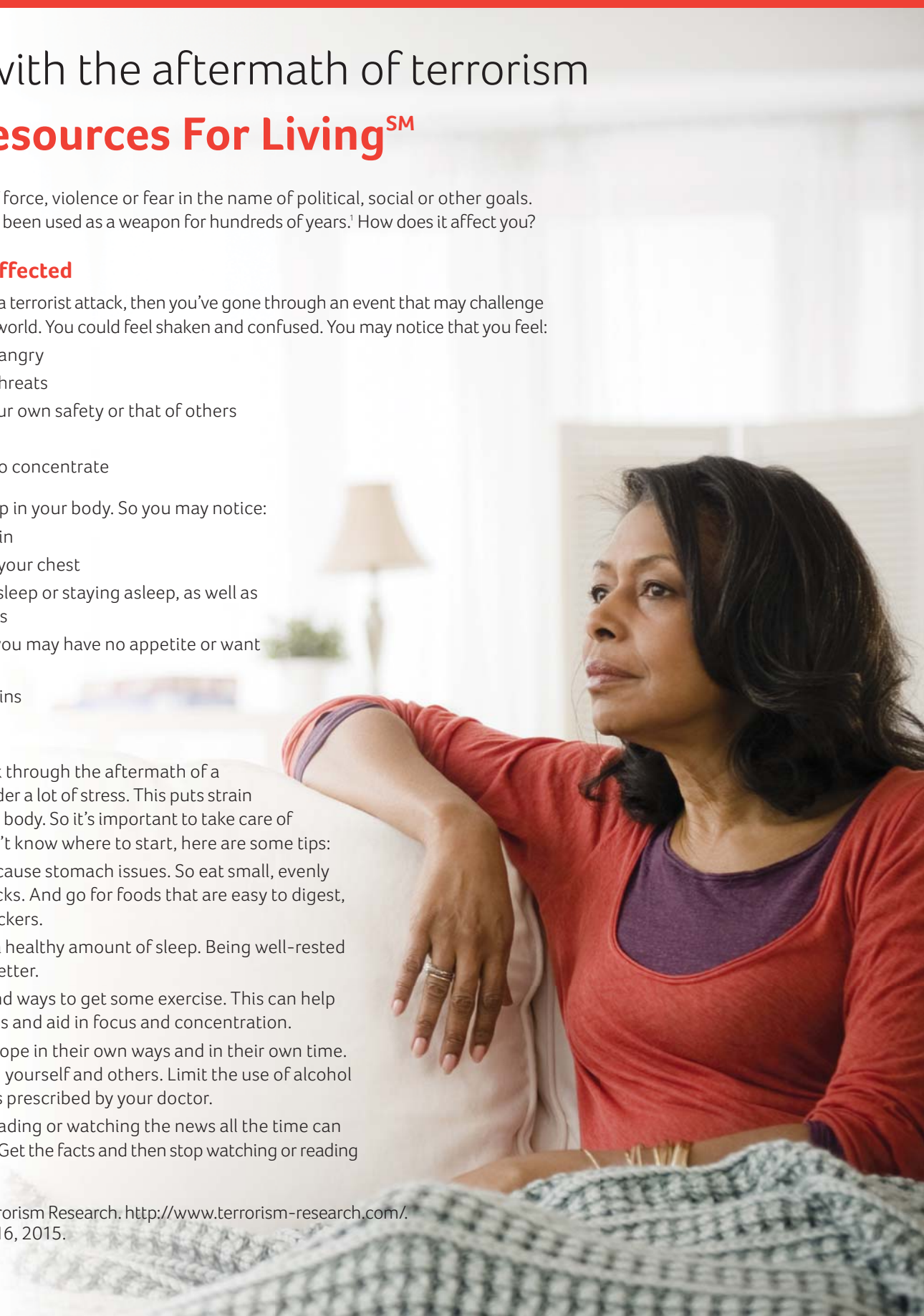
- Stomach upset or pain
- Heaviness or pain in your chest
- Problems getting to sleep or staying asleep, as well as increased nightmares
- Hunger changes — you may have no appetite or want to eat too much
- Muscle aches and pains

How to cope

If you're trying to work through the aftermath of a terrorist act, you're under a lot of stress. This puts strain on both your mind and body. So it's important to take care of your health. If you don't know where to start, here are some tips:

- **Eat well.** Stress can cause stomach issues. So eat small, evenly spaced meals or snacks. And go for foods that are easy to digest, like bananas and crackers.
- **Get rest.** Try to get a healthy amount of sleep. Being well-rested helps you function better.
- **Move your body.** Find ways to get some exercise. This can help reduce physical stress and aid in focus and concentration.
- **Be patient.** People cope in their own ways and in their own time. So be patient — with yourself and others. Limit the use of alcohol or other drugs unless prescribed by your doctor.
- **Minimize media.** Reading or watching the news all the time can make you feel worse. Get the facts and then stop watching or reading about the event.

¹ What is terrorism? Terrorism Research. <http://www.terrorism-research.com/>. Accessed September 16, 2015.



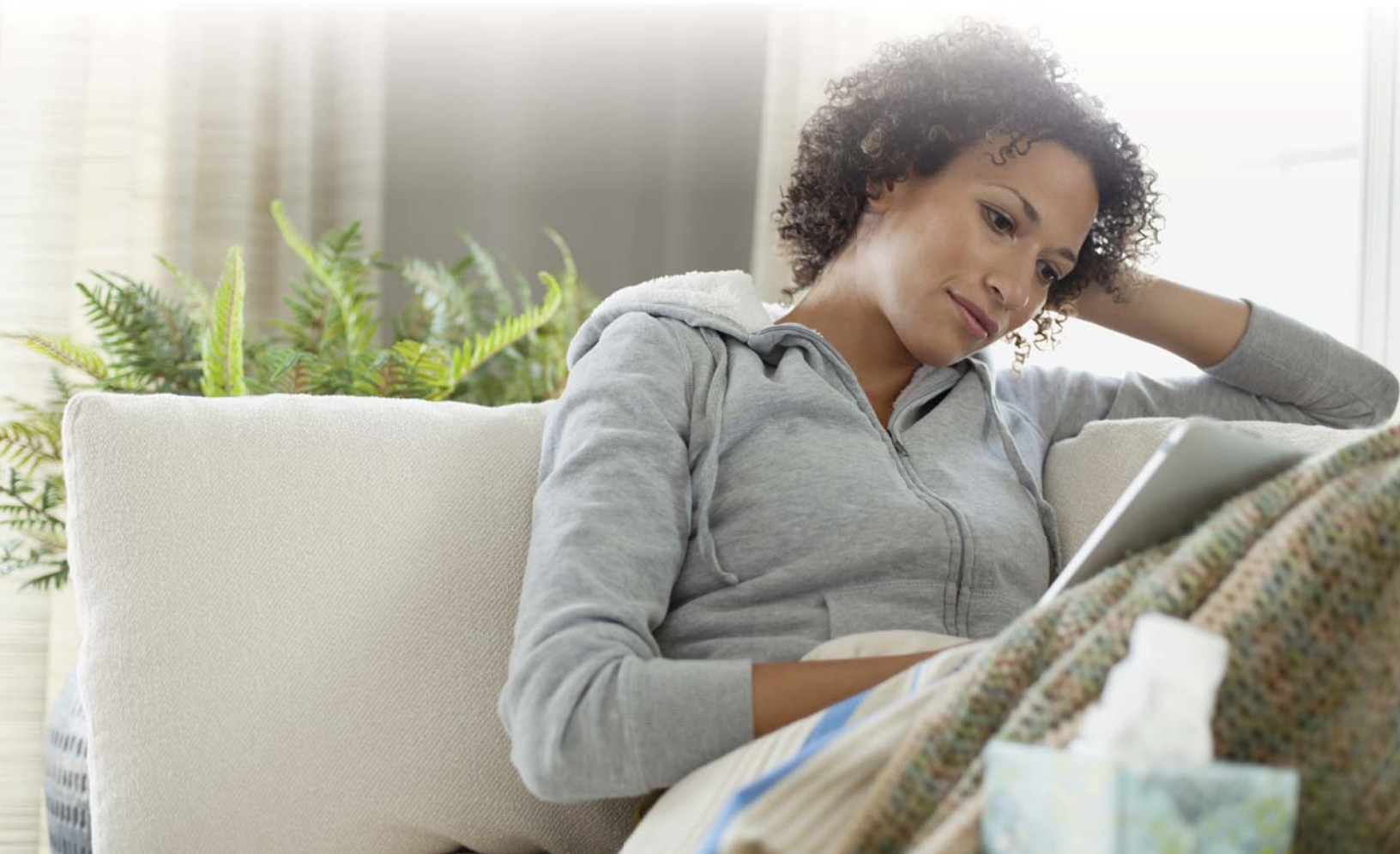
When to get help

Sometimes our reactions to violence may overwhelm our normal coping skills. It can help to talk to a mental health expert. You may want to call us if it's been a few weeks and you still notice the following symptoms:

- Problems getting through day-to-day life
- Sleeplessness for two weeks or more
- Inability to focus or enjoy normal activities
- Changes in appetite
- Feeling irritable or more or less reactive than usual
- Increased worrying or feelings of panic (with or without nausea, sweating, changes in heartbeat, breathlessness or sense of doom)

It's natural to have a reaction to terrorism — whether you're directly or indirectly involved. We're here to help. Confidential help is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Call: 1-888-AETNA EAP (1-888-238-6232)



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