

Acute stress reaction, adjustment disorder

Acute stress disorder (ASD) (F43.0)

- **Stressor:** same as in PTSD (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Post-traumatic_stress_disorder) (see PTSD for more information)
- can progress into PTSD, especially if left untreated
- according to the **DSM-V** (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/DSM-5>) there are various criteria that need to be met in order to diagnose it
 - **Time:** > 3 days but < 1 month (PTSD > 1 month)
 - Specific symptoms (at least 9 out of 14) in the category of intrusive thoughts, negative emotions, arousal, avoidance and dissociation
 - **Intrusion:** intrusive thoughts: flashbacks, intrusive thoughts (recollection of psychotraumatic events)
 - **Negative effect** on mood and cognition: distorted memories, negative thoughts or expectations, constant negative emotions
 - **Dissociation**
 - **avoidance:** e.g. not talking about it, not going to the place
 - **arousal:** irritability (not anxiety, angry outbursts), hypervigilance, sleep disturbance

Adjustment disorder (AD) (F43.2)

- **Stressor**
 - usually non-life threatening (not PTSD) → mood change (but not mood disorder), no grief → therefore a diagnosis of exclusion
- **Examples**
 - break-up (marriage, long relationship), children moving out of home, getting fired from the job
- **Symptoms and Diagnostic criteria**
 - mood or behavioral changes that do not fit the criteria of other mental disorders (e.g. Major depressive episode, dysthymia, general anxiety disorder (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Generalized_anxiety_disorder))
 - reaction is disproportionate to the expected response to the trigger (e.g. losing job)
 - occurs within 3 months of onset of the stress, lasting less than 6 months