

**What are common reactions people may experience after an unanticipated event?**

**Physical symptoms**

- sleep disturbance
- difficulty concentrating
- eating disturbance
- headache
- fatigue
- diarrhea
- nausea or vomiting
- rapid heart rate
- rapid breathing
- muscle tension
- weight loss or weight gain
- isolation
- frustration
- fear
- grief and remorse
- uncomfortable returning to work
- anger and irritability
- depression
- extreme sadness
- self-doubt
- flashbacks
- poor attention span

**Who is helping my loved one?**

The forYOU team is comprised of volunteers from a variety of disciplines. The team includes physicians, nurses, respiratory therapists, social workers and chaplains. The forYOU team members have been trained in critical incident stress management and were selected because of their high level of competence supporting second victims.

**Help is only a call away!**

The forYOU team is free, confidential and available 24-7 by paging **(573) 397-0044**.

For additional assistance, you may also call University of Missouri Employee Assistance at **(573) 882-6701**.

 **Health Care**  
*University of Missouri Health System*

**We're here for you  
and your family.**



**forYOU**  
team



## The forYOU team

This program was created to help University of Missouri Health Care staff members who may be considered “second victims.” A second victim is a health care team member who is involved in a unanticipated event or stressful event who becomes victimized in the sense that he or she is traumatized by the event.

Our goal is to educate and offer assistance to providers who are experiencing the second victim phenomenon. Recognizing that family members and friends may also be affected by what happens to a loved one at work, we want to provide you information about second victims. This information is to help you understand the situation and allow you to provide support to your loved one. This brochure contains tips and frequently asked questions. If you have concerns or would like more assistance, please contact the forYOU team by pager at (573) 397-0044.

### What are second victims feeling and experiencing?

Second victims may:

- feel personally responsible for a stressful event
- feel as though they have failed the patient
- second-guess their clinical skills and knowledge base
- experience a wide variety of symptoms related to stress
- feel numbness or an absence of response
- not want to discuss the case for fear of breaking confidentiality requirements
- become less tolerant of normal interactions that occur outside of work

### How can family members help loved ones who have experienced a traumatic event at work?

- **Listen** carefully; this can be more meaningful than talking.
- Do **not** say things like “everything will be OK” or “this is fate” or “just quit.” These expressions will not fix or improve the situation.
- Do not take their anger or frustration personally.
- Give them time to work through their feelings.
- Understand their reactions are normal.
- Encourage plenty of rest and a well-balanced diet.
- Offer your sincere sorrow.
- Give them space and time to be alone.
- Understand that their stress reaction may last days or weeks.
- Become more familiar with their symptoms (refer to the back of this brochure).
- Help with everyday tasks like cleaning, cooking and caring for the family.
- Call the forYOU team if you feel your loved one is not coping well within a few weeks following the event.
- Consider encouraging your loved one to speak with a professional counselor if his or her symptoms do not lessen within a few weeks.