



Healthcast: Fireworks and PTSD

Posted: Jul 03, 2015 2:37 AM IST

Updated: Jul 03, 2015 8:39 AM IST



It's an American tradition to celebrate the Fourth of July with fireworks, but for many veterans with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), the sound of fireworks can bring back terrifying memories of combat.

“You hear the sound of fireworks and for you that amigdula may transport you to memories of summer barbeques, warm wind, joyous memories, whereas for the soldier with PTSD, there's a dark side and that amigdula can transport you to memories of the battles,” Dr. Sudip Bose, PTSD expert, said.

PTSD can come from any traumatic events in a person's life, but the majority of people who suffer from PTSD are veterans.

“For PTSD, you can’t see it, you know when you look at a brain scan or even you look at the brain in general, you can’t see PTSD and that’s what makes it tricky and hard to diagnose, there’s not a test for it and there’s not a scan for it,” Bose said.

Kevin Rhoades is a US Marine Corps veteran who said the sound of fireworks is hard to deal with, but he’s not the only one. Many veterans with PTSD are triggered by the popping sound. That’s why an organization called “Military with PTSD” created yard signs to ask the public to be more courteous with fireworks.

“Late at night, you know sometimes whenever you get woke up at two or three o’clock in the morning, you know it brings back your memories,” Rhoades said.

“That’s my whole point with having the sign is to get people aware that the men and women who have fought over there in Afghanistan, Iraq and any other conflict that we have had, it brings back those memories and stuff so I want everyone to be aware of it.”

Rhoades has the sign posted in his yard as a reminder for people to be more aware this Fourth of July.

“I’m not against having fun, actually on the Fourth of July I’m going to pop my own fireworks, but you know, hey, be courteous where you’re at, and just be safe and do within accordance to the law,” he said.
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