

Differentiating

..... Between



Bad Dreams

- Fully oriented upon waking
- Distress resolves quickly
- Emotionally calm/neutral
- Easy to return to sleep
- Rarely includes body movements or speech
- Occurs later in sleep cycle



Idiopathic Nightmares

- Oriented upon waking
- Full recall of content
- Emotionally distressed
- Difficulty returning to sleep
- May/may not cause movement or talking
- May occur later in sleep cycle



Post Traumatic Nightmares

- Awakens disoriented
- Content often trauma related
- Emotionally terrified
- Very difficult to return to sleep
- Usually includes thrashing movements & vocalization
- Occurs earlier in sleep cycle

How do they compare?

Pruiksma et al. (2016: Sample of 108 Soldiers (AD & OIF/OEF))

Nightmares Before PTSD Treatment

69%



VS

Nightmares After Successful PTSD Treatment

13%



Clinical Note:

While many Service members with PTSD experience nightmares, specific criteria must be met for a co-morbid Nightmare Disorder diagnosis.

Resources:

- CDP Webinar: Sleep & PTSD
- American Academy of Sleep Medicine Nightmare Practice Guidelines

Blogs: Consortium for Health & Military Performance

- Sleep & PTSD: A Double Whammy
- Treatments for Insomnia & PTSD
- Prioritizing Insomnia & PTSD

For more information about the treatment of anger in patients with PTSD register for CDP Presents: Helping Patients with PTSD-Related Nightmares Online via Zoom, lead by Kristin Pruiksma, PhD., University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio

Pruiksma, K. E. et al. (2016). Residual sleep disturbances following PTSD treatment in active duty military personnel.. Psychological Trauma. 8(6): 697-701. [dod: 10.1037/tra0000150](https://doi.org/10.1037/tra0000150)