

EMDR and The Military In Action

A monthly newsletter to keep you informed.

This is a monthly e-newsletter created primarily for our colleagues trained in Eye Movement Desensitization and Desensitization (EMDR) who work with military, veterans, and their families. The purpose of **EMDR and The Military In Action** is to promote continued dialogue regarding the efficacy and current developments with EMDR and its use with these special populations.

In This Issue

- War-related medically unexplained symptoms, prevalence, and treatment: Utilizing EMDR within the armed services.
- Intervening early with EMDR on military operations: A case study.
- Veterans and PTSD treatment.
- Married to a veteran: When memories of past interrupt the present.

Citations of the Month

Russell, M. C. (2008). [War-related medically unexplained symptoms, prevalence, and treatment: Utilizing EMDR within the armed services.](#) *Journal of EMDR Practice and Research*, 2(3), 212-225. doi:10.1891/1933-3196.2.3.212.



The mental health impact of war is often underestimated by military, government, and media officials who focus primarily on well-known conditions like depression and post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) while ignoring the complex toll of modern warfare. These effects are clearly evident in "war syndromes," many of which can be collectively understood as medically unexplained symptoms (MUS). The current study provides a brief historical review of combat-related MUS as well as an analysis of present evidence of a possible "Iraqi War Syndrome." An overview of past and current treatments for combat MUS is followed by a single case study treating an Iraqi war combat veteran with combat-related MUS with eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR). Therapy resulted in significant improvement of the patient's 1-year psycho-physical condition and co-morbid PTSD. We provide a detailed account of those treatment sessions as well

as a discussion of EMDR's potential to simultaneously treat a range of combat-related psycho-physical conditions without requiring extensive homework or self-disclosure that some military patients may resist. The results are promising, but they require further research. [Author Abstract]

Early Intervention

Wesson, M., & Gould, M. (2009). [Intervening early with EMDR on military operations: A case study](#). *Journal of EMDR Practice and Research*, 3(2), 91-97. doi:10.1891/1933-3196.3.2.91.

The U.K. armed forces are currently involved in a number of military operations throughout the world. Offering structured psychological interventions such as eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR) in theater has a number of potential advantages. This single-case study describes how the EMDR recent event protocol (Shapiro, 1995) was used in theater with a 27-year-old active-duty U.K. soldier who was experiencing an acute stress reaction after treating a land mine casualty. The intervention took place 2 weeks post trauma with four sessions conducted on consecutive days, resulting in a positive outcome, with the soldier able to return immediately to frontline duties. Treatment response was assessed with administration of four standardized measures at pre-treatment, post treatment, and 18-month follow-up. Treatment effects remained at 18-month follow-up. The challenges of conducting EMDR in operational theaters and clinical implications are explored.

E.C. Hurley, EMDR, and Veterans in the News - Huffington News

[Veterans and PTSD treatment](#) (February 5, 2012)

Many veterans never dreamed of needing help coping with life following combat deployments. While the impact of surviving in a combat zone has left many veterans seeking help in overcoming post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), there have been significant advances in treatment. An overview of available therapy approaches for PTSD can enhance a veteran's treatment options. There are three evidenced-based psychotherapies researched with veterans and recognized to be effective in the treatment of combat-related PTSD. Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT), Prolonged Exposure (PE), and Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) are all accepted as being effective treatment approaches. Each form of therapy has the potential to make a positive difference in the lives of veterans who are treated. Since each therapy addresses specific treatment issues, veterans should know that if one treatment has not worked well for them, other options are available in your community. [Excerpt]

[Married to a veteran: When memories of past interrupt the present](#) (February 19, 2012)

Incorporating an evidence-based model of psychotherapy such as Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) helps resolves the reactivity. It assists both parties in reclaiming their lives. Recently, after completing treatment, a veteran said to me "I am home now!" In a follow-up session his spouse noted the amount of fun they regained in their marriage now that memories from the past had been resolved. Dr. Shapiro's book can give you a good overview of how EMDR can help. Individual veterans and a military couple volunteered to share their stores to help others. In addition, the book describes self-help techniques in detail as well as relationship advice. It also gives guidelines to decide if memory processing is a good choice for you.
[Excerpt]

Special Notes

Our Wordpress blog: <http://emdrresearchfoundation.wordpress.com/>
(note that there are entries on 12/16 and 12/18 with links to articles)

Like us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/emdrresearchfoundation
(note that there are quite a few relevant entries with links to articles)

Follow us on Twitter: www.twitter.com/EMDRResearch

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