

WG 3 (Psychological Health)

Adverse Events in Childhood as Predictor to PTSD Due to Combat

Shlomi Abuhasira, Leah Shelef, Liya Kerem, Ariel Tenenbaum, Lucian Tatsa-Laur.

Medical Corps, IDF.

Background and Rationale:

Adverse childhood experiences (ACE) are recognized risk factors for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). However, limited research explores their specific impact on PTSD development among soldiers in combat and combat support roles.

Research Methodology:

This retrospective cohort study analyzed data from 288,633 IDF soldiers assessed between the years 1998-2019. ACEs were assessed using a 9-item adaptation of the ACE questionnaire. PTSD diagnoses were determined by licensed clinicians at enlistment and discharge.

Findings:

PTSD prevalence increased from 0.01% at enlistment to 0.06% at discharge. ACE exposure was common (27.8% reported ≥ 1 ACE). Sexual abuse (OR = 4.14) and Emotional neglect (OR = 1.92) were the strongest PTSD predictors. ACEs significantly predict PTSD due to combat severity in military recruits beyond and over being in combat roles.

Conclusions:

Findings highlight the need for pre-enlistment screening and targeted interventions for high-risk recruits. A trauma-informed approach to military psychiatry may mitigate long-term psychiatric morbidity. Our study suggests that military enlistment should include ACE screening as part of routine mental health evaluations.

WG 3 (Psychological Health)

Assessment of PTSD Severity and Moral Injury Among Combat Medical Caregivers

Amit Rimon, Nir Hirschhorn, Yaakov Rothschild, Leah Shelef.

Tzameret Program, Department of Military Medicine, Hebrew University Hadassah Ein Kerem Campus.

Background and Rationale:

Caregivers exposed to war events face increased risks of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Moral Injury (MI). The research aims to assess the frequency of PTSD and MI in military medical caregivers with different combat exposure events, compared to civilian doctors who treated combat casualties in ER. Findings could aid in developing prevention programs and interventions for high-risk military caregivers.

Research Methodology:

This cross-sectional quantitative study targets four groups: Combat medics (CMs), who fought as part of organic combat teams; non-combat medics (non-CMs) who crossed border lines to evacuate casualties without engaging in combat; military medical caregivers who treated casualties without crossing border lines; and civilian doctors in hospitals near combat zones.

Data collection will be conducted by the lead researcher using validated Hebrew questionnaires, including Combat Exposure Scale (CES), PTSD Checklist (PCL-5), Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI), Moral Injury Events Scale (MIES), and Mental Health Continuum Short Form (MHC-SF).

Results:

The study will assess and compare the severity and prevalence of PTSD and MI across the four groups. Data analysis methods and main findings will be determined after the study is conducted.

Conclusions:

The research aims to provide insights into the mental health risks faced by military medical personnel and civilian doctors in combat-related situations. Results may inform the development of targeted prevention and intervention strategies for these high-risk populations.