

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.

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- Treating traumatic amputation-related phantom limb pain: A case study using EMDR within the Armed Services
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Independence Day is just around the corner, and we want to say thank you to the men and women who defend our freedom. It is those who sacrifice their lives to protect the citizens of the United States.

We also want to say thank you to those who provide support and resources to help veterans transition from armed forces to civilian life. Your support has improved the lives of thousands of veterans.

Citations of the Month - Phantom Limb Pain

Schneider, J., Hofmann, A., Rost, C., & Shapiro, F. (2008, January-February). [EMDR in the treatment of chronic phantom limb pain: Theoretical implications, case study, and treatment guidelines](#). *Pain Medicine*, 9(1), 76-82. doi:10.1111/j.1526-4637.2007.00299.x.



Objective: Little research substantiates long-term gains in the treatment of phantom limb pain. This report describes and evaluates an eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR) treatment with extensive follow-up. **Design:** A case series of phantom limb pain patients. **Setting:** In-patient hospitalization and out-patient private practice. **Patients:** Case series of five patients with phantom limb pain ranging from 1 to 16 years. All patients were on extensive medication regimens prior to EMDR. **Interventions:** Three to 15 sessions of EMDR were used to treat the pain and the psychological ramifications. **Outcome Measures:** Patients were measured for continued use of medications, pain intensity/frequency, psychological trauma, and depression. **Results:** EMDR resulted in a significant decrease or elimination of phantom pain, reduction in depression and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms to subclinical levels, and significant reduction or elimination of medications related to the phantom pain and nociceptive pain at long-term follow-up. **Conclusions:** The overview and long-term follow-up indicate that EMDR was successful in the treatment of both the phantom limb pain and the psychological consequences of amputation. The latter include issues of personal loss, grief, self-image, and social adjustment. These results suggest that (1) a significant aspect of phantom limb pain is the physiological memory storage of the nociceptive pain sensations experienced at the time of the event and (2) these memories can be successfully reprocessed. Further research is needed to explore the theoretical and treatment implications of this information-processing approach. [PubMed]

Russell, M. C. (2008, April). [Treating traumatic amputation-related phantom limb pain: A case study utilizing eye movement desensitization and reprocessing within the Armed Services](#). *Clinical Case Studies*, 7(2), 136-153. doi:10.1177/1534650107306292

Since September 2006, more than 725 service members from the global war on terrorism have survived combat-related traumatic amputations that often result in phantom limb pain (PLP) syndrome. Combat amputees are also at high risk of developing chronic mental health conditions such as PTSD and clinical depression as they deal with wartime experiences, rehabilitation, and post rehabilitation adjustments. One active-duty patient was referred to a military outpatient clinic for treatment of PLP and PTSD following a traumatic leg amputation from a noncombat-related motor vehicle accident. Four sessions of eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR) led to elimination of PLP and a significant reduction in PTSD, depression, and phantom limb tingling sensations. A detailed account of this treatment, as well as a review of the benefits of EMDR research and treatment in the military, is provided. The results are promising but in need of further research. [Author Abstract]

Military Mental Health Providers Help Desk

[Military OneSource](#) is a U.S. Department of Defense program that provides resources and support to active-duty, National Guard and Reserve service members and their families anywhere in the world. The program is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at no cost to users.

EMDR In The News

Hurley, E. C. (2012, February 28). [Being a veteran can be hazardous to your health](#). Huffington Post.

What are effective treatments for chronic pain? Due to the multi-dimensional aspects of pain, a number of treatment approaches have been used. They take into account the cognitive, affective, behavioral, social, and physical aspects of pain. Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), hypnosis, acupuncture, and biofeedback training have all been used. While EMDR therapy was originally utilized in the treatment of PTSD the neurobiological similarities with PTSD patients and chronic pain disorders has led therapists to use EMDR in the treatment of a broad range of disorders including chronic pain, anger, anxiety, and depression (Silver, Rogers, & Russell, 2008). Studies have found EMDR effective in the treatment of chronic pain (Mazzola, Calcagno, Goicochea, Pueyrredon, Leston, & Salvat, 2009; Shapiro, 2012) [Excerpt]

Special Notes

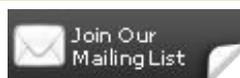
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