



## EMDR AND THE MILITARY IN ACTION E-NEWSLETTER

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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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### Researchers!

If you are interested in doing research that addresses EMDR topics related to the military and you need additional funding, consider applying for a \$25,000 research award through the EMDR Research Foundation. Go to <http://emdrresearchfoundation.org/research-grants/research-grant-awards> for details. If you need access to expertise for a research project, don't hesitate to apply for a \$1,000 research consultation award. For details go to <http://emdrresearchfoundation.org/research-grants/research-consultation-awards>.

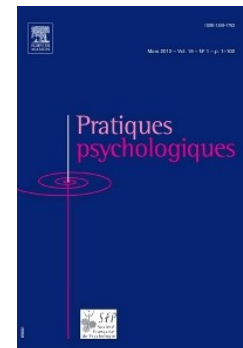
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### Citations - Pain

Brennstuhl, M. J., Tarquinio, C., & Bassan, F. (2016). [[Use of an Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing \(EMDR\) Therapy in Chronic Pain Management: A Pilot Study](#)]. *Pratiques Psychologiques*. doi:10.1016/j.prps.2015.11.002 .

**Introduction:** Chronic pain is a major healthcare issue. Additional costs involved in pain management each year in France amount to more than one billion euros. While painkillers have been proven effective in treating acute pain, their long-term use has negative side effects reducing their effectiveness. Psychotherapeutic schemes like hypnosis and cognitive- behavioural therapies also seem to show mixed results.

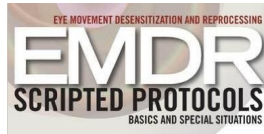
**Objective:** Considering that the use of Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) therapy is an innovative approach in chronic pain management, the main focus of this research was to compare the use of EMDR therapy versus eclectic healthcare in a hospital unit specialized in the management of chronic pain. Method: Forty- ve patients divided into



three groups were treated by standard protocol of EMDR therapy, pain protocol of EMDR therapy and eclectic therapy.

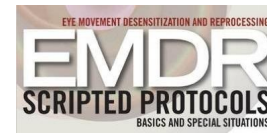
**Results:** Results show the effectiveness of EMDR therapy on sensory, cognitive, behavioural and emotional but also traumatic components of pain, EMDR standard protocol being most efficient after five sessions, and a reduction of pain extending one month after therapy has been discontinued.

**Conclusion:** The interest in the of EMDR in chronic pain management then lies partly in its effectiveness in a few sessions, but also in clinical fast emergence and awareness that it allows to obtain from these patients.



de Roos, C., & Veenstra, S. (2009). EMDR pain protocol for current pain. In M. Luber (Ed.), [Eye Movement Desensitization \(EMDR\) Scripted Protocols: Special Populations](#) (pp. 537-557). New York, NY: Springer Publishing Co.

Grant, M. (2009). Pain control with EMDR. In M. Luber (Ed.), [Eye Movement Desensitization \(EMDR\) Scripted Protocols: Special Populations](#) (pp. 517-536). New York, NY: Springer Publishing Co.



## JAMA Psychiatry

Jonas, W. B., & Schoemaker, E. B. (2014). [Pain and Opioids in the Military](#), *JAMA Internal Medicine* 174(8),1402-1403. doi:10.1001/jaminternmed.2014.2726.

In the documentary movie *Escape Fire*, (1) a battle-weary and combat-wounded soldier falls out of his bunk during a medical evacuation flight from Afghanistan to Washington, DC. Disoriented from an overdose of opioid and psychoactive medications previously prescribed for his wounds, pain, and loss, he later embarks on a journey of self-healing in an effort to get off of the drugs. Unfortunately, he is not alone. In a study by Toblin et al (2) of one of the Army's leading units published in this issue of *JAMA Internal Medicine*, 44.0% of the soldiers had chronic pain, and 15.1% regularly used opioids. Even accounting for the ready availability of military care, these rates are much higher than the estimates of 26.0% and 4.0%, respectively, in the general civilian population. While chronic pain and opioid use have been a long-standing concern of the military leadership, this study is among the first to quantify the impact of recent wars on the prevalence of pain and narcotic use among soldiers. The nation's defense rests on the comprehensive fitness of its service members-mind, body, and spirit. (3) Chronic pain and use of opioids carry the risk of functional impairment of America's fighting force.

Tefft, A. J., & Jordan, I. R., (2016, April). [Eye Movement Desensitization Reprocessing as Treatment for Chronic Pain Syndromes: A Literature Review](#). *Journal of the American Psychiatric Nurses Association* 1-23. doi:10.1177/1078390316642519.



**Background:** Chronic pain is public health problem in the United States, costing upwards of \$560 to \$635 billion annually. Guidelines consistently recommend psychological treatment for chronic pain. Eye movement desensitization reprocessing (EMDR) psychotherapy may provide an alternate approach to treating chronic pain.

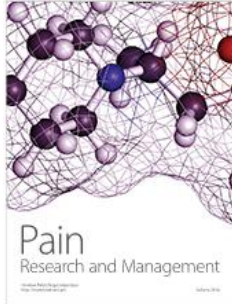
**Objective:** Review of literature to evaluate the effectiveness of EMDR in the treatment of

chronic pain.

**Method:** A literature search of seven databases was conducted to find relevant studies addressing the use of EMDR for chronic pain.

**Results:** Most studies reported improvement in pain and psychological indices with EMDR.

**Conclusions:** Because most literature reported case studies, the results have limited generalizability. However, for clients who suffer from chronic pain, EMDR is a reasonable treatment alternative.



Vallerand, A. H., Cosler, P., Henningfield, J. E., & Galassini, P. (2015). [Pain Management Strategies and Lessons from the Military: A Narrative Review.](#) *Pain Research and Management*, 20(5), 261-268. doi:10.1155/2015/196025

**Background:** Wounded soldiers often experience substantial pain, which must be addressed before returning to active duty or civilian life. The United States (US) military has instituted several guidelines and initiatives aimed at improving pain management by providing rapid access to medical care, and developing interdisciplinary multimodal pain management strategies based on outcomes observed both in combat and hospital settings.

**Objective:** To provide a narrative review regarding US military pain management guidelines and initiatives, which may guide improvements in pain management, particularly chronic pain management and prevention, for the general population.

**Methods:** A literature review of US military pain management guidelines and initiatives was conducted, with a particular focus on the potential of these guidelines to address shortcomings in chronic pain management in the general population.

**Discussion:** The application of US military pain management guidelines has been shown to improve pain monitoring, education and relief. In addition, the US military has instituted the development of programs and guidelines to ensure proper use and discourage aberrant behaviours with regard to opioid use, because opioids are regarded as a critical part of acute and chronic pain management schemes. Inadequate pain management, particularly inadequate chronic pain management, remains a major problem for the general population in the US. Application of military strategies for pain management to the general US population may lead to more effective pain management and improved long-term patient outcomes.

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## From the EMDR Bookshelf

Grant, M. (2009, 2012). [Pain Control with EMDR: Treatment Manual.](#) Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications.

An "information-processing" approach to the psychological management of pain, utilizing EMDR. Includes theory, assessment and clinical application of specialized protocols.

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## In the News

Arlotta, C. J. (2015, Feb 13). [New Recommendations for Pain Management Among Active Military and Veterans.](#)

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For a complete list of Military In Action Archives, [click here.](#)

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