



US DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

BLAST INJURY RESEARCH PROGRAM COORDINATING OFFICE

Diagnostics and Biomarkers

Rapid Field Assessment of Visual Acuity

Current techniques to assess vision impairments on the battlefield consist of simply asking the Service Member questions regarding any changes to vision or to count how many fingers the medic is holding up. This gross assessment of potential vision impairments often leads to inaccurate estimations of visual damage. Vision Center of Excellence (VCE) researchers in conjunction with Madigan Army Medical Center and the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) Department of Ophthalmology researchers have developed a rapid vision assessment tool for use by combat medics and first responders. The purpose of this work was to devise a simple method to rapidly assess the visual acuity of a casualty on the battlefield by utilizing an approach that will yield more accurate and reliable visual measurements than the current techniques. As a result of the development of this tool, visual acuity screening at the point of injury need not be delayed for lack of formal vision screening cards. Further work is planned to assess the adaptability and validity of this effort. The rapid vision assessment tool was presented at MHSRS in August 2016.¹

¹ Godbole, N. J., Kim, N. S., Seefeldt, E. S., Morgenstern, A., Egan, J. A., Coyler, M. H., & Mazzoli, R. A. (2016). Simplified method for rapid field assessment of visual acuity by first responders after ocular injury. Presented at the Military Health System Research Symposium, Kissimmee, FL.

