



US DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

BLAST INJURY RESEARCH PROGRAM COORDINATING OFFICE

Psychological and Quality of Life Outcomes

Long-term Quality of Life Outcomes in Injured U.S. Military Personnel: The Wounded Warrior Recovery Project

To better understand the effects of blast-related combat injuries on long-term health and readiness, the Naval Health Research Center (NHRC; San Diego, CA), is longitudinally assessing clinical, rehabilitative, and patient-reported outcomes in injured U.S. Service members through the Wounded Warrior Recovery Project (WWRP). WWRP is a 15-year, prospective, population-based study, with participants completing follow-up assessments every 6 months. WWRP enrollment is ongoing and each of the more than 52,000 Service members injured in Iraq and Afghanistan will be invited to participate in the study. To date, 5,575 injured Service members have provided informed consent and enrolled in the study and over 24,000 assessments have been completed; approximately 79 percent of respondents were injured in a blast event.

The study includes longitudinal assessments of patient-reported PTSD and depression symptoms and health-related QOL. Several cross-sectional assessments have been deployed, allowing the research team to examine social support, chronic pain, and functioning and satisfaction ratings for orthotic and prosthetic users. Recently, the WWRP team added longitudinal assessments related to health behaviors such as sleep, physical activity, and alcohol and tobacco use. Measures are chosen with the aim of examining the complex relationship between physical and mental health and its impact on QOL.

WWRP findings from the past year continue to demonstrate that PTSD and depression are prevalent issues facing injured Service members (*Woodruff et al., 2018*). Both can impact overall QOL, and poor mental health in particular may be a primary driver in reduced QOL (*McCabe et al., 2018; Woodruff et al., 2018*). Chronic low back pain also appears to be a prevalent issue in this population. Notably, individuals experiencing pain have higher rates and severity of PTSD and depression as well as lower QOL than those not experiencing pain (*Watrous et al., 2017; Watrous et al., 2018*). The project's public facing website is www.wwrecoveryproject.org.

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