



KNOW THE FACTS

Test your psychological health knowledge to
keep your mind fit and stay mission ready

REAL WARRIORS★REAL BATTLES
REAL STRENGTH

DID YOU KNOW THAT YOUR PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH IMPACTS HOW YOU FEEL, THINK AND ACT



Use this booklet to:

- Test your knowledge about psychological health
- Know the common myths associated with psychological health
- Identify the early warning signs of psychological health concerns
- View resources for seeking help
- Check your quiz answers

It also affects how you handle stress, relate to others and make choices. A healthy frame of mind and knowing the facts may help you overcome any concerns you may have about you or someone you love seeking psychological health care.

Feeling stress as a result of certain military experiences can be common. About 20 percent of all active-duty service members are diagnosed with a psychological health concern, with 2.5 percent diagnosed with PTSD, 5 percent with insomnia, and 5 percent with depression (Deployment Health Clinical Center, 2017). **Seeking care early can lead to a healthier life.**

TEST YOUR **KNOWLEDGE**

1

Which of the following can be considered a psychological health concern?

- a. Post-traumatic stress
- b. Depression
- c. Thoughts about ending your life
- d. All of the above

2

What is the best way to cope with a psychological health concern?

- a. Hide it from others
- b. Wait to see if symptoms get better
- c. Reach out for support
- d. All of the above

3

Who can you share your concerns with?

- a. Family member or peer
- b. Psychological health professional
- c. My leader
- d. All of the above

4

What should you not do to help someone access care?

- a. Reach out and let the person know you are available to talk
- b. Help the person access psychological health services
- c. Ask what type of support the person would like
- d. Tell the person to stick it out and stop being weak

5

Which of the following is a benefit of staying mentally fit?

- a. Ability to better cope with stress
- b. Increased readiness
- c. Stronger relationships
- d. All of the above

6

Where can you seek help?

- a. Military hospital or clinic
- b. Military Crisis Line
- c. Veterans Affairs Medical Center
- d. All of the above

CHECK THE **FACTS**

1

True or False: Seeking psychological health care or support can improve your career.

a. True

b. False

2

True or False: Only weak people experience psychological health concerns.

a. True

b. False

3

True or False: Treatment works.

a. True

b. False

4

True or False: It is not possible to confidentially seek help for a psychological health concern.

a. True

b. False

5

True or False: Service members only experience PTSD symptoms immediately following combat or a traumatic event.

a. True

b. False

6

True or False: Seeking psychological health care can make you stronger and help you stay mission ready.

a. True

b. False

EXPOSE THE MYTHS

- ▶ **Myth:** You cannot get or maintain your security clearance if you seek care for a psychological health concern.

FACT: Seeking psychological health counseling or treatment alone will not automatically impact your ability to obtain or maintain a security clearance.

There may be some psychological health concerns that can impair your ability to safeguard classified information and hold a clearance. However, many service members who seek help from a psychological health professional are able to get or maintain a clearance. In fact, "such counseling can be a positive factor in eligibility determinations," according to Executive Order #12968.

- ▶ **Myth:** PTSD is a sign of weakness in character.

FACT: PTSD is a common reaction to traumatic situations. As a service member coping with PTSD symptoms, seeking help will provide benefits to you, your family, your unit and your service. Do not hesitate to seek care – PTSD is treatable and reaching out early often leads to the best outcomes.

- ▶ **Myth:** You can't recover from a psychological health concern.

FACT: Successful treatment and a positive outcome are greatly enhanced by early intervention. Therapy, and in some cases medication, can improve psychological health concerns and recovery is possible. Treatment can help you feel more in control and teach you effective ways to cope with stressful situations. Work with your medical provider to find the right treatment for you.

- ▶ **Myth:** I probably don't know anyone with a psychological health concern.

FACT: Psychological health concerns are common. According to [MentalHealth.gov](https://www.mentalhealth.gov), one in five American adults in the general population have experienced a psychological health concern and one in 10 young people have experienced a period of major depression.

- ▶ **Myth:** People with psychological health concerns are violent and unpredictable.

FACT: According to [MentalHealth.gov](https://www.mentalhealth.gov), only three to five percent of violent acts are caused by individuals who have a psychological health concern. The majority of people with psychological health concerns are no more likely to be violent than anybody else.

CHECKLIST: EARLY WARNING SIGNS

If you, or someone you know, are experiencing one or more of the following feelings, behaviors, or thoughts, you could have early warning signs of a psychological health concern and you may want to consider seeking care. Use this checklist to write any symptoms you are experiencing and discuss them with your health care provider.

Feelings

- ☐ Feeling as if nothing matters
- ☐ Helplessness or hopelessness
- ☐ Extreme forgetfulness, anger and worry
- ☐ Ongoing sadness
- ☐ Severe mood swings

Behaviors

- ☐ Eating or sleeping too much or too little
- ☐ Pulling away from people and typical activities
- ☐ Using tobacco or alcohol more than usual
- ☐ Engaging in substance misuse
- ☐ Acting recklessly such as driving at excessive speeds
- ☐ Yelling at family and friends
- ☐ Hearing or believing things that other people do not hear or believe
- ☐ Unable to perform daily tasks like getting to work or school

Thoughts

- ☐ Confused thinking
- ☐ Thinking of harming yourself or others
- ☐ Fear or suspiciousness of others who are not a danger to you

Other symptoms or concerns you are experiencing (Please describe):



Seeking care early can decrease your likelihood of developing a more serious psychological health concern, and can lead to positive outcomes for you, your family and your unit.

ANSWER KEY

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. d. All of the above

A psychological health concern has an effect on how you think, feel or act. Post-traumatic stress, depression and anxiety can all result from life's challenges. When these concerns lead to lasting negative thoughts, moods or behaviors, it may be time to reach out for support.

2. c. Reach out for support

Psychological wounds are often invisible and can become more serious without care. Reaching out for help early can lead to positive outcomes such as improved relationships, career growth and better overall health.

3. d. All of the above

Seeking help is a sign of strength. Reach to someone you trust to create a support network. You may even inspire those around you who need help to reach out as well.

4. d. Tell the person to stick it out and stop being weak

Supporting friends in need and using your strength to take action can save a life. You can make a difference in the life of someone you care about by offering to help. When a friend reaches out to you, they are trusting you to have their back. It is important that you listen to the person and offer positive ways to help. Saying "stick it out" or "suck it up" may make the person doubt that they should seek help.

5. d. All of the above

Feeling resilient and psychologically healthy can impact every part of your life. When you are mentally fit, you are better able to handle tough situations and reach your goals. It is also easier for those around you to enjoy your company and lean on you for support.

6. d. All of the above

Taking action to address your psychological health concerns is a sign of strength and can lead to a happier and healthier life. For service members and veterans, there are a wide range of resources to support you in taking control of your psychological health.

- Military hospitals or clinics are great resources for getting help for psychological health concerns. These should be the first stop for care for service members. Here, you can work with your primary care manager to find the appropriate treatment options. Visit the TRICARE website (tricare.mil/mtf) to find a facility near you.
- For **immediate** assistance, call the Military Crisis Line at **800-273-8255** and press **1** for free 24/7 access to trained counselors who understand what service members are coping with and can provide support.
- Veterans Affairs Medical Centers provide 24/7 psychological health care. Find your local medical center (va.gov/directory) to work with a health care provider to help determine the type of care you need.

To learn more about resources available for psychological health concerns, contact the Psychological Health Resource Center 24/7. Call **866-966-1020** to speak confidentially with a trained health resource consultant, or use the Real Warriors Live Chat (realwarriors.net/livechat). For additional resources and ways to seek help, reach out at resources@phcoe.org or take a look at the You Are Not Alone section of this booklet.

CHECK THE FACTS

1. a. True

Seeking care can help you succeed in your career by lessening the impact of symptoms on your performance. Visit realwarriors.net to watch videos of service members and veterans who have reached out for help and had successful outcomes.

2. b. False

Psychological health concerns have nothing to do with a lack of toughness or strength. Difficult life experiences, trauma, abuse, injury, genetics and family history are all factors that can play a role in determining who experiences psychological health concerns.

3. a. True

There are many effective treatments for psychological health concerns supported by decades of research. While you may not know what treatment options to pursue, work with your health care provider to find the option that is right for you. Your provider will answer any questions or concerns you may have and explain the different treatments. You don't need to go it alone. Your provider is there to help you return to peak condition and improve your overall health.

4. b. False

Health care providers work with service members to provide the care that best addresses their symptoms. They strive to keep psychological health care private and will give detailed information about confidentially at the first session. In certain cases, a service member's command may need to be notified, such as when a service member has suicidal thoughts, needs to be hospitalized, or has a duty restriction. By seeking care early, you can help address psychological health concerns in a timely manner before it becomes a crisis. If you are concerned about confidentiality and would like to consider other ways to seek care or support, you can reach out to your chaplain or use online resources such as realwarriors.net.

5. b. False

PTSD symptoms usually occur within three months after the traumatic event, but symptoms may not appear until six months or years later. The types of symptoms fall into four categories

- Hyperarousal – a state of increased tension
- Avoidance – avoiding reminders of the event
- Reliving the event – for example, having nightmares or flashbacks
- Negative thoughts and feelings – such as fear, guilt or shame

Reaching out for care is an important step since symptoms may lessen or disappear and then re-appear later in life. Early intervention can provide the right coping tools to work through these symptoms, and sometimes even prevent development of chronic PTSD.

6. a. True

Seeking care for psychological health concerns allows you to play an active role in your own well-being. When you receive care, you can greatly improve your physical and mental fitness. This can help you take back control of your life. Other benefits include sustaining recovery, maintaining positive relationships with friends, family and members of your unit, and enjoying overall better health.

WATCH WARRIORS SHARE THEIR STORIES

realwarriors.net/personal-stories



YOU ARE NOT ALONE

MILITARY CRISIS LINE militarycrisisline.net/chat

Call the Military Crisis Line at **800-273-8255** (press 1), chat online by visiting militarycrisisline.net/chat or send a text message to **838255** for confidential support in a crisis.

PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH RESOURCE CENTER

Talk confidentially to a trained health resource consultant 24/7, for free at **866-966-1020** or visit realwarriors.net/livechat for assistance accessing care.

MILITARY HOSPITAL OR CLINIC

Provides emergency and non-emergency care for both physical and invisible wounds covered by TRICARE. Visit tricare.mil/mtf to find a hospital or clinic near you.

MILITARY CHAPLAINS

Chaplains are a great source of comfort, support and encouragement. If you don't live near a military installation, contact the closest one and ask for assistance, or contact **Military OneSource** at **800-342-9647** to locate your unit chaplain.

VET CENTERS www.vetcenter.va.gov

Access free counseling, outreach and referral services for combat veterans and their families. Call **877-WAR-VETS (877-927-8387)** to speak confidentially with a combat veteran.

THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Visit va.gov/find-locations to find health care, counseling and benefits facilities nearest you.

SOURCES

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MHS Military Health System
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