

DCoE in Action

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Complementary and alternative medicine, along with conventional medicine, can promote good health for the mind, body and spirit. DCoE encourages servicemembers to care for their psychological health through traditional methods and consider non-traditional methods in order to maintain mission readiness.



What is Complementary and Alternative Medicine?

The National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine, one of 27 institutes that make up the National Institutes of Health within the Department of Health and Human Services, defines complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) as a group of diverse medical and health care systems, practices and products that are not generally considered part of conventional medicine. Complementary medicine is used in conjunction with conventional medicine to assist in pain management, while alternative medicine excludes the use of conventional medicine.


There are many different kinds of CAM that work in diverse ways. Certain procedures or medicines are usually grouped together to work in a particular manner. Mind-body therapy concentrates on the mind, body and cognitive behavior. Such practices include meditation, relaxation therapy, aromatherapy, yoga and acupuncture. Dietary and natural products are another form of CAM and along with herbal medicines are thought to promote good overall health. (See article on page 8)

Manipulative and body-based practices such as chiropractic and massage therapy are among the most commonly used CAM therapies.

The overall concept for CAM is focused on treating the body as a whole, promoting self-care and often-times natural healing. There are significant gaps between conventional medicine and CAM with the latter sometimes lacking scientific evidence-based research within a clinical setting. But some CAM practices have become more widely accepted with more than 60 military installations across the country now offering chiropractic care to active-duty servicemembers. (See article on page 5)

While some CAM methods have not been scientifically proven, many servicemembers have found relief from their physical or psychological symptoms. Within the United States, the National Center for Health Statistics noted that "38 percent of U.S. adults aged 18 years and over use some form of CAM, and \$33.9 billion was spent on out-of-pocket expenses for CAM products" in 2009.

Within DCoE, many CAM therapies are being studied to determine their efficacy in treating post-traumatic stress and pain. At the Deployment Health Clinical Center, a DCoE component center, clinical trials have recently been concluded with servicemembers reporting sleeping better after participating in Yoga Nidra, and several reporting an improved ability to manage post-traumatic stress after receiving acupuncture. (See article on page 6)

A good diet, proper nutrition and psychological and spiritual health are essential for a productive lifestyle. While conventional medicine is the first line of defense for illness, disease and traumatic injuries, CAM can play a role in healing our minds, bodies and spirits. 

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Welcome Message from DHCC Director



Army Col. Charles Engel, Deployment Health Clinical Center director

As the Department of Defense Deployment Health Clinical Center (DHCC) director, I am honored to have this opportunity to share with you our efforts to give back to those servicemembers and families who give so much of themselves to protect our nation.

The DHCC has facilitated the post-war adjustment of our combat veterans since 1994. With a staff of approximately 40 clinicians, scientists and administrators, DHCC provides clinical care and advances in science to educate providers, as well as servicemembers and families. Our mission at DHCC is to improve deployment-related health by providing caring assistance and medical advocacy for servicemembers and families with deployment-related health concerns.

Our footprint on military medicine continues to grow. For example, during the month of May 2010, approximately 1,539 servicemembers were screened for behavioral health concerns during their primary care visit under the DHCC managed program Re-Engineering Systems of Primary Care Treatment also known as [RESPECT-Mil](#). Our diverse center addresses a broad continuum of care — from primary care management of low-level behavioral health concerns, to education and outreach to families and civilians in an intensive outpatient care environment with complex concerns resulting from war.

The highest praise DHCC receives comes from servicemembers themselves. Many graduates of our [Specialized Care Program](#) have told us they believe the program saved their lives. DHCC offers hope for a better future and tools for managing life after deployment. The center has adapted to the changing nature of war and its impact on health by creating treatment programs to address current war-related health concerns.

DHCC's studies are designed to improve health care services for servicemembers by developing empirically-supported, novel therapies and to increase recognition and facilitate early intervention. Further, in this issue, you will find additional information on our complementary and alternative medicine research. The success we had with our randomized clinical trial of acupuncture for the treatment of post-traumatic stress has led to our implementing acupuncture as one of the multidisciplinary modalities in our Specialized Care Program.

Our Center is also implementing RESPECT-Mil in 42 clinics internationally, with plans to expand to another 55 clinics in the coming year. RESPECT-Mil uses an evidenced-based, systematic process of care for depression and post-traumatic stress in the primary care clinic. Nurse care facilitators track patients with periodic phone contact, convey relevant information to primary care providers and consult with behavioral health specialists. Since its inception in 2007, RESPECT-Mil sites have screened more than 600,000 servicemembers and provided appropriate care management.

To learn more about the center's projects, please visit us at www.pdhealth.mil where you can sign up for our daily newsletter that provides news about current events and post-deployment health concerns. Also, you can reach a clinician toll-free at 866-559-1627 who can provide information on specific needs for servicemembers, families and providers.

I would also like to invite you to visit our center anytime you are in the area. To schedule a visit please contact Monica Valdiviez-Wiley, DHCC Strategic Communications officer at 202-356-1012, ext. 28947.

DHCC remains committed to providing compassionate state-of-the-art care for America's deployment veterans while giving their providers the research and resources they need to accomplish the mission.

Army Col. Charles Engel, M.P.H., M.D.,
Deployment Health Clinical Center
director

“The DHCC has facilitated the post-war adjustment of our combat veterans since 1994.”

Experts Discuss Changing Fitness Measures

"I believe the secret to optimal fitness lies in the constant awareness of the changing environment and the continuous pursuit of flexible adaptation to the inevitable shifts. Total force fitness is more than a physical fitness. It is the sum total of the many facets of individuals, their families and the organizations to which they serve."

— Adm. Mike Mullen
Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff

Last winter, Adm. Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff assembled 70 experts to integrate the components of health and fitness. Titled **"Total Force Fitness for the 21st Century,"** these experts collaborated to write 15 essays, which were published in the August 2010 edition of *"Military Medicine,"* an international journal produced by the [Association of Military Surgeons of the United States](#) regarding total force fitness. In addition to detailing deliberations, findings and work regarding total force fitness, the journal evaluated a wide-range of health-related subjects such as physical, psychological, nutritional, spiritual and family fitness as they relate to a new approach to servicemember fitness.

The Army has already implemented a concept called **Comprehensive Soldier Fitness**, a precursor to the concept of total force fitness. According to the Army's official website, "[Comprehensive Soldier Fitness] is based on 30-plus years of scientific study and results, uses individual assessments, tailored virtual training, classroom training and embedded resilience experts to provide the critical skills our soldiers, family members and Army civilians need."

The journal's survey on total force fitness often references the Army's Comprehensive Soldier Fitness program, with the major difference being that total force fitness is a service-wide approach. Army Maj. Todd Yosick, DCoE Resilience and Prevention deputy director, recognizes that difference and says Mullen is trying to conceptualize a way to "holistically integrate" the various fitness domains that will allow development of training, processes and programs within the military.



"Total Force Fitness is a joint initiative where policies and procedures will have to be developed by each service regarding how it is going to fit within a specific unit," said Yosick. "It can't be the one-size-fits-all approach because every unit culture is different."

According to journal contributor retired Army Brig. Gen. Michael Rounds, "Total force fitness integration efforts will fundamentally challenge the military, requiring a shift from the current course of fitness efforts and injecting a new paradigm when determining readiness."

Traditional fitness has largely been defined in the military by the capacity to manage physical challenges. According to the Total Force Fitness model, the mind domains of behavioral, psychological, spiritual and social are ideally in relative balance with the body domains of physical, environmental, medical and nutritional. Equally important is the balance the warrior feels surrounding the environment defined by family, organization and community.

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FITNESS from Page 3



Environment

Prior to Mullen's direction, there was not a comprehensive effort within the military to establish a total force fitness assessment or supporting metrics. As Rounds assesses, Total Force Fitness may vary depending on location and the mission.

In its totality, Total Force Fitness includes eight domains: Physical Fitness; Psychological Fitness; Behavioral and Occupational Fitness; Medical and Environmental Fitness; Nutritional Fitness; Spiritual Fitness and Social and Family Fitness. There are essential factors contained in each domain, and implementation of Total Force Fitness is further complicated when standards and evaluations are conducted over a multi-branch military that has nearly 1.5 million active-duty servicemembers. Certain integration elements may develop faster than others, but transparency is the ultimate goal. Here is a list of the domains:

Physical Fitness

Physical fitness relies on four components of physical health: endurance, mobility, strength and flexibility. The resulting benefit of a holistic approach is the non-performance-based benefits such as reduced risk of cardiovascular disease, stroke, hypertension, diabetes, etc.

Psychological Fitness

Psychological fitness looks at operational outcomes, variables and metrics related to performance. Psychological health is evaluated with a post-deployment health assessment and a re-assessment along with a patient health questionnaire.

Behavioral and Occupational Fitness

Behavioral and occupational fitness looks at substance misuse, excessive weight, stress and environmental conditions. Behavioral health is the relationship between one's behaviors and their positive or negative health outcomes.

Medical and Environmental Fitness

Medical fitness speaks to the condition of mental and physical fitness while environmental fitness addresses "the ability to perform mission-specific duties in any environment and withstand the multiple stressors of deployment and war," according to researchers in the journal. Current metrics are available to measure this domain but other tools, such as those that evaluate traumatic brain injury, are being implemented and studied.

Nutritional Fitness

Nutritional fitness is a domain most Americans have discussed throughout their lives and encourages healthy food choices. Recommended daily allowances, military dietary references intakes and other nutrition guidelines are the mainstay of the Nutritional Fitness Domain.

Spiritual Fitness

Spiritual fitness is perhaps the newest field of study. Researchers believe spiritual and religious beliefs offer an opportunity for unit cohesion. Challenges in implementing spiritual fitness lay in definitions and the ability of "commanders to develop policies that will promote a coherent and effective approach to the spiritual needs of servicemembers," said the journal's researchers.

Social Fitness

Social fitness includes financial health, social connectivity, leadership skills, relationships with family and friends, and unity and work relationships. Researchers point out that it is a difficult domain to measure but in the big picture, social fitness should be measured as a group, rather than on an individual basis. Social fitness is about union.

Family Fitness

Family fitness is partially addressed today by way of family support programs. With military families facing deployments and servicemembers potentially at risk for combat-related injuries and psychological health concerns, families need evidence-based prevention services that can teach coping skills.

For more details, or to read the full collection of essays from the journal, [click here](#).

Modern Docs Use Ancient Methods to Relieve Servicemembers' Back Pain

“Get knowledge of the spine, for this is the requisite for many diseases,” wrote Hippocrates, the Greek physician. It appears even the ancient Greeks knew the value of chiropractic care.

Chiropractic refers to the treatment of neuro-musculoskeletal disorders. A chiropractor may perform a series of adjustments often referred to as spinal manipulation to treat chronic pain associated with the neck, back and joints, as well as other related injuries. When pressure is applied by a chiropractor on the spine, it releases pressure on the nerves and pain subsides. For many years chiropractic was seen as an ineffective, non-evidenced based medicine, but recently, it is being considered a more science-based medical practice.

Today, many health insurance companies cover chiropractic care, and Congress continues to further legislation to expand coverage within Medicare and the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Dr. Jerry Jones, chief chiropractor at Lyster Army Health Clinic at Ft. Rucker, Ala. says chiropractic care is about getting help and healing to those who need it. According to Jones, 45-55 patients are treated per day in the clinic's aviation health unit helping to provide relief when conventional treatment has failed.

“I see soldiers with traumatic brain injuries, folks who have chronic neck and back pain, and I am able to offer them something that conventional medicine didn't help fix. That is why they came to me,” said Jones.

Jones, a former CH-47 Chinook helicopter pilot suffered a back injury after 10 years in the Army.



U.S. Army photo

“I was carrying a heavy load, turned and hurt my back, and it got progressively worse,” said Jones.

After a medical discharge from the Army, Jones decided to study and become a chiropractor. Jones is back at Ft. Rucker, not as a helicopter pilot, but as a chiropractor treating aviators for injuries sustained while “working in a vibrating box”.

“Call it CAM [complementary and alternative medicine], call it conventional medicine, it doesn't matter as long as the troops are getting help with whatever they're facing medically,” said Jones.

One such patient getting help is Chief Warrant Officer Michael McMurphy, a flight instructor at Ft. Rucker. In 2003, McMurphy was involved in a training accident when a flight management system malfunctioned and brought his Apache helicopter to the ground.

“We hit hard. After a few months of seeing a primary care physician, I was referred to see Dr. Jones. I had plenty of nights where I was unable to sleep due to my neck pain, but within just a few minutes of having an adjustment, I could tell an immediate difference,” said McMurphy.

In the case where a servicemember receives a neck or back injury, and conventional medicine provides minimal results, a servicemember may be referred to a chiropractor.

Currently, a servicemember must have a formal referral from a primary care physician in order to receive treatment under Tricare.

“I spent two months going to different physicians trying to ease my pain. Having an adjustment is literally the only thing that stopped me from hurting,” said McMurphy.

Chiropractic care within the military is offered only to active-duty personnel. According to the American Chiropractic Association (ACA), current legislation in Congress (H.R. 484) seeks to expand chiropractic care to military retirees, veterans and active-duty servicemember dependants. Chiropractic care is also limited to 60 of the 261 military treatment facilities that offer it within the Military Health System.

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New Research Shows Yoga, Acupuncture Effective in Treating Servicemembers with PTS, Chronic Pain



U.S. Army photo by Chuck Roberts



U.S. Army photo



U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist Seaman David A. Brandenburg

When selected to participate in an acupuncture study to treat post-traumatic stress, Army Staff Sgt. Kati-sha Smittick's first thought was picturing herself "walking on hot coals and watching ninja movies." Smittick was in for quite a surprise.

"Stephanie [Deployment Health Clinical Center acupuncturist] showed us the right way to receive acupuncture versus just going to get some pins stuck in you," said Smittick. "It was great learning about something that I didn't know anything about or had misconceptions about."

Acupuncture is a form of ancient Eastern medicine used to restore and maintain health. Although it's been used in the United States for several years, its use and effectiveness are still cause for some debate. However, NIH research has shown that acupuncture can relieve pain by "stimulating specific points on the body through the most common type of acupuncture called electro-acupuncture, by sending pulses of electricity through needles."

Like acupuncture, yoga has been used for thousands of years and is found in many different cultures and practices. Within the United States, yoga has become a widely accepted form of meditation and is used as a health and fitness relaxation therapy.

The [National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine](#) notes the effectiveness of yoga as a way to help people achieve fitness and relaxation. Many people with various health conditions are also finding relief through yoga. The center reports there is "growing evidence to suggest that yoga works to enhance stress-coping mechanisms and mind-body awareness."

According to Robin Carnes, a Yoga Nidra instructor at [DHCC](#), "it is all about learning with your mind."

"I give them the analogy that sometimes dogs are allowed to do whatever they want to do and without any discipline or training. Our minds work in a similar manner and sometimes we don't know how to operate them. So our minds are very much like that unruly dog," said Carnes.

New research at DHCC has recently been completed to study the effectiveness of yoga and acupuncture to treat post-traumatic stress and chronic pain. Dr. Kristi Gore, DHCC Research and Program Evaluation director, said the results of the research were "astounding."

DHCC began in 1994 after servicemembers from the Gulf War continued to seek medical treatment for psychological health concerns years after the war ended. In 1999, the center was renamed and tasked with improving deployment-related health for military personnel and families.

Gore and the DHCC team believed that many different therapies could treat post-traumatic stress in addition to therapies such as cognitive behavioral therapy, which is reported to be nearly 66 percent effective. According to Gore, relaxation therapy can actually "ready" someone to respond more to traditional therapies.

"We have tried to draw parallels between empirically supported therapies coming out of psychology and mindful practices of Yoga Nidra, and I am constantly struck by how this therapy intersects with psychology," said Gore.

[See YOGA, Page 7](#)

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U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Lance Cheung

DHCC conducted two separate research trials for Yoga Nidra and acupuncture. One hundred active-duty servicemembers were screened for the Yoga Nidra trial and seven were selected. Availability was a strong factor for the selection process and servicemembers had to be available for three months and attend classes twice a week. The acupuncture study was conducted over a three-month period and enrolled 55 servicemembers. As a way to measure research and whether or not the therapy was effective, DHCC created an inactive control group and those who did not participate in the trial received


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acupuncture when the study was completed. Those in the acupuncture treatment condition experienced significantly greater reductions in post-traumatic stress and depression compared with the inactive control group, and those gains were maintained at the three month follow-up.

According to DHCC the two trials were not necessarily about drawing a particular conclusion, but questioned whether servicemembers would be open to using non-traditional medicine as a means to treat post-traumatic stress.

“We could not have been more pleased with the results,” said Gore. “The next step of course is larger, multi-site trials, but within this pilot trial, post-traumatic stress, depression and pain reduced significantly while mental and physical functioning increased significantly.”

Servicemembers reported sleeping better at night, having relief from pain and were generally able to manage their post-traumatic stress.

“Life to me is totally different now and I feel great,” said Smittick. “This therapy was a lifesaver.” 


(CHIROPRACTIC from Page 5)

“Chiropractic care is a fully recognized and cost-effective health benefit in most private health plans, said John Falardeau, vice president of government relations at ACA.”

“Chiropractic care is a fully recognized and cost-effective health benefit in most private health plans, the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Federal Employee Health Benefits Program and Medicare, said John Falardeau, vice president of

government relations at ACA. It only makes sense that the benefits be fully implemented to those in uniform and extended to their families and to the men and women who have made the military their career.”

According to Jones, between three and four people show up at his clinic per day hoping to be seen. Since care is not yet available to those who are not on active-duty, he is forced to turn them away.

“If we were able to see retirees and others, we could improve their quality of life. The only problem then for us is we would have to hire more chiropractors, and that is a good problem to have,” said Jones. 

Dietary Supplements: Things to Consider

The Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act defines dietary supplements as a product intended to supplement the diet. They can contain a vitamin, mineral, amino acid, herb or other botanicals.

Even though servicemembers receive routine health care, they are still responsible for managing their overall health and well-being. Here are a few things to consider:

Follow the rules

It is important for servicemembers to know what policies are in place at their military installation and command in order to follow the guidelines and regulations properly. If a servicemember is found to have taken an unauthorized

supplement, they could receive disciplinary action.

Consider the risk

When consuming a supplement, if the substance interacts with any prescribed medications or a particular health condition, seek medical attention immediately.


Talk to your doctor

If you are taking any type of medication, whether prescription or over-the-counter, speak with a physician prior to starting a supplement regimen.

Don't be fooled

Be wary of sensational claims. If a product seems too good to be true, there



is a good chance that very little scientific proof exists for the manufacturer's claims. 

Call for Proposals

Forging the Partnership

2011 DoDI/USDA Family Resilience Conference

April 26–29, 2011

Proposals* for

- Workshops
- Computer Labs
- Research Posters
- Program Showcase Exhibits

Deadline for proposals: November 3, 2010

*All proposals must be aligned with one of the six content areas: Early Childhood, School-age (K-8), Teens, Parents/Families, Community and Physical and Mental Health/Fitness.

More Information

www.cyfernet.org/partnership2011

www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil/service/conferenceandworkshops/fy2011



Tools You Can Use

Additional links are available at www.dcoe.health.mil under “Resources”

Resources for Servicemembers and Families

DCoE Outreach Center

www.dcoe.health.mil

24/7 Help: Call 866-966-1020

The center is staffed with health resource consultants who provide comprehensive information, resources and tools about psychological health and traumatic brain injury concerns to military members, veterans, families, health professionals and civilians 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Military OneSource

www.militaryonesource.com

A resource provided by the Department of Defense for all servicemembers, spouses and families. The website provides a wide range of information and tools.

National Resource Directory

www.nationalresourcedirectory.gov

The website serves wounded, ill and injured servicemembers, veterans, their families and those who support them. It provides national, state and local resources to support recovery, rehabilitation and community reintegration. Find information on a variety of topics, including benefits and compensation, education and training, employment, family and caregiver support.

Check out what's new on the [Real Warriors Campaign website!](#)

Save the Date

Monthly Webinar

Oct. 28, 2010, 1–2:30 p.m. (EST)

[Understanding, Addressing and Combating Stigma Surrounding Seeking Help for Psychological Health Issues in Today's Military](#)

To register for this event, e-mail us directly: DCoE.MonthlyWebinar@tma.osd.mil

Please e-mail us your comments and story ideas to dcoemedia@tma.osd.mil.



U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Jon Hyde



U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Melissa A. Latty



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Renae L. Kleckner

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