

VETERANS OUTREACH



Epilepsy affects over 3 million Americans.

What is epilepsy??

Epilepsy is a neurological condition. A seizure is a symptom of epilepsy. A diagnosis of epilepsy is generally given after a person experiences two or more unprovoked seizures.

Known causes of epilepsy include head injuries, stroke, brain tumors, poisoning, problems in brain development before birth, and serious infections such as encephalitis or meningitis. However, more than half the time, the cause of epilepsy is unknown.

The Epilepsy Foundation has a network of affiliates nationwide that provide services in their local communities. To locate an affiliate in your area, call us toll-free or visit our website's home page and type in your zip code under 'community connections.'

For more info contact:

Program Objectives

A study performed by the Rand Corporation found that 19.5% of the U.S. military personnel returning from Iraq and Afghanistan reported possible traumatic brain injury (TBI) which is now identified as the "signature injury of the global war on terror." TBI is a common cause of post-traumatic epilepsy (PTE).

It is estimated that between 15-34% of TBI patients have PTE and active-duty military rates can be as high as 53%. Between 50-80% of all TBIs are due to blast injuries sustained during combat.

Military personnel may under report mild TBI to avoid removal from combat situations or active duty and thus may be under diagnosed. And, limited time and resources available at forward medical commands can prohibit thorough TBI evaluation, which can result in service members returning to duty with symptoms of undiagnosed TBI.

In an effort to support the men and women who have fought to protect our country, the Epilepsy Foundation has created the ***Veterans Outreach Program** that is designed to: 1) provide education on the link that exists between traumatic brain injury (TBI) and epilepsy, and 2) increase the numbers of veterans who are screened for TBI.

The Foundation works with organizations such as the Veterans Administration and Epilepsy Centers of Excellence to communicate the following key messages to veterans and their families:

- TBI is a common form of injury in service men and women returning from Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF).
- PTE is a seizure disorder that is caused by TBI.
- The Risk of PTE increases with the severity of the TBI.
- There are available resources to help veterans and family members receive accurate information regarding PTE and TBI.

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Available Resources

Traumatic Brain Injury and Epilepsy is a pocket-size booklet that has been designed to educate veterans and their families about the relationship between TBI and epilepsy. If you would like to order a copy, please contact Doretha Dixon at ddixon@efa.org.

