

Casualties of war: Wounded veterans more likely to die of coronary heart disease

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War-time stress may lead to an increased risk death by coronary heart disease in later life. Researchers writing in BioMed Central's open access journal *BMC Health Services Research* surveyed a cohort of 55 year old Finnish WW2 veterans in 1980, and then carried out a follow-up study 28 years later.

Dr Seppo Nikkari and his team from the University of Tampere in Finland conducted the study. He said "During the 28 year follow up , out of 412 deaths, 140 were due to [coronary heart disease](#) (CHD), making wounded [veterans](#) 1.7 times more likely to die from CHD than the comparison group".

The study also found that those who had been wounded in action had a higher BMI, a greater history of self-reported depression and were more likely to be claiming disability pension. This also suggests that as well as increased risk of PTSD, physical trauma in early life may cause longstanding physiological implications.

Dr Nikkari added "our findings support the concept that the effects of [traumatic events](#) at early adulthood may have long-term consequences on an individual's health".

More information: Casualties of War: wounded veterans more likely to die of coronary heart disease, Tarja Kunnas, Tiina Solakivi, Jaana Renko, Anne Kalela, Seppo T Nikkari, *BMC Public Health* (in press)

Provided by BioMed Central

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