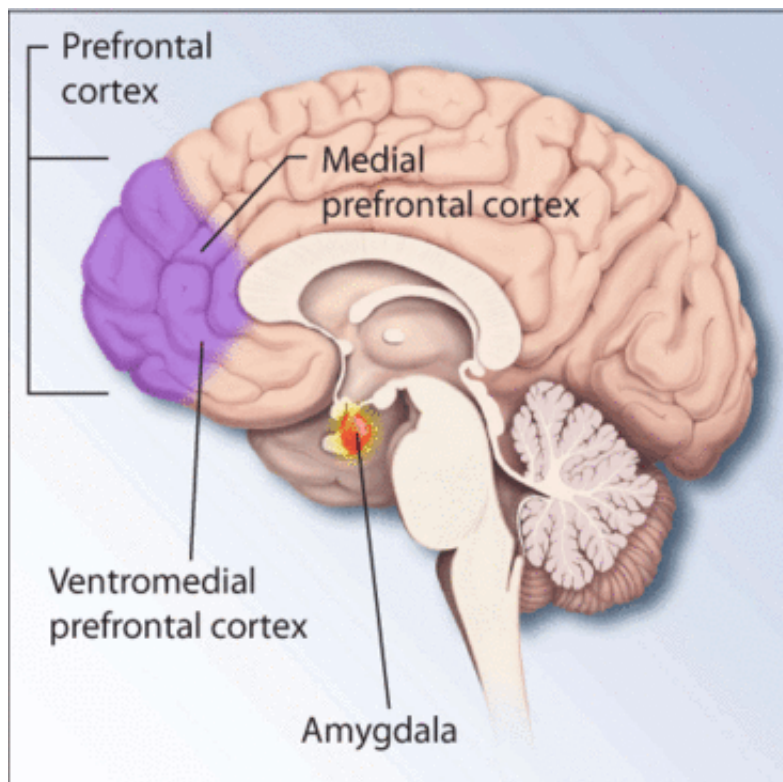


Mind-body therapy effective for military veterans with PTSD

February 9 2018, by Theresa Kreif



Regions of the brain associated with stress and posttraumatic stress disorder.
Credit: National Institutes of Health

Post-9/11 military veterans who receive mind-body therapy have significant improvements in symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), according to a study co-authored by University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Professor Kathryn Braun in the Journal for Alternative and

Complementary Medicine.

"Our findings show that mind-body interventions are effective in reducing the severity of PTSD symptoms associated with combat," said Braun, director and professor at the Office of Public Health Studies within the Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work. "They also can reduce depression and anxiety symptoms, and increase mindfulness and sleep quality in veterans with PTSD."

Combat-related PTSD is a major public health challenge for the Department of Defense and Veteran Affairs. When service members return from deployment with combat-related PTSD, conventional therapies include [cognitive behavioral therapy](#) and antidepressant medications.

But complementary and alternative treatments, such as mind-body therapies including meditation and yoga, are less invasive. Thus they may be more attractive to service members and veterans.

Not only are mind-body therapies effective, but they may also be less costly than conventional treatments. For example, yoga can be taught and delivered to a dozen service members or veterans at a time.

Study author Robin Cushing is an Army physician assistant who teaches yoga in military and [veteran](#) communities. "We reviewed 15 pieces of literature on the effects of mind-body interventions for veterans with PTSD," said Cushing. "Our findings show that, for the majority of participants, their PTSD symptoms improved."

More information: Robin E. Cushing et al. Mind–Body Therapy for Military Veterans with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder: A Systematic Review, *The Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine* (2017). [DOI: 10.1089/acm.2017.0176](https://doi.org/10.1089/acm.2017.0176)

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