



Prevalence of hearing loss and tinnitus in Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans: A Chronic Effects of Neurotrauma Consortium study

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to describe the prevalence of hearing loss and tinnitus in a cohort of Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans and examine the association of these conditions with common post-deployment conditions, including traumatic brain injury (TBI), post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), headaches, and vertigo/dizziness.

Participants

Veterans were included if they had at least three years of Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) care between 2002 and 2014, with at least one year of care in 2007 or after when TBI screening became mandatory at the VA.

How was the study conducted?

This retrospective observational study used Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs diagnostic codes and administrative data.

Findings

Older individuals, males, and those with TBI, PTSD, or vertigo/dizziness were significantly more likely to have hearing loss, tinnitus, or both.

Military Impact

Understanding that there is a tendency for these conditions to occur together has implications for treatment of US Veterans and service members. Screening and treatment will improve outcomes for military members.

Swan A.A, Nelson J.T., Swiger B., Jaramillo C.A., Eapen B.C., Packer M., Pugh MJ. Prevalence of hearing loss and tinnitus in Iraq and Afghanistan veterans: A Chronic Effects of Neurotrauma Consortium study. Hearing research. 2017 Jun; 349 PubMed: 28153668. DOI:[10.1016/j.heares.2017.01.013](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heares.2017.01.013)