

Invisible Wounds of War

Psychological and Cognitive Injuries,
Their Consequences, and Services to Assist Recovery

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Part III: Immediate and Long-Term Consequences of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Depression, and Traumatic Brain Injury

In this part, we review the available literature on the short- and long-term consequences associated with psychological and cognitive injuries to inform predictions of the likely immediate and long-term consequences of mental health problems experienced by veterans of Afghanistan and Iraq. Our review is organized into three parts. First, we present *two theoretical perspectives* that can help to explain how specific symptoms arising from these conditions may give rise to broader short-term and long-term consequences, and we offer a *single integrated framework* that informs the remainder of our discussion. Second, we *summarize evidence from the scientific literature* documenting associations among post-traumatic stress disorder, major depression, and traumatic brain injury, as well as links between these conditions and specific domains, or areas, of functioning. This part is a brief version of a much longer review and analysis of existing literature, a RAND working paper titled *Invisible Wounds: Predicting the Immediate and Long-Term Consequences of Mental Health Problems in Veterans of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom* (available at <http://veterans.rand.org>). Finally, we *summarize common themes* emerging from the reviewed literature and offer *concrete recommendations* for future research to inform policies and interventions to mitigate the negative consequences of post-combat mental health and cognitive conditions.