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Volume 3, Issue 4
September 2004

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- **Soldiers Have Help Fighting Combat Stress**
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DEPLOYMENT SPECIAL
Welcome to HITS!

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HOOAH 4 HEALTH NEWSLETTER

DEPLOYMENT SPECIAL - Welcome to HITS!

Welcome to the newest member of the HOOAH 4 HEALTH family, the Health Information Technology System (HITS)! This is a web portal that delivers educational and interactive deployment health and personal readiness tools to the Army. HITS leverages the health promotion and prevention information on the HOOAH 4 HEALTH web site and focuses on the Department of Defense (DoD) top five readiness areas:

- **Dental health**
- **Weight management**
- **Stress and Suicide Prevention**
- **Tobacco Cessation**
- **Injury Prevention**

The primary mission of HITS is to disseminate up-to-the-minute, validated health promotion, deployment health, prevention, and wellness information to:

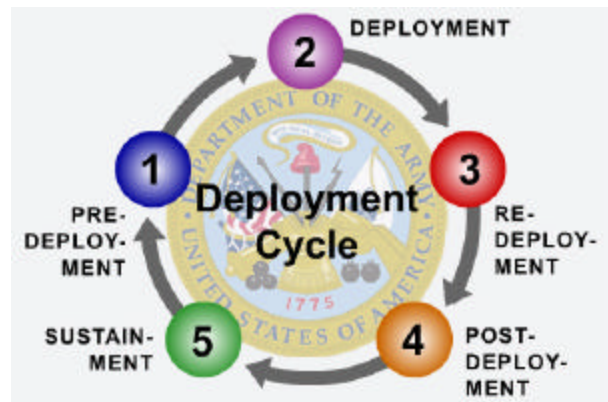
- **Enhance force health protection, well-being and overall quality of life.**
- **Provide comprehensive personal readiness tools and resources critical to mission success for Soldiers and their families.**
- **Promote partnerships with other health promotion and readiness initiatives to reinforce the importance of self-responsibility for health and fitness.**

With today's OPTEMPO, the Deployment Cycle is a concept that is critical to the life of every Soldier, and this innovative graphic helps Soldiers and families to understand the prominent role of deployment in military life. From Predeployment through Sustainment, a Soldier's career is governed by the phases of this cycle. Please visit www.healthHITS.us and roll over each phase in the graphic to learn more.

Posters about HITS were presented at the Department of Health and Human Services' second annual *Steps to a Healthier US* Summit and at USACHPPM's Force Health Protection conference earlier this year, thus bringing HITS into partnership with other federal health and wellness initiatives.

HITS features the HOOAH 4 HEALTH specialty shops for each of the Top 5 readiness areas. The Stop Tobacco Shop, <http://www.hooah4health.com/4you/stoptobaccoshop/introduction.htm>, offers

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www.healthits.us



DEPLOYMENT SPECIAL
Welcome to HITS!
www.healthITS.us



BODY BY HOOAH
Neat and Trim

"You don't stop exercising because you grow old. You grow old because you stop exercising." — Anonymous

Source: *Growing Stronger: Strength Training for Older Adults*
http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/physical/growing_stronger/index.htm

(Deployment Special – Welcome to HITS! - Continued from page 1)

assessment tools and links to proven tobacco cessation support materials. The Shape-Up Shop will offer users a highly interactive healthy living guide. Calculators will be available for optimal weight, body mass index, and target heart rate, among others, and a state-of-the-art, easy-to-use food and nutrition diary will facilitate achieving and maintaining a healthy weight.

Dental health is featured in two HITS sections, Fit 2 Bite www.Fit2Bite.us and the Army National Guard's tailored Dental Bytes program www.DentalBytes.us. Fit 2 Bite is an oral health education center that integrates information about dental classification, preventing dental disease, and benefits news. Its goal is to educate Soldiers about the importance of oral fitness to overall medical and personal readiness. Dental Bytes is an innovative Army National Guard program that delivers oral health information directly to Guard Soldiers via e-mail.

The Injury Prevention and Mental Wellness shops are currently under development and will address these topics that are so critical to deployment health.

HITS reaches out, grabs the user, offers a wealth of health information to the military community, and hones in on those areas that are mission-essential for readiness. By using authoritative military and government sources, it guarantees the availability of an educational tool of great value to service members, family members and civilian employees.

Neat and Trim

By Judith S. Harris, BSN, MA, CHES

According to AR 600-9, "The Army Weight Control Program," (1987), "[t]he Army traditionally has fostered a military appearance which is neat and trim. Further, an essential function of day-to-day effectiveness and combat readiness of the Army is that all personnel are healthy and physically fit." (page 1) There are good reasons for this regulation, although they may have more to do with health than appearance.

Today, in the general US population, 64% of adults are overweight. In the Department of Defense (DoD), 36.5% of service members under the age of 20 are overweight (by military standards), and 58.4% of those 20 and older are above the standard for their ages. Better than the national rate but not great: more than one in three of the youngest personnel are overweight, and more than half of the rest are!



Chronic overweight is associated with higher health care costs and lower productivity. In one study, unhealthy weight was found to increase an employer's health care expenditures by an average of \$70 per overweight person per year. At an approximate FY 2005 DoD end strength (active and reserve) of 2.4 million, the added cost to the military (and civilian employers of reservists) of overweight personnel could be around \$8.5 million. Furthermore, being overweight decreases stamina and increases the risk for heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, and other chronic conditions, all of which affect readiness.

What to do about it? Service members can lead the way back toward healthier bodies, and HITS is here to help! In the Body section of [Hooah 4 Health](#) the core of the Army's Health Information Technology System (HITS), you'll find helpful tools, articles, and tips. There are [calculators for determining body mass index and optimum weight](#) that will help with goal setting. Articles about [healthy eating](#), [stamina](#), and exercise provide the tools for a sustainable healthy living plan. In the near future HITS will launch its Shape-Up Shop that includes a Food and Nutrition Diary for tracking progress.

Focusing on health and fitness will automatically provide that Army ideal of the "neat and trim" Soldier. Sustained personal wellness is an important key to readiness!

* Ms. Harris is a certified health educator and consultant to the HOOAH 4 HEALTH program. She served in the Population Health Resources Program, Directorate of Health Promotion and Wellness at the Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine (USACHPPM). Ms. Harris is a retired Captain in the Naval Reserve with over 30 years of combined active and reserve service.

Soldiers Have Help Fighting Combat Stress

by Spc. Jeremy D. Crisp

345th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

U.S. service members are fighting a war every day, a war on terror with violence of the sort that can make the most battle-hardened veteran briefly forget his or her duties, stare into space, or cause temporary memory loss. That condition is referred to in the Army as a "combat/operational stress reaction." Sometimes it can lead to a soldier being unable to function.

"Combat stress is an unavoidable occupational hazard of the military," said Lt. Col. Steven M. Gerardi, chief of the occupational therapy branch and instructor at the Army Medical Department Center and School.

"Soldiers who become job-ineffective due to combat stress reactions are termed 'battle fatigued,'" he said.

The 4 R's

- Reassure
- Rest
- Replenish
- Restore

Gerardi's occupational therapy branch at the AMEDD Center and School holds an annual "Management of Combat Stress Casualties" course, this year in May. The course places students in a fictitious Combat Stress Control (CSC) detachment and trains them to provide the full range of CSC services, Gerardi said.

In real life, exhaustion, hyperalertness, loss of confidence, panic and depression are a few of the symptoms associated with battle-fatigued Soldiers. Although these reactions can cause a Soldier to become dysfunctional, "they are experiencing a normal reaction to the abnormal environment of war," Gerardi explained.

The first line of defense against this condition in the field falls on the shoulders of leadership.

"It's the commander's responsibility to keep units tight and make sure Soldiers feel competent in their team. Make sure they [Soldiers] are adequately fed, rested and taken care of," said Gerardi.

If a Soldier has a combat/operational stress reaction, though, CSC companies and detachments help return the soldier to duty.

"Members of CSC detachments are assets to commanders to help them minimize the impact of combat stress on their Soldiers' mission performance," Gerardi said.

While CSC detachments have preventive and restoration/fitness teams, "preventive services are the top priority and are provided by all members of the CSC detachment," Gerardi said.

Preventive teams work far forward in the battle area to, "provide consultation to operational unit commanders and perform combat neuropsychiatric triage (the sorting of casualties based on where they should be managed) to prevent the over-evacuation of battle-fatigued Soldiers," explained Gerardi.

In addition to preventive work, restoration/fitness teams provide casualties with the necessary recuperation they need to return to their units and be effective.

"The CSC detachment's restoration/fitness team is generally established close to the front lines in a division's support area, and is staffed to hold up to 50 battle-fatigued soldiers," said Gerardi.

Once Soldiers are in the hands of the restoration/fitness team, they are not treated as patients, but managed as Soldiers in need of rest. Gerardi explained that the battle-fatigued Soldier should be kept close to the unit.

"Keeping a Soldier in a military setting, either within his own unit or as close as practical, helps support the individual's 'Soldier' identity," he said. By keeping the Soldier out of medical

(Continued on page 4)



MIND MATTERS
Soldiers Have Help Fighting
Combat Stress

Training Opportunity

**2004 Military Suicide
Prevention Conference**
Hyatt Crystal City
Arlington, VA
October 25-29, 2004.

This conference will provide updates on current suicide prevention statistics, research, instructions, policies, and programs in the specific services and in the civilian community. Attendees will be able to return to their installations with up-to-date information, and be prepared to implement and manage the programs required.

<http://www.ha.osd.mil/2004mspc/>

Federal Strategic Health Alliance (FEDS_HEAL)

Army Reserve:
<http://fedsheal.foh.dhhs.gov/AR/ARDefault.html>

Army National Guard:
<http://fedsheal.foh.dhhs.gov/ArmyNG.html>

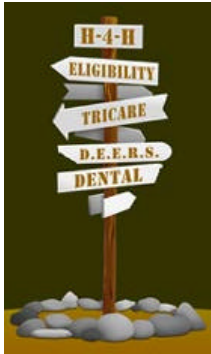
Air Force Reserve:
<http://fedsheal.foh.dhhs.gov/AFReserve.html>

HOOAH 4 Health:
<http://www.hooah4health.com/deployment/benefits/fedsheal.htm>



MIND MATTERS

Soldiers Have Help Fighting
Combat Stress



SPIRIT

A Good Read Can Uplift the
Spirit! CSA Unveils
Professional Reading List



**Did you know that
General George S.
Patten participated in
the Modern
Pentathlon at the 1912
Olympics in Stockholm,
Sweden and placed fifth?**

Source:

<http://www4.army.mil/olympics/history/index.html>

(Soldiers Have Help Fighting Combat Stress – Continued from page 3)

treatment facilities, explained Gerardi, "it reinforces the notion that he or she is not sick but merely in need of rest."

"The majority of stress patients are just overly fatigued and need to get some rest," said Staff Sgt. Dwayne A. Kirkland, an occupational therapy specialist and instructor at the AMEDD Center and School.

Along with this much-needed rest, Kirkland said that Soldiers are given CTT (Common Task Training) tasks and other basic soldierly duties such as weapons cleaning and drills, in order to "treat them like Soldiers, not patients."

During the recovery process from battle fatigue, Gerardi explained that the Soldier is managed using simple measures known as the four Rs:

- **Reassure**—Reassure the Soldier what he or she is going through is a normal reaction.
- **Rest**—Give the Soldier respite from battle and needed sleep.
- **Replenish**—Give the Soldier needed food and water.
- **Restore**—Restore the Soldier's self-confidence through therapeutic occupation and talk.

The goal in managing combat stress casualties, said Gerardi, "is to rapidly return functional Soldiers to duty." This can usually be done within 72 hours, explained Kirkland.

For immediate release, July 7, 2004.

<http://www.armymedicine.army.mil/news/releases/releases.htm>

EDITOR'S NOTE: According to LTC James Cartwright, MSW at USACHPPM, the newer terminology for "battle fatigue" is Combat Operation Stress Control Reaction (COSCR). Soldiers experience combat operation stress control reaction. The goal of the COSCR prevention program is to keep Soldiers, who experience COSCR, out of the medical channels, as much as possible.

A Good Read Can Uplift the Spirit! CSA Unveils Professional Reading List

WASHINGTON (Army News Service, July 26, 2004) -- Army Chief of Staff Gen. Peter Schoomaker released a new Professional Reading List 23 July.

The list, which can be found online at the Center of Military History Web page, www.army.mil/cmh, is broken down into four sub groups based on a leader's responsibilities, whether enlisted or commissioned.

"The Professional Reading List is a way for leaders at all levels to increase their depth of understanding of our Army's history, the global strategic context, and the enduring lessons of war," said Schoomaker.

"The topics and time periods included in the books on this list are expansive, and are intended to broaden each leader's knowledge and confidence. I challenge all leaders to make a focused, personal commitment to read, reflect, and learn about our profession, and our world," Schoomaker said. "Through the exercise of our minds, our Army will grow stronger."

Books range in timeframe from the Peloponnesian War to the hunt for al Qaeda and in context from personal memoirs of command to commentaries on the impact of centuries of armed conflict.

Among the books included are John Keegan's *The Face of Battle*, the *Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant*, Stephen E. Ambrose's *Band of Brothers*, Lt. Gen. Hal Moore's *We Were Soldiers Once ... and Young*, *Inside al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror*, and Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*.

AAFES Military Clothing Sales Stores and a few Main Exchanges will have the publications on hand for purchase. Additionally, Army installation libraries will make the volumes available to interested personnel.

The complete list of books that includes the Constitution of the United States can be found at the Center of Military History web page, www.army.mil/cmh.

Source: U.S. Army Public Affairs, *Army News Source*, www.army.mil, http://www4.army.mil/ocpa/read.php?story_id_key=6194

Mission First, Safety Always!

Injury prevention is one of the top five Department of Defense health goals. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld has challenged DoD Services to reduce accident rates by at least 50% in the next two years. *“Our accident rates have increased recently, and we need to turn this situation around. I challenge all of you to reduce the number of mishaps and accident rates by at least 50% in the next two years. These goals are achievable, and will directly increase our operational readiness. We owe no less to the men and women who defend our Nation.”* You can reduce accidents by 50% and it can be done in two years.

From the DoD Ergonomics Working Group

Where Do You Start?

Believe it's possible. Reducing accidents by 50% is only too big a goal if you think in terms of reducing rates for the entire military. Approach the reduction on an installation by installation basis, and then units within those installations.

Aim for the low hanging fruit. Get the easiest 50%—focus on the three or four jobs or programs that cause the biggest problems and have the most accidents. By simply shooting for the top half of these jobs and implementing good practices you're already aware of, you should see a significant reduction.

Devise a plan. Review the injury log, make a list of the "bad" jobs, determine what will be needed to reduce injuries and how much those solutions will cost, and draw up an action plan with dollar figures assigned to each item. After the plan is drafted, then get buy-in. Circulate the plan for comments and "enhancement" (don't ask for a critique!).

Present the plan to senior command for support and funding. You don't have to argue for support—Secretary Rumsfeld is already providing it. His challenge is your leverage. He's telling you that injury reduction is important.

Identify who is available to make the 50% reduction happen. Create a core team to provide expertise and oversee the efforts. Train them and turn them loose!

Stress that safety is everyone's responsibility. You must have "participatory ergonomics"—hold focus groups, ask workers to identify problems. Everyone's mantra should be "Mission first, safety always."

What Do You Need?

There are two key components to a 50% reduction in accidents:

The Best People. Recruit, develop, and retain the best and the brightest. Offer rewards. Provide opportunities for safety professionals. Underscore that this is interesting and exciting work and it's a public service. "Get smart ideas to smart people."

The Most Effective Process. A system for reducing accidents can either make things easy and natural or can be set up for failure. Put initiatives and metrics in place to change the paradigm—it can no longer be business as usual. Work to create a culture of safety.

What's Next?

Follow-on issues of this newsletter will detail upcoming DoD initiatives and share effective best practices. In addition to Ergo News, there are many resources available to you to meet the 50% reduction challenge—whether you need to establish an ergonomics program or enhance an



ENVIRONMENT
Mission First, Safety Always!

Soldier or civilian, coming home from war, work or drill, exercise your individual responsibility to be safe and ...Make it Home!!

The US Army Safety Center has identified a trend toward increased accidents among our returning soldiers with many accidents occurring only within a month or two of their return dates. To survive OIF, OEF, or a deployment to the Balkans only to return home and die in a needless and preventable motor vehicle, water related other accident is a tragedy. To help combat this trend, the ARNG Safety and Occupational Health Office has teamed with members of the training and family advocacy community to produce a "Welcome Home" informational pamphlet containing useful information about a number of services and benefits mixed in with specific safety reminders. Of all the information they will be receiving during their redeployment process, this one will cover and address more of the "Guard specific" issues of interest of our returning soldiers and family members.

[Download the "Welcome Home" pamphlet here!](#)

*Submitted by John McGowen,
Health Promotion Consultant,
National Guard Surgeon's Office*

*Source: LTC Dennis A. Balitski,
Chief, Safety & Occupational Health
Branch
Aviation & Safety Division, National
Guard Bureau and LTC Beverly E.
Vandenberg, NGB-ARNG*

**The Challenge May Be a 50% Reduction,
But No Accidents is Your Goal!**

"This is serious...just being a little bit better every year is not sufficient...our real goal is getting preventable accidents to zero."

*- David Chu, Under Secretary of Defense
for Personnel and Readiness*

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**ARE YOU READY TO
ACCEPT THE HOOAH
CHALLENGE?**

www.hooah4health.com



(Mission First, Safety Always! – Continued from page 5)

existing one. For expert assistance, contact the United States Army Center for Health Promotion & Preventive Medicine (USACHHPM) Ergonomics Program: Toll-Free: 800-222-9698, ext. 3928; Commercial: 410-436-3928; DSN: 584-3928.

Investing in a prevention program NOW will return cost saving benefits in the FUTUTRE.

Source: DoD Ergonomics Working Group, www.ergoworkinggroup.org

Resources:

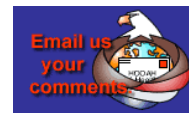
- U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine
Injury Prevention Program, <http://chppm-www.apgea.army.mil/deds/InjPrev.aspx>
- Operation Aegis Injury Control Program, <http://www.cs.amedd.army.mil/aegis/>

What is HOOAH 4 HEALTH?

HOOAH 4 HEALTH (H4H) is a web-based health promotion and prevention program developed to respond to the needs of the U.S. Army Reserve Components. The site was launched in May 2000 and since then over 74 million hits have been recorded. The users of [http://www.hooah4health.com/](http://www.hooah4health.com) include not only Reserve Component citizen-Soldiers and active Army personnel, but also their co-workers and families. Also, many users are elementary school children, and requests to link to this innovative U.S. Army web site originate from around the world. The vision of the Army Well-Being Strategic Plan is captured throughout the modules on the site. Body, mind, spirit, environment, prevention, change, family and lifestyle are the primary wellness topics contained in a user-friendly environment.

This is the twelfth issue of the HOOAH 4 HEALTH newsletter. It has been developed and designed so any user can customize it to enhance or augment their DOD health promotion or prevention program. Just insert a tailored organization logo at the top left-hand corner. The editors invite you to visit the H4H web site (www.hooah4health.com) regularly and use the quarterly newsletter. A message board is available on the site. All comments and contributions are welcomed. HOOAH!

If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions email us at:
h4newsletter@visiontracks.com.



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