

Mood disturbances endure after completion of high-altitude military training

Titre(s): Mood disturbances endure after completion of high-altitude military training / W. A. Bardwell, W. Y. Ensign, P. J. Mills

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Résumé ou extrait: Associations between physical and emotional stress and increases in mood symptoms have been documented in a variety of populations. In military personnel, more physical symptoms and decrements in ability to perform critical tasks have been shown to accompany such stress-induced dysphoria. Most research in this area has focused on the immediate effects of stress on mood. We wondered what immediate mood effects strenuous high-altitude training would have in male Marines, what mood effects would endure 30 and 90 days after completion of training, and how mood scores would compare with normative data. Sixty male Marines (mean age = 19, range = 18-28) completed the Profile of Mood States (POMS) at multiple time points before and after participating in a 30-day, cold-weather, high-altitude field training exercise. Detailed anthropometric measurements were taken at the same time points. The Marines reported significant increases in mood symptoms from baseline to completion of training, most of which endured for up to 90 days. In terms of anger and fatigue, the degree of mood symptoms reported by the Marines was elevated to levels comparable to normative data for adult male psychiatric outpatients. Rigorous military training in challenging environments may result in enduring mood symptoms that approach levels of clinical significance. Such dysphoria may have implications for readiness for duty and performance of critical tasks. Military populations may represent new opportunities for application of behavioral medicine techniques. Behavioral interventions such as stress coping techniques may be useful in military populations to reduce the impact of these mood symptoms

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