

Veterans Struggling With PTSD and Substance Abuse Face Increased Risk of Death



Veterans struggling with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and substance abuse face an increased risk of death, a new study suggests.

The study included 272,509 veterans who were diagnosed with PTSD. Those who had a substance use disorder were more likely to die during the study follow-up period.

For all age groups, veterans with PTSD and substance use disorder were more likely to die from injuries than those with PTSD alone.

For veterans under age 45, those with PTSD and substance use disorder were more likely than older veterans to die from non-injury-related causes, PsychCentral.com reports.

Injury related deaths included suicides, homicides and accidents. Non-injury related deaths included cancer, heart disease and other health problems.

The study of veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan is the first to evaluate the combined impact of drug or alcohol use disorders in combination with PTSD, according to the University of Michigan researchers.

"Attention needs to be paid to veteran patients with PTSD, with an emphasis on identifying those who might also have a problem with drug or alcohol use," lead author Kipling Bohnert said in a news release. "This study highlights the potential importance of effective treatment for both conditions in helping veterans after they've returned from conflict."

The results appear in the journal *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*.

To learn more about Veterans and Drugs, [please click here](#).