

Short-Term Intensive EMDR Therapy for War Veterans

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A problem faced by war veterans suffering post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is accessible and timely treatment. This study compared the effectiveness of two eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR) therapies for war veterans; an intensive format, based on the Recent Traumatic Events Protocol (R-TEP), and a standard weekly format. Thirty-nine Israeli Defense Force Gaza war veterans were assigned to either an intensive EMDR therapy, delivered on five consecutive days, or a standard EMDR therapy, delivered in weekly sessions. Patients were assessed for PTSD symptoms on admission, at pre-treatment, post-treatment, and at a follow-up, four to five weeks after treatment. Results showed comparable treatment gains overall for both therapies, but faster improvement for the intensive therapy. This suggests intensive EMDR is a promising psychotherapy for the treatment of PTSD, for both war veterans and those exposed to other traumatic events. The presentation will discuss the background to the study, the results, a few case descriptions, and its theoretical and clinical implications.

Learning objectives:

- Learn about intensive short term EMDR therapy using the R-TEP protocol.
- Learn about possible differences and similarities between the R-TEP and standard EMDR protocols.
- Learn about the possible theoretical and clinical implications of this study