



D1 The Physical, Psychological, and Physiological Effects of Mefloquine on Armed Forces Personnel Re-Deploying From Combat Theaters

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Pathologists, psychiatrists, and investigators will learn about the preliminary survey results on the effects of mefloquine to soldiers returning from combat theaters of operation, to include Iraq, Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, and Somalia.

It is important to know and understand the effect mefloquine may be having on U.S. soldiers fighting and dying, in a deployed area. If this preventative is having adverse effects, it may be causing them to act out violently toward others or succumbing to depression and taking their own lives. Equally important are the delayed effects on Reservists and National Guard soldiers returning to civilian life. This presentation will impact the forensic community and/or humanity by identifying this issue, which may be the first step in finding a more innocuous preventative for malaria for U.S. soldiers.

Mefloquine is an anti-malarial drug with a trade name of Lariam. Studies have revealed mefloquine has been known to cause neuro-psychiatric adverse effects ranging from anxiety and paranoia to depression, hallucinations, psychotic behavior, and possible suicide. A history of depression, generalized anxiety disorder, or a psychotic or seizure disorder has been known to exacerbate the symptoms.

The authors conducted a preliminary self-reporting survey of military police personnel who have returned from combat theaters. All of the soldiers surveyed were administered mefloquine. Results will be provided to exhibit trends, or the lack of trends, pertaining to side effects.

The authors were given permission to conduct the survey among students attending the U.S. Army Military Police School. Since this was a preliminary survey instrument for future research, the results are not provided in an official military capacity and should not be construed as being the opinion of the Department of Defense, U.S. Army or the U.S. Army Military Police School.

Lariam, Effects, Soldiers