Redeployment Medical Guide for Missions in Support of Operation Iraqi Freedom

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For additional information, contact your health care provider or contact the DoD Deployment Health Clinical Center listed in this brochure

Now that you are in the process of going home, you need to remain alert to your own medical condition after leaving the theater. Staying in tune with your body's signals over the next several months will help ensure your transition back to life in the U.S. is healthy and stress-free.

Preventive Medicine Requirements

⇒ Complete Enhanced Post-Deployment Health Assessment, DD form 2796

⇒ Tuberculosis skin test: At time of redeployment and repeat 90 to 180 days later

⇒ Continue daily Doxycycline (or weekly Chloroquine) for 4 weeks after departing theater

⇒ Also take 14 days of daily Primaquine (15 mg) during the first 2 weeks of this 4-week period, unless medically deferred

⇒ Post-Deployment Blood Sample: Within 30 days after redeployment

Directions for Health Concerns

- Step 1 -- Contact your local medical treatment facility with any questions, concerns, or symptoms noticed after deployment.
- Step 2 -- If you have symptoms, your primary health care provider can do an initial assessment and provide any necessary treatment. If symptoms persist or your health does not improve, ask for referral to a specialist.
- Step 3 -- If you require further assistance, contact:

DoD Deployment Health Clinical Center
Walter Reed Army Medical Center
6900 Georgia Avenue, NW
Building 2, Room 3G04
Washington, DC 20307-5001
Phone: DSN: (312) 662-6563; (202) 782-6563; (07:45 to 16:30 EST)(16:30 to 07:45 EST - Voicemail Available to leave a message for a return call) Fax: (202) 782-3539

Website: http://www.pdhealth.mil

Diseases of Military Significance

Most illnesses related to a deployment occur while troops are still in the theater of operations. However, some diseases may not cause symptoms until after return to home station. Except for very rare cases, these will show up within the first six months. In the coming weeks or months, if you experience fever, muscle or joint pain, stomach or bowel problems, swollen glands, skin problems, excessive tiredness, emotional problems, trouble sleeping, shortness of breath or weight loss you should seek medical care as soon as possible. Remind your provider that you were deployed to Southwest Asia.

Possible delayed disease problems can be grouped into 5 main categories, though it is possible to have a combination of two or more: intestinal; respiratory; skin; nervous system; and fever or generalized illness. Many diseases can affect more than one system. For example, Leishmaniasis can be a skin disease or it can be a generalized illness. Seeking medical care is very important. The earlier the right tests are done, the more likely the correct diagnosis and treatment will be started.

Listed below are examples of diseases that can affect US or coalition forces. Many of these regularly occur in the US and other parts of the world, just as they do in Southwest Asia. A person's specific experiences determine what exposures they may have had. Just as important as laboratory tests, is telling your doctor where you were deployed and what you may have encountered while completing your mission.

Spread by insects

Malaria (spread by mosquitoes)

- Symptoms--fever, flu-like illness, chills, headache, muscle aches, fatigue, can be fatal if left untreated.

It is CRITICAL that you finish all anti-malarial medication exactly as prescribed.

Leishmaniasis (spread by sand flies)

- Skin form – open sores (usually round or oval). Sometimes affects the nose or mouth
- Internal form – fever, weight loss, swelling of spleen and liver. Less common than skin form but can be much more serious.

Bacterial & viral infections

- Examples: West Nile fever, relapsing fever, sandfly fever, dengue, typhus, Lyme disease.

Spread by animals

- Diseases include anthrax (usually skin sores), brucellosis, rabies, and Q fever.
- Rabies can be fatal disease if an infected person does not get shots early after exposure. **If you were bitten or scratched by an animal (especially a dog or cat) you should report it to a health care provider immediately.**

Spread by people

Tuberculosis (TB)

- Bacteria transmitted by infected person's cough, sneeze, or sometimes even speaking.
- Symptoms – persistent cough (possibly with blood), chest pain, weight loss, night sweats, fever, weakness. Can be fatal if left untreated. **It is important to have a tuberculosis skin test between 3 and 6 months after redeployment, even if you had one at the time you redeployed.** (There can be a delay in the skin test turning positive after infection.)

Other person-to-person infections

- Besides TB, there are many other diseases spread by the respiratory route, including influenza, common colds, "strep" infections, various kinds of pneumonia, and chickenpox. You should continue to cover your mouth and nose when sneezing or coughing, avoid rubbing

your eyes or touching your nose with your fingers, and wash your hands frequently—even while you are traveling back, and especially in crowded places like inside an aircraft.

- A number of disease-causing agents can be spread by sexual contact. Some of the more serious ones, like the hepatitis B and HIV viruses, can also enter the body through contaminated needles or other direct ways to reach the bloodstream.

Spread by water, food, soil

Most of the infections that come from contaminated foods and beverages cause illness within days of ingestion—but some may not cause illness for several weeks:

- Several kinds of ingested parasites cause intestinal problems that can last for months. A stool exam is used to make the diagnosis, and most are treatable.
- Some parasites or bacteria can enter the body when the skin, mouth, or nose comes into contact with water or moist soil in the environment. The bacterial disease leptospirosis usually shows up within days, but schistosomiasis and other microscopic "worms" may not cause symptoms for several weeks. Parasitic infections cause a variety of symptoms including rash, itching, fever, cough, muscle aches, and urinary or intestinal problems.

Environmental Exposures

As described above, a number of infectious diseases can be delayed for weeks, or months, before symptoms begin. Some infectious diseases require only a short period of exposure to "set up" an infection. Then, these viruses or bacteria are able reproduce. Non-infectious diseases become important when there is intense or prolonged exposure. Intense exposures usually cause symptoms immediately. Military operations can result in these types of short intense exposures, such as smoke, dust or intense heat. These types of exposures cause short-term effects in contrast to what may be seen after prolonged periods (years) of working with the same hazards.

Some of these exposures, such as smoke from battlefield fires, may have caused coughing, shortness of breath, irritated eyes, headache, or dizziness. These effects usually resolve within a few days and no long-term health effects are expected. If you continue to have symptoms even though you are no longer in the irritating environment, you should seek medical care as soon as possible.

Teams have sampled and analyzed soil, water, and air throughout the Area of Operations to determine if any toxic chemicals are present at hazardous levels. No significant concentrations of toxic chemicals were found at any troop locations. Specific unit locations and environmental sampling data can be matched for verification of environmental conditions.

Sources of more information:

- Military deployment health information http://www.pdhealth.mil
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention http://www.cdc.gov
- Tricare National and Regional toll free contact numbers : http://www.tricare.osd.mil
- US Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine: http://chppm-www.apgea.army.mil

Commander, US Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine-Europe ATTN: MCHB-AE-EN, CMR 402, APO, AE 09180 DSN: 486-8084/FAX: 486-8938