

[http://www.allgov.com/Controversies/ViewNews/Multiple\\_Tours\\_of\\_Duty\\_Lead\\_to\\_Post\\_Traumatic\\_Stress\\_100412](http://www.allgov.com/Controversies/ViewNews/Multiple_Tours_of_Duty_Lead_to_Post_Traumatic_Stress_100412)

## Multiple Tours of Duty Lead to Post-Traumatic Stress

Monday, April 12, 2010



Nearly 300,000 American troops have served three, four or more times in [Iraq](#) and/or [Afghanistan](#), while cases of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) have risen dramatically since the wars began. The possible correlation between these two facts has led to the question of whether it's fair to send young men and women back into combat again and again, and risk causing long-term mental and emotional problems.

One [U.S. Army](#) study from 2009 found troops in Afghanistan were more vulnerable to developing psychological problems as the number of tours went up (31% for three tours, more than double the rate of those with just one). Another study focused on Iraq showed nearly 15% of Army troops who served two tours suffered from depression, anxiety or traumatic stress, more than double that of a single tour. The PTSD rate was almost 2.5 times higher for two deployments compared with one.

“We just don't know whether it's combat exposure, repeated separation from the family or (not enough) time off,” Lieutenant Colonel Paul Bliese, director of the division of psychiatry and neuroscience at the [Walter Reed Army Institute of Research](#), told the Associated Press. “All of those are reasonable explanations.”