

2014 ADVOCACY SUMMIT

March 24-26, 2014

TALK ABOUT ARTHRITIS
FACE2FACE

Continue Funding for Arthritis Research at the Department of Defense (DoD)

DoD Research Serves Members of the Military, their Families and Veterans.

In an effort to address the broad spectrum of diseases that effect our nation's war fighters, their families, and veterans, Congress created the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program (CDMRP), Peer-Reviewed Medical Research Program (PRMRP) at the DoD. Established with bipartisan support, the CDMRP was developed to specifically fund innovative research that would have near term treatment application. This program awards grants to only the best research, and requires collaboration to avoid information silos. Each year, Congress determines which disease topics are eligible to apply for grants in the Defense Appropriations Act.

Arthritis Disproportionately Impacts Members of the Military.

Arthritis, our nation's leading cause of disability, adversely impacts our nation's warriors:

Osteoarthritis (OA) is the leading cause of disability and medical discharge in active service members under the age of 40 and post-traumatic osteoarthritis caused by battlefield injuries is now the primary source of disability for warriors (*Journal of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons, 2012*).

Active duty soldiers and veterans have twice the rate of OA when compared to non-military populations.

Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA) strikes military personnel at the peak of their careers (mid-late forties). An RA diagnosis initiates a Medical Evaluation Board (MEB), often resulting in medical discharge from services. According to Army statistics, number of soldiers medically retired from the Army with at least one musculoskeletal condition increased nearly 10-fold from 2003 to 2009, according to Army statistics.

Arthritis Research Should Continue at the DoD

Request: The Arthritis Foundation strongly recommends that as a Member of Congress, you communicate with your respective members and leadership on the Appropriations Committee, or its Defense Subcommittee on Appropriations, to include the topics of "Post-Osteoarthritis and Rheumatoid Arthritis" in the Peer-reviewed Medical Research Program, Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program of the Defense Appropriations Bill, FY2015.

Post-traumatic Osteoarthritis and Rheumatoid arthritis were both included in the DoD portion of the FY2014 Omnibus Appropriations Bill.



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