

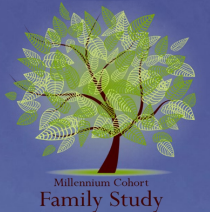
THE MILLENNIUM COHORT PROGRAM

PROTECTING SERVICE MEMBER, VETERAN AND FAMILY HEALTH

A US DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AND DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS STUDY



MILLENNIUM COHORT STUDY



*We are committed to helping
protect service member, veteran, and family health*

Dear Colleague,

We are pleased to share with you our most recent program updates. This past year marked the 20th anniversary of the first panel enrollment of the Millennium Cohort Study. In our third decade of research, we look forward to continuing the visionary legacy of the original investigators of the Millennium Cohort Program. This newsletter includes new scientific publications that the research team has recently published. We hope you continue to take pride in being an important partner of our research community as we continue to inform and improve the health and readiness of military service members, Veterans, and their families.

Sincerely,

Rudy Rull, PhD, MPH
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Millennium Cohort Study

Valerie Stander, PhD
Principal Investigator
Millennium Cohort Family Study
Millennium Cohort Adolescent Study

First 20 Years of the Millennium Cohort Study¹

In commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the Millennium Cohort Study, this paper provides a summary of the study design, key findings, and future directions. Published findings are summarized and categorized into 3 core areas (psychological health, physical health, and health-related behaviors) and several crosscutting areas culminating in more than 120 publications to date. The Study will continue to foster stakeholder relationships such that research findings inform and guide policy initiatives and health promotion efforts.

Military Experiences among LGBT Service Members²

Survey data from the 2016 Millennium Cohort Study follow-up questionnaire were used to assess sexual orientation (lesbian, gay, and bisexual [LGB] versus heterosexual) and military experiences and service separation experiences. Of the 99,599 participants, 3.4% identified as LGB. Those service members were more likely than their heterosexual peers to report feeling unimpressed by the quality of unit leadership, unsupported by the military, and negative about the military overall. LGB veterans were more likely than heterosexual peers of the same sex to separate from service for a variety of reasons (e.g., administrative, dissatisfaction with promotions/pay, disability/medical reasons, dissatisfaction with leadership and incompatibility with the military). Promoting inclusion and increasing support for LGB service members may improve satisfaction with military service and retention.

Marital Instability in Military Couples³

The objective of this study was to predict marital instability from a range of risk and protective factors in a large, representative cohort of military couples participating in the Millennium Cohort Family Study. Factors analyzed include mental health, family communication, military experiences, and education level. Findings from this study can be used to target specific couples risk factors for marital instability and to tailor programs to at-risk subgroups.

Anger and Financial Wellbeing among Service Members and Veterans⁴

Of 95,895 participants, 17.4% screened positive for problematic anger. Involuntary job loss and financial problems were significantly associated with problematic anger adjusting for demographics, military characteristics, disabling injury, and behavioral health factors. Among veterans, problematic anger was associated with unemployment and homelessness after adjustment for covariates. These findings suggest it may be useful for military leaders, veteran organizations, and policy makers to support the adjustment and financial health of military personnel and veterans by proactively addressing problematic anger.



For more information on recent publications, including links to full-text, please visit the study websites: millenniumcohort.org and familycohort.org



Insomnia and Sleep Medication Usage among Service Members⁵

Millennium Cohort Study participants were administered the clinically validated Insomnia Severity Index at Time 1 (2013) and Time 2 (2016) to determine the prevalence and correlates of probable clinical insomnia and sleep medication use. At Time 1, 16.3% of participants screened positive for probable clinical insomnia and 23.1% reported sleep medication use; at Time 2, these prevalence estimates were 11.2% (probable clinical insomnia) and 25.1% (sleep medication use). Risk factors for new-onset insomnia (6% of those without insomnia at Time 1) included Army service, combat deployment, and separation from military service, while risk factors for newly-reported sleep medication use (17.1%) included number of deployments and having a healthcare occupation.

Patterns of Military Spouse Alcohol Consumption⁶

Risky alcohol use, defined as heavy or binge drinking, among spouses has ramifications for themselves, the service member, and the family unit. Using Millennium Cohort Family Study data (n=5,476), this study assessed associations of factors at individual, interpersonal, and organizational levels with risky alcohol use among military spouses. Among spouses in this sample, 1 in 5 were risky drinkers, and 17% increased their drinking over a three-year period, 19% decreased their drinking, and 64% didn't change their consumption. Factors associated with risky alcohol use included male gender, cigarette smoking, elevated symptoms of posttraumatic stress, marital separation, and service member deployment with combat. Our results suggest that providing alcohol screening and interventions specifically for spouses has the potential to improve the broader health and safety of military families.

Sources

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