



This issue of *Journal of Surgical Orthopaedic Advances* (JSOA) focuses on the treatment and outcomes of common musculoskeletal conditions and injuries in military service members. The United States has been at war now for over 11 years in Iraq and Afghanistan. As of December 14, 2012, there have been 50,365 service members wounded in action and 5230 combat deaths in the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts. Early studies on these conflicts reported that 49% to 54% of all soldiers injured sustained a musculoskeletal extremity injury. Some of the articles in this issue of JSOA detail the treatment of common combat-related extremity injuries, which are devastating because of the heavy bacterial contamination and slowly evolving complex wounds. One article of interest details the potential for monitoring and diagnosing lower extremity compartment syndrome in musculoskeletal combat casualties utilizing serial near-infrared spectroscopy.

Additionally, the treatment of musculoskeletal noncombat injuries, whether incurred in theater or during military training stateside, is of paramount importance in conserving the fighting strength of our military force. There are threefold more noncombat than combat musculoskeletal injuries and these noncombat musculoskeletal casualties account for nearly 50% of all musculoskeletal casualties that require evacuation from the combat zone. Additionally, many service members sustain nonemergent musculoskeletal injuries, which are treated conservatively in theater and ultimately require surgery following their combat tour. The anterior cruciate ligament disruption and first-time shoulder dislocation incidence rates from noncombat injuries are nearly five times greater than that of the civilian population, indicative of the daily rigors of the combat environment. To that end, this issue details treatment of common musculoskeletal conditions and injuries in military service members with an emphasis on the military occupational outcome of whether the military service member was able to return to duty.

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