OTSG/MEDCOM Policy Memo 09-046
25 JUN 2009

Expires 25 June 2011

MEMORANDUM FOR Commanders, MEDCOM Regional Medical Commands

SUBJECT: Exertional Rhabdomyolysis as Cause for Referral to a Medical Evaluation Board (MEB)

1. Reference: Army Regulation (AR) 40-501, Standards of Medical Fitness, 14 Dec 07 (Rapid Action Revision (RAR) 10 Sep 08).

2. Purpose: To issue new guidance for referral to a MEB for Soldiers with the medical diagnosis of Exertional Rhabdomyolysis.

3. Proponent: The proponent for this policy is the Director, Health Policy and Services, Office of The Surgeon General.

4. Policy:

   a. AR 40-501, paragraph 3-40, identifies systemic diseases that are cause for referral to an MEB.

   b. The diagnosis of Exertional Rhabdomyolysis, defined as severe exercise-induced muscle pain resulting from repetitive exercise with an elevation of serum creatine kinase (CK) generally at least 5 times the upper lab limit of normal and/or urine myoglobin, will cause referral to an MEB if the Soldier has:

      (1) Recurrent episodes of Exertional Rhabdomyolysis.

      (2) A single episode with severe systemic complications (e.g., compartment syndrome).

      (3) A single episode which results in physical complications that interfere with successful performance of duty.
MCHO-CL-P
SUBJECT: Exertional Rhabdomyolysis as Cause for Referral to a Medical Evaluation Board (MEB)

c. Soldiers with any of the following symptoms two weeks after experiencing an episode of Exertional Rhabdomyolysis should be referred to the appropriate specialist for consideration of referral to an MEB:

1. Persistent residual kidney injury.

2. Persistent elevation of CK above 5 times the upper limit of the lab normal range or delayed clinical recovery.

3. A history of sickle cell trait.

d. Pending publication of a revised AR 40-501, an exception to policy to use this new guidance for Exertional Rhabdomyolysis is authorized.

e. The Uniformed Services University Consortium for Health and Military Performance is available electronically to assist in clinical consultation at champ@usuhs.mil. In addition, a Clinical Practice Guideline for the management of Exertional Rhabdomyolysis in Soldiers is available at http://champ.usuhs.mil/chclinicaltools.html.

5. Regional Medical Commands are responsible for the execution of this policy.

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Lieutenant General
Commanding