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J R Army Med Corps. 2016 Apr;162(2):90-7. doi: 10.1136/jramc-2015-000417. Epub 2015 Jul 3.

Accelerated resolution therapy: an innovative mental health intervention to treat post-traumatic stress disorder.

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Abstract

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a disabling trauma and stress-related disorder that may occur after a person experiences a traumatic event, and evokes a combination of intrusion and avoidance symptoms, negative alterations in cognitions and mood, and alterations in arousal and reactivity. **Accelerated resolution therapy (ART)** is an emerging psychotherapy that provides fast and lasting resolution for mental health problems such as PTSD. ART has been shown to achieve a positive result in one to five sessions, typically over a 2-week period, and requires no homework, skills practice or repeated exposure to targeted events. Initial research, including one randomised control trial, has demonstrated that ART interventions can significantly reduce symptoms of psychological trauma in both civilians and US service members and veterans. These results suggest that ART be considered as either a primary treatment option or for refractory PTSD in those with a suboptimal response to endorsed first-line therapies. Conservative estimates indicate substantial potential cost savings in PTSD treatment. Despite the need for more definitive clinical trials, there is increasing interest in ART in the USA, including in the US Army. The growing positive empirical evidence is compelling, and there appears to be sufficient evidence to warrant UK researchers undertaking ART research. The armed forces offer the potential for comparative international trials. However, equally important are veterans, emergency services personnel and those subjected to violence. ART appears to also have application in other conditions, including depression, anxiety disorders, and alcohol or drug misuse. ART can potentially help personnel traumatised by the unique challenges of war and conflict zones by providing brief psychotherapy in a readily accessible and culturally competent manner. ART facilitates the provision of interventions and resolutions in theatre, thus enhancing forces' fighting capability.

KEYWORDS: MENTAL HEALTH; STATISTICS & RESEARCH METHODS

PMID: 26141210 DOI: [10.1136/jramc-2015-000417](https://doi.org/10.1136/jramc-2015-000417)

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