## Symptom<sup>1</sup> Profiles of Combat Stress Reactions

Combat Stress Reactions (CSRs) are normal, involuntary, temporary reactions to extremely stressful combat-related events. CSRs are the body's expected survival responses that encompass physiological, behavioral, emotional, mental, and other changes in body processes triggered by the autonomic nervous system (ANS). These changes, which are detailed below, are regulated by two branches of the ANS – the sympathetic nervous system (SNS) responsible for arousal and the parasympathetic nervous system (PNS) responsible for shutdown. Co-active SNS and PNS responses, including high heart rate, blood pressure, and arousal with extreme fear, can trigger a "fright" response that leaves a service member unable to move or vocalize ("scared stiff").

<ul> <li>▲ Intense increase in heart rate (heart pounding, palpitations)</li> <li>▲ Sudden, marked rise in blood pressure</li> <li>▶ Sudden, marked rise in blood pressure</li> </ul>	
▲ Intense increase in heart rate (heart pounding, palpitations) ▼ Dramatic decrease in heart rate	
▲ Sudden, marked rise in blood pressure	
▲ Fast and deep breathing (increased level of oxygen) ▼ Slow and shallow breathing, shortness of breath, and lack of oxygen	
▲ Supercharged energy level; incredibly strong with high to rigid muscle tone  ▼ Drained energy level; incredibly weak with limp muscle tone	
▲ Rise in body temperature, increased sweating	
▲ Dry mouth and dry eyes	
▲ Enlarged pupils, better distance visi <mark>on</mark>	
▲ Decreased digestive activity, appetite, and elimination	
▲ Dizziness, lightheadedness	
▲ Difficulty falling or staying asleep; nightmares	
▲ Goosebumps or muscle jerks, twitches	
AWARENESS/AROUSAL	
▲ Hyperalertness and hyperarousal	S
▲ Single-mindedness and over-focused on the threat	
▲ Exaggerated startle response	
▲ Feelings of unreality, e.g., may feel as if outside of body	
BEHAVIORAL	
▲ Extreme agitation or recklessness in behavior, e.g., acts "manic" or invincible 👘 🛛 🖉 Becoming frozen, unable to move, e.g., paralyzed, collapsed	
▲ Over-excitement and possible arguing, fighting, or rowdiness within unit ▼ Social withdrawal, unresponsiveness, disconnected from unit	
EMOTIONAL	
▲ Intense anger, fear, or euphoria; rapid mood swings	
MENTAL	
▲ Rapid thinking with thoughts initially occurring fast and clear but becoming too fast, causing confusion, memory problems, poor judgement, and difficulty understanding language	
SPEECH	
▲ Loud, rapid speech, or stuttering	
SENSORIMOTOR	
▲ Exaggerated or more vivid sight, hearing, or feeling	
▲ Tingling of body parts	
▲ Reduced ability to feel physical pain (non-opioid system) ▼ Failure to feel physical pain (opioid system)	

<sup>1</sup> Primary reference: Schauer, M., & Elbert, T. (2010). Dissociation following traumatic stress. Journal of Psychology, 218 (2), 109–127