Supplemental materials S1

Study characteristics

Results described here are part of a larger study, which was conducted between September 2010 and September 2013. PTSD patients were included and examined close to the start of their treatment. Based on a power analysis, the aim was to collect pre- and post-treatment scans from 50 PTSD patients and 25 combat controls. The time needed to collect 75 post-treatment scans determined the duration of the study. For this study, war veterans who were diagnosed with PTSD by a psychologist or psychiatrist at the Military Mental Healthcare outpatient clinics, Ministry of Defence in the Netherlands were recruited. The inclusion criteria were a clinician-administered PTSD scale (CAPS (Blake et al. 1990)) score of ≥ 45, deployment to a war zone, age 18 to 60 years and written informed consent. Controls were included when they had no current psychiatric disorder and a CAPS score ≤ 15. Subjects were excluded when they had a history of neurological illness, current substance dependence, or when they were suffering from medical or psychological conditions due to which a MRI scan could not be made.

A total of 65 PTSD patients and 31 controls had signed up for the study, but five patients and two controls did not fulfill the eligibility criteria. Therefore, 60 PTSD patients and 29 combat controls were included. Five patients dropped out before the first MRI scan, because they experienced participation as too much of a burden. Furthermore, four patients and two controls dropped out after the first MRI scan for unknown reasons, two patients did not agree to a second MRI scan and two patients and one control were not scanned a second time, because of poor quality of the first scan. Pre- and post-treatment scans were obtained from a total of 47 war veterans with PTSD and 25 combat controls