



National Center for  
**PTSD**

POSTTRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

# Combat Exposure Scale

**Version date:** 1989

**Reference:** Keane, T., Fairbank, J., Caddell, J., Zimering, R., Taylor, K., & Mora, C. (1989). *The Combat Exposure Scale (CES)*. [Measurement instrument]. Available from <http://www.ptsd.va.gov>

**URL:** <http://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/assessment/te-measures/ces.asp>

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## Combat Exposure Scale

Please circle the number above the answer that best describes your experience.

- 1) Did you ever go on combat patrols or have other dangerous duty?
- |    |           |            |             |           |
|----|-----------|------------|-------------|-----------|
| 1  | 2         | 3          | 4           | 5         |
| No | 1-3 times | 4-12 times | 13-50 times | 51+ times |

- 2) Were you ever under enemy fire?
- |       |          |            |            |           |
|-------|----------|------------|------------|-----------|
| 1     | 2        | 3          | 4          | 5         |
| Never | <1 month | 1-3 months | 4-6 months | 7+ months |

- 3) Were you ever surrounded by the enemy?
- |    |           |            |             |           |
|----|-----------|------------|-------------|-----------|
| 1  | 2         | 3          | 4           | 5         |
| No | 1-2 times | 3-12 times | 13-25 times | 26+ times |

- 4) What percentage of the soldiers in your unit were killed (KIA), wounded or missing in action (MIA)?
- |      |       |        |        |             |
|------|-------|--------|--------|-------------|
| 1    | 2     | 3      | 4      | 5           |
| None | 1-25% | 26-50% | 51-75% | 76% or more |

- 5) How often did you fire rounds at the enemy?
- |       |           |            |             |           |
|-------|-----------|------------|-------------|-----------|
| 1     | 2         | 3          | 4           | 5         |
| Never | 1-2 times | 3-12 times | 13-50 times | 51+ times |

- 6) How often did you see someone hit by incoming or outgoing rounds?
- |       |           |            |             |           |
|-------|-----------|------------|-------------|-----------|
| 1     | 2         | 3          | 4           | 5         |
| Never | 1-2 times | 3-12 times | 13-50 times | 51+ times |

- 7) How often were you in danger of being injured or killed (i.e., being pinned down, overrun, ambushed, near miss, etc.)?
- |       |           |            |             |           |
|-------|-----------|------------|-------------|-----------|
| 1     | 2         | 3          | 4           | 5         |
| Never | 1-2 times | 3-12 times | 13-50 times | 51+ times |

## Combat Exposure Scale Scoring Sheet

Answers (raw scores) on the Combat Exposure Scale can range from 1 to 5. However, the scoring of the items requires the conversions described below:

1) SUBTRACT 1 FROM THE RAW SCORE AND MULTIPLY BY 2  
(e.g., a raw score of 4 becomes a converted score of 6). \_\_\_\_\_ (Item 1 converted score)

2) SUBTRACT 1 FROM THE RAW SCORE  
(e.g., a raw score of 4 becomes a converted score of 3). \_\_\_\_\_ (Item 2 converted score)

3) IF THE RAW SCORE IS BETWEEN 1 AND 4:  
SUBTRACT 1 FROM THE RAW SCORE AND MULTIPLY BY 2  
(e.g., a raw score of 4 becomes a converted score of 6).  
  
IF THE RAW SCORE IS 5:  
SUBTRACT 2 FROM THE RAW SCORE AND MULTIPLY BY 2  
(e.g., a raw score of 5 becomes a converted score of 6). \_\_\_\_\_ (Item 3 converted score)

4) IF THE RAW SCORE IS BETWEEN 1 AND 4:  
SUBTRACT 1 FROM THE RAW SCORE  
(e.g., a raw score of 4 becomes a converted score of 3).  
  
IF THE RAW SCORE IS 5:  
SUBTRACT 2 FROM THE RAW SCORE  
(e.g., a raw score of 5 becomes a converted score of 3). \_\_\_\_\_ (Item 4 converted score)

5) SUBTRACT 1 FROM THE RAW SCORE  
(e.g., a raw score of 4 becomes a converted score of 3). \_\_\_\_\_ (Item 5 converted score)

6) SUBTRACT 1 FROM THE RAW SCORE AND MULTIPLY BY 2  
(e.g., a raw score of 4 becomes a converted score of 6). \_\_\_\_\_ (Item 6 converted score)

7) SUBTRACT 1 FROM THE RAW SCORE AND MULTIPLY BY 2  
(e.g., a raw score of 4 becomes a converted score of 6). \_\_\_\_\_ (Item 7 converted score)

**ADD ALL CONVERTED SCORES TO OBTAIN A TOTAL SCORE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **(TOTAL SCORE)**

**The total exposure to combat score can be categorized according to the following scale:**

1 = 0-8 light

2 = 9-16 light - moderate

3 = 17-24 moderate

4 = 25-32 moderate - heavy

5 = 33-41 heavy