

Military History: Physiology and Health

Military History And Human Health · Answer Key · 25 Questions

1. During the American Civil War, what was the leading cause of death among soldiers, accounting for more fatalities than combat-related injuries?

- A) Dysentery and typhoid fever**
- B) Gunshot wounds
- C) Tetanus
- D) Malnutrition

2. What physiological phenomenon, frequently observed in WWI soldiers, was nicknamed 'trench foot' and is medically classified as a form of non-freezing cold injury?

- A) Immersion foot**
- B) Gangrene
- C) Frostbite
- D) Peripheral neuropathy

3. Which historical medical condition, rampant during the Napoleonic Wars and linked to lice infestations, is caused by the bacterium *Rickettsia prowazekii*?

- A) Typhus**
- B) Plague
- C) Cholera
- D) Scurvy

4. In military history, 'Soldier's Heart' was a term used to describe what is now medically recognized as what condition?

- A) Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder**
- B) Congestive heart failure
- C) Mitral valve prolapse
- D) Tachycardia

5. What nutritional deficiency, caused by a lack of Vitamin C, historically decimated naval crews on long voyages during the Age of Sail?

- A) Scurvy**
- B) Beriberi
- C) Pellagra
- D) Rickets

6. During the Vietnam War, what physiological effect was primarily observed in soldiers exposed to Agent Orange, specifically linked to dioxin toxicity?

A) Chloracne

- B) Acute radiation syndrome
- C) Hyperthermia
- D) Muscle atrophy

7. What was the primary physiological result of the 'gas gangrene' that frequently infected soldiers during WWI due to soil-borne Clostridium perfringens?

A) Tissue necrosis

- B) Massive internal hemorrhaging
- C) Cardiac arrest
- D) Severe dehydration

8. What term was used in the American Civil War to describe the physiological strain of constant, extreme fatigue and mental exhaustion?

A) Da Costa's Syndrome

- B) Neurasthenia
- C) Shell shock
- D) Battle fatigue

9. What specific type of physiological damage is caused by a 'blast injury' when a shock wave passes through the lungs, known as 'blast lung'?

A) Pulmonary barotrauma

- B) Pneumothorax
- C) Alveolar collapse
- D) Pulmonary edema

10. During the Crusades, what skin condition caused by poor hygiene and crowding was frequently documented in military medical chronicles?

A) Scabies

- B) Leprosy
- C) Erysipelas
- D) Impetigo

11. What was the primary cause of the high mortality rate among British soldiers in the Crimean War before Florence Nightingale's reforms?

A) Infectious disease in hospitals

- B) Direct bayonet wounds
- C) Chemical weapon exposure
- D) Dehydration

12. What physiological condition did soldiers in the 19th-century 'Yellow Fever' epidemics often exhibit, giving the disease its name?

- A) Jaundice**
- B) Cyanosis
- C) Erythema
- D) Petechiae

13. What is the physiological mechanism by which high-altitude warfare, such as in the Himalayas, primarily affects a soldier's blood composition?

- A) Increased red blood cell production**
- B) Decreased white blood cell count
- C) Platelet aggregation
- D) Hemolysis

14. Which substance was historically used in military field surgery to induce anesthesia before the widespread adoption of ether or chloroform?

- A) Alcohol and opium**
- B) Cocaine derivatives
- C) Vinegar
- D) Saltwater irrigation

15. What physiological impact did the use of 'Mustard Gas' (sulfur mustard) have on the human body during WWI?

- A) Vesicant skin blistering**
- B) Immediate neurological paralysis
- C) Instant cardiac arrest
- D) Severe respiratory alkalosis

16. What physical injury was historically labeled 'Trench Mouth' among soldiers due to poor oral hygiene and extreme stress?

- A) Necrotizing ulcerative gingivitis**
- B) Dental caries
- C) Periodontitis
- D) Oral thrush

17. Which physiological symptom is the hallmark of 'Caisson disease' (the bends) experienced by military divers?

- A) Nitrogen bubble formation in tissues**
- B) Oxygen toxicity
- C) Carbon dioxide poisoning
- D) Hypobaric hypoxia

18. What neurological condition was common among WWI artillerymen, caused by repeated exposure to concussive pressure waves without visible external injury?

A) Traumatic Brain Injury

- B) Encephalitis
- C) Meningitis
- D) Epilepsy

19. What condition, historically known as 'camp fever,' is primarily transmitted via body lice in crowded military barracks?

A) Epidemic typhus

- B) Malaria
- C) Dengue fever
- D) Yellow fever

20. What physiological failure occurs in the body during severe heatstroke, a common ailment in desert warfare?

A) Thermoregulatory failure

- B) Kidney failure
- C) Liver failure
- D) Respiratory failure

21. What is the medical term for the iron deficiency often found in soldiers experiencing chronic parasitic infections in tropical climates?

A) Anemia

- B) Hypovolemia
- C) Leukopenia
- D) Thrombocytopenia

22. What physiological mechanism led to the high rates of deafness among soldiers operating early heavy artillery?

A) Acoustic trauma to the cochlea

- B) Tympanic membrane ossification
- C) Middle ear infection
- D) Eustachian tube block

23. During the Napoleonic Wars, what was a common physical effect of soldiers walking hundreds of miles in ill-fitting boots?

A) Podiatric stress fractures

- B) Plantar fasciitis
- C) Achilles tendon rupture
- D) Tarsal tunnel syndrome

24. What physiological effect does chronic, prolonged exposure to lead (common in historical musket ball shrapnel) have on a soldier's health?

A) Neurotoxicity and cognitive impairment

- B) Muscular hypertrophy
- C) Enhanced bone density
- D) Increased metabolic rate

25. What physiological condition arises from prolonged exposure to 'trench foot' if left untreated, leading to tissue death?

A) Gangrene

- B) Cellulitis
- C) Dermatitis
- D) Psoriasis