



Army Aviation Fitness Enhancement Program: Holistic Health Guidance for Aircrew

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14. ABSTRACT

Context: The Human Performance and Wellness (HPW) program, an update to the Tactical Human Optimization Rapid Rehabilitation and Reconditioning program, provides special operations forces (SOF) with access to professional sports level staff to maximize total human performance and mental resiliency. As implemented by the Army Special Operations Aviation Regiment (Airborne), HPW offers individualized support by highly trained professionals in strength and conditioning, performance psychology, and nutrition. Soldiers in the larger Army aviation community would benefit from a similar program to better meet the physical and mental demands of flying Army aircraft. Army is currently rolling out a new program to the Combat Aviation Brigades for this purpose, Holistic Health and Fitness (H2F, FM 7-22).

Objective: This project reviewed currently available Army programs to evaluate human performance and mental resiliency resources available to the aviation community.

15. SUBJECT TERMS
holistic health, H2F, Army aviation, aviation, Soldier readiness, performance triad, nutrition, physical health, mental health

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14. Abstract (continued)

Interventions: Examine the resources available to implement a holistic health program, similar to HPW, and develop guidance for non-SOF Army aviation commanders and aircrew.

Results: Army Ready and Resilient, Wellness Program, Morale Wellness and Recreation services, and H2F can be combined for the Aviation Commanding Officer to develop a program based on HPW. To aid aircrew in meeting the complex cognitive demands of flying, it is critical to include cognitive enhancements specialists.

Conclusions: HPW is a successful program that incorporates physical fitness training, nutrition support, and performance psychology training to the SOF communities. It is a successful model that would be beneficial for Army aviation units. Leveraging existing programs, partnerships, and facilities may be able to fill some of the current gaps; however not all aviation units will have access to these resources.



Army Aviation Fitness Enhancement Program: Holistic Health Guidance for Aircrew

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Purpose

- Quick overview of the Holistic Health and Fitness (H2F) Program.
- Identify challenges to readiness in Army aviation.
- Discuss Army resources that can bridge the gap to H2F.



The Army is constantly evolving to address challenges to readiness with novel tactics and evidenced-based approaches

Army Challenges to Readiness

- Physical Health
- Musculoskeletal Injury
- Mental Health
- Injury Recovery
- Unit Morale

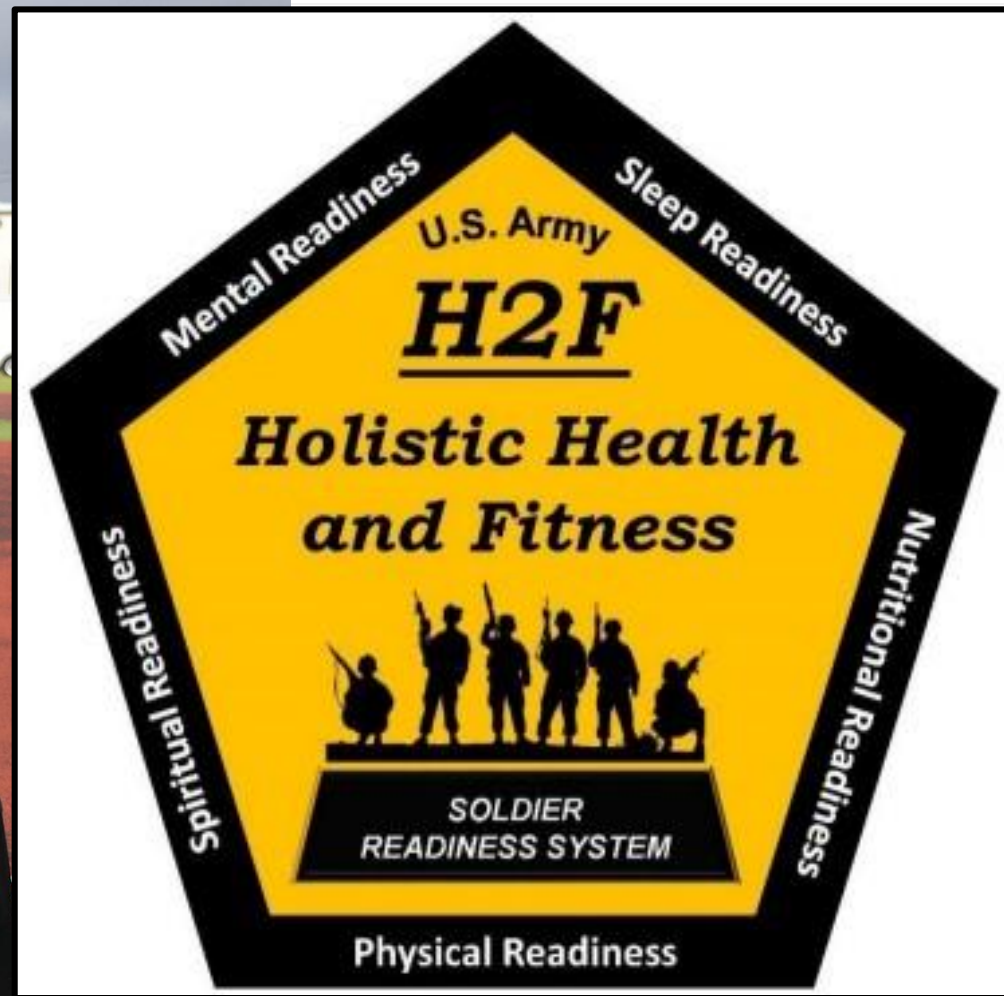
Special Operations		Total Army
Tactical Human Optimization, Rapid Rehabilitation and Reconditioning (THOR3); 2009		Comprehensive Soldier Fitness (CSF); 2008; Comprehensive Soldier and Family Fitness (CSF2); 2012
Preservation of the Force and Family (POTFF)	Human Performance and Wellness (HPW)	Holistic Health and Fitness (H2F)



H2F Overview



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Aviation Physical Readiness Challenges



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- Pilots are exposed to vibration and acceleration.^{1,5}
- Ergonomics force a prolonged, static, hunched, seated position.³
- Helmets add to head, neck, and back strain.
- Cancelled missions, lost duty time, and flight performance are also affected by injuries sustained as a result of routine helicopter operation.³



Physical Readiness Resources



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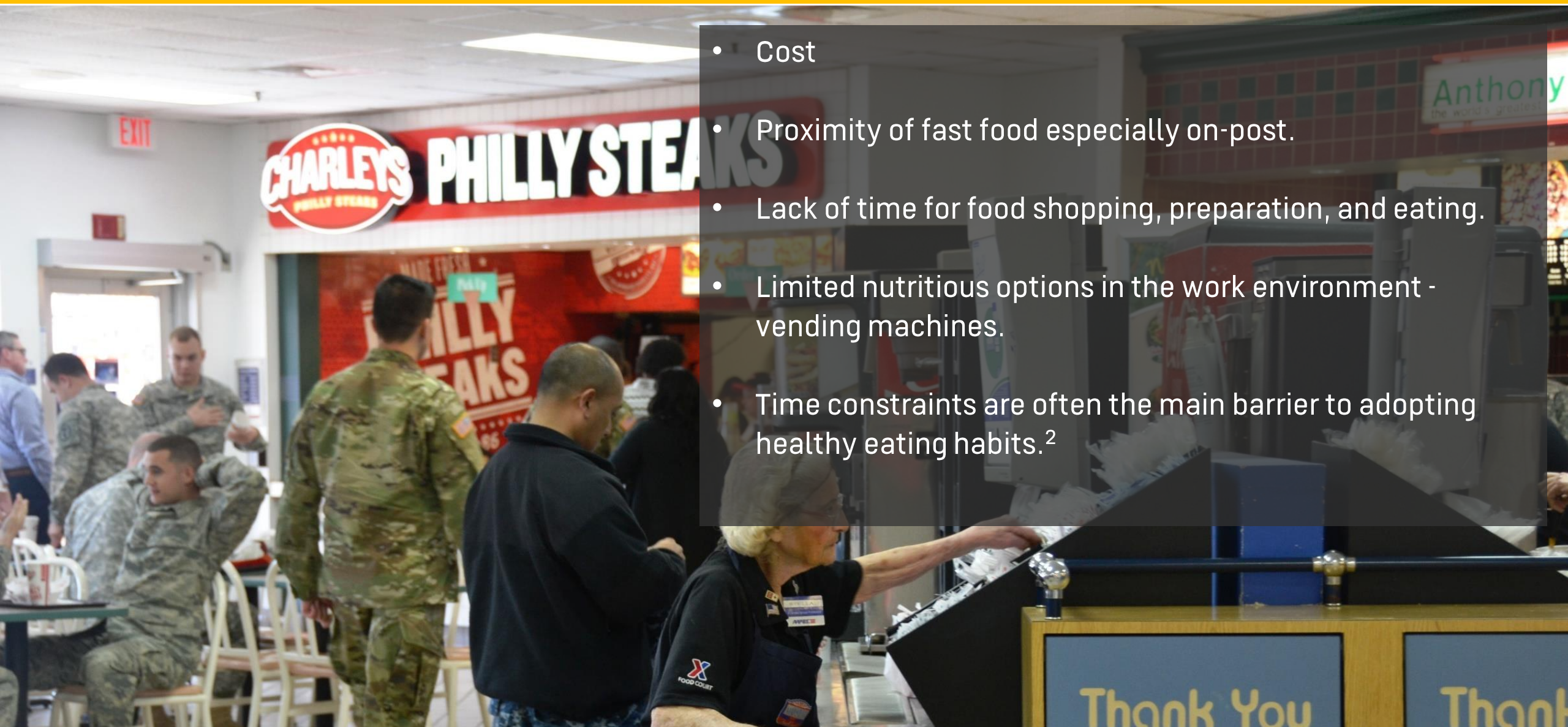
- Army Wellness Centers
[Army Wellness Center Services - Army Public Health Center](#)
- Uniformed Services University CHAMP – Human Performance Resources
<https://www.hprc-online.org/physical-fitness/training-performance>
- Performance Triad
[Learn About Activity- Performance Triad \(army.mil\)](#)



Nutritional Readiness Challenges



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- Cost
- Proximity of fast food especially on-post.
- Lack of time for food shopping, preparation, and eating.
- Limited nutritious options in the work environment - vending machines.
- Time constraints are often the main barrier to adopting healthy eating habits.²



Nutritional Readiness Resources



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- The Uniformed Services University Human Performance Resources offers a wealth of information and strategies for improving eating environments relevant to warfighters.
<https://www.hprc-online.org/nutrition/eating-environments>
- The Operation Supplement Safety website provides easy access to materials and databases for Soldiers to stay informed and make healthy dietary supplement choices.
<https://www.opss.org/>
- The Army Public Health Center site has information on nutrition and dietary supplements.
<https://phc.amedd.army.mil/topics/healthyliving/n/Pages/default.aspx> also
- [Military Nutrition Initiatives - Army Public Health Center](#)
- [HPRC – The military's source for fitness, wellness, and performance nutrition \(hprc-online.org\)](#)



Mental Readiness Challenges



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- High cognitive load when flying
- Work and personal stress can be high
- Civilian spouse's employment challenges
- Isolation from family/friends
- Financial issues/stress
- Deployments
- Relocation



Mental Readiness Resources



- Military OneSource – Mental Health – The Essentials

<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/health-wellness/mental-health/mental-health-support/mental-health-support-the-essentials/>

- U.S. Department of Veteran’s Affairs Mental Health Website

<https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/>



Sleep Readiness Challenges



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- Aviation mission sets may increase sleep disruptions due to work shift changes, cumulative sleep loss, and circadian rhythm disruptions.
- Night vision goggles (NVGs) compound the impact of sleep disruptions and can also induce physical, mental, and visual fatigue.⁴



Sleep Readiness Resources



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- The 2B-Alert Web, scientifically-developed mission planning decision aid is available at: <http://sleep.bhsai.org>
- Human Performance Resources by CHAMPS: <https://www.hprc-online.org/>





Thank you



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