

# Iraq Veterans Against the War

## Lariam Fact Sheet

### **What Is Lariam?**

Lariam is the commercial name for the anti-malaria drug, Mefloquine, which is currently being used by US troops in Iraq in Afghanistan. Mefloquine or Lariam has a broad range of physical and psychological side effects. It is a large white pill that comes in a foil blister pack and is taken once per week during exposure to malaria and for a month afterward. There are other anti-malarial drugs the military uses, although the preference has been for mefloquine since FDA approved it in 1989.

### **What are the Signs and Symptoms and Negative Effects of Lariam Being Ingested?**

Some current and former troops sent to Iraq claim that Lariam, has provoked violent and dangerous behavior. Some military families blame the drug for the suicides of their loved ones. Lariam toxicity often produces dizziness and other vestibular symptoms along with tinnitus (ringing in your ears).

### **What Should I Do If Had Taken Laraim?**

Check your medical records for "mefloquine" OR "Lariam." Unfortunately, anti-malarial medication is not recorded routinely in service personnel's medical records. If you think you took it and it's not in your records, check with your corpsman/medic. It might be recorded in their dispensing logs. See if you or anyone in your unit has any leftover pills. Finally, check with your buddies and see if they have any documentation (medical records, corpsman's logs) that you all were taking mefloquine. If you don't have any documentation, make your own detailed record of what you were told to ingest, what you were given, how many and how often. Also include any side effects you encountered. Download the mefloquine side effects questionnaire from Lariam Action USA [http://www.lariaminfo.org/pdfs/side\\_effects\\_questionnaire.pdf](http://www.lariaminfo.org/pdfs/side_effects_questionnaire.pdf). Fill it out and make copies.

### **What Do I Do If Am Suffering Adverse Side Effects Due To Lariam?**

Consult a physician for a diagnosis and or treatment. You may have to go outside the military for this. Download [Mefloquine \(Lariam®\) Information for Military Service Members and Their Families, 01 Apr 04, www.pdhealth.mil/downloads/Mefloquine\\_SM\\_fs\\_4104.pdf](http://www.pdhealth.mil/downloads/Mefloquine_SM_fs_4104.pdf) and the VA Information Letter on Lariam for clinicians, [www.va.gov/publ/direc/health/infolet/102004007.pdf](http://www.va.gov/publ/direc/health/infolet/102004007.pdf).

Fax a one-page letter to the Office of Senator Dianne Feinstein in Washington D.C. Include a very brief chronology of your experience on mefloquine, including any side effect warnings you were/were not given, how you were given the drug, who gave you the drug, and your side effects. The Senator has been collecting such letters from military and civilians with mefloquine damage from all over the country. Fax your letter to: Senator Dianne Feinstein, Attn: Maeve Townsend Fax 202-228-3954

### **Resources:**

National Gulf War Resource Center, [www.ngwrc.org](http://www.ngwrc.org)  
Lariam Action USA, [www.lariaminfo.org/](http://www.lariaminfo.org/)