"Susceptibility and resilience factors in the development of PTSD. From basic science to mental resilience enhancement intervention"

Wednesday, April 15th 2015, at 12:45pm
Room PE203, Ivcher-Tiomkin building

Combat deployment entails a higher frequency of exposure to stressful situations than that associated with the exposure of civilian populations. Substantial literature documents attention biases to threat among anxiety patients in general and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) patients in particular. Recent research demonstrates that vulnerability to stress-related anxiety and PTSD can be predicted by earlier performance in attention bias tasks. Military training involves training soldiers to direct their attention to potential threats in the environment and to respond to them efficiently in order to protect themselves and the lives of their fellow soldiers. I will present studies that elucidate changes in threat related processes as a function of stress, genetics and the way the interaction between them is related to the development of PTSD. Derived from the results, I will review the development of a new computerized tool (Attention Bias Modification Training-ABMT). ABMT was designed to shift attention patterns toward threat as a primary intervention tool for reducing the risk for posttraumatic symptoms after combat. This intervention was introduced in the context of a randomized controlled trial. Primary results and future research directions in preventative interventions in soldiers and civilian will be discussed.

! You are invited!