

Human enhancement could turn soldiers into weapons that violate international law

Science fiction, or actual U.S. military project? Half a world away from the battlefield, a soldier controls his avatar-robot that does the actual fighting on the ground. Another one wears a sticky fabric that enables her to climb a wall like a gecko or spider would. Returning from a traumatic mission, a pilot takes a memory-erasing drug to help ward off post-traumatic stress disorder. Mimicking the physiology of dolphins and sled-dogs, a sailor is able to work his post all week without sleep and only a few meals.

All of these scenarios are real military projects currently in various stages of research. This is the frontlines of the Human Enhancement Revolution — we now know enough about biology, neuroscience, computing, robotics, and materials to hack the human body, reshaping it in our own image. And defense-related applications are a major driver of science and technology research.

But, [as I reported earlier](#), we also face serious ethical, legal, social, and operational issues in enhancing warfighters. Here, I want to drill down on what the laws of war say about military human enhancements, as we find that other technologies such as [robotics](#) and [cyberweapons](#) run into serious problems in this area as well.

View the original article here: [Could Human Enhancement Turn Soldiers Into Weapons That Violate International Law? Yes](#)

Additional Resources:

- [“Military Must Prep Now for ‘Mutant’ Future, Researchers Warn,”](#) Wired
- [“Human enhancement upsets extremists on left and right,”](#) The Genetic Literacy Project