



# Europe Regional Medical Command

*"Caring for Our Nation's Best"  
Medics Forward ... Any Mission, Anywhere!*



## Landstuhl Regional Medical Center Commander



Rhonda Cornum was commissioned into the Army and began a military medical research career in 1978 after receiving her PhD in nutrition and biochemistry from Cornell University. Assigned to the Letterman Army Institute of Research, she focused on wound healing metabolism and improving liquid blood preservation and transfusion therapy. From 1982 through 1986 she attended medical school at the Uniformed Services University, and then completed a General Surgery Internship at Walter Reed Army Medical Center. In 1987 she transferred to the Army Aeromedical Center at Fort Rucker, AL, first as Chief, Primary Care and Community Medicine, and then Chief of Aviation Medicine. In 1989 research again became her primary duty when she was assigned as Chief, Crew Life Support Branch at the Army Aeromedical Research Laboratory, also at Fort Rucker. While there, her interests revolved around enhancing pilot performance and use of helmet mounted displays in advanced attack helicopters.

Research was interrupted by the Persian Gulf conflict. In August of 1990 Colonel Cornum was assigned as the flight surgeon to the 2/229 Attack Helicopter Battalion. During the last week of February 1991, while performing a search and rescue mission for a downed Air Force F-16 pilot, her Blackhawk helicopter was shot down. Five of the eight person crew were killed and three survivors, including Colonel Cornum, were captured. All prisoners were repatriated to friendly forces on 6 March.

Colonel Cornum attended Air Command and Staff College at Maxwell Air Force Base from 1991 through 1992. She began Urologic Surgery training in 1993. In addition to academic and clinical responsibilities, she renewed her blood and metabolic research interests, including use of the absorbable fibrin bandage, and evaluating alternate strategies for treating prostate cancer. Following graduation in 1998, Colonel Cornum was assigned as the assistant DCCS and staff urologist at Eisenhower Army Medical Center in Augusta, GA. She took command of the 28<sup>th</sup> Combat Support Hospital at Fort Bragg, NC on 25 July 2000. In this position she deployed as the Medical Task Force Commander to Bosnia for SFOR 9, and deployed three subordinate units to Afghanistan for Operation Enduring Freedom. She graduated from the National War College in June 2003.

In addition to senior flight surgeon wings, Colonel Cornum wears the airborne, air assault, and the expert field medic badges. Decorations include the Legion of Merit, Distinguished Flying Cross, Bronze Star, Meritorious Service Medal (with 4 OLCs), Purple Heart, Air Medal, POW Medal and others. Dr. Cornum has written or co-authored one book, four book chapters, and numerous scientific articles.