

Military Health History

POCKET CARD FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONS TRAINEES & CLINICIANS

Ask all military service members and all Veterans

General Questions

Would it be ok if I talked with you about your military experience?

When and where did you/do you serve and in what branch?

What type of work did you/do you do while in the service?

Did you have **any** illnesses or injuries while in the service?

If your patient answers “Yes” to any of the following questions, ask:

“Can you tell me more about that?”

- Did you ever become ill while you were in the service?
- Were you or a buddy wounded, injured, or hospitalized?
- Did you have a head injury with loss of consciousness, loss of memory, “seeing stars” or being temporarily disoriented?
- Did you see combat, enemy fire, or casualties?
- Were you a prisoner of war?

Compensation & Benefits

Do you have a service-connected condition?

Would you like assistance in filing for compensation for injuries/illnesses related to your service?

Call VA at 1-800-827-1000 or 844-MyVA311 (698-2311)

Living Situation

Would it be ok to talk about your living situation?

Where do you live and who do you live with? Is your housing safe?

Are you in any danger of losing your housing?

Do you need assistance in caring for yourself and/or dependents?

Sexual Harassment, Assault, and Trauma

Would it be ok to talk about sexual harassment or trauma that you might have experienced?

Have you ever experienced physical, emotional, or sexual harassment or trauma?

Is this past experience causing you problems now?

Would you like a referral for some help with that?

Many people find it helpful to get some support.

Exposure Concerns

Would it be okay if I asked about some things you may have been exposed to during your service?

What... were you exposed to?

- **Chemical** (pollution, solvents, weapons, etc.)
- **Biological** (infectious diseases, weapons)
- **Psychological** (mental or emotional abuse, moral injury)
- **Physical**

Blast or explosion
Munitions or
bullet wound

Radiation
Shell fragment
Heat

Vehicular crash
Noise/Vibration
Other injury

What... precautions were taken? (Avoidance, PPE, Treatment)

How... long was the exposure?

How... concerned are you about the exposure?

Where... were you exposed?

When... were you exposed?

Who... else may have been affected? Unit name, etc.

Behavior

Would it be okay if we talked about emotional responses during your service?

PTSD: Have you been concerned that you might suffer from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder? Symptoms can include numbing, re-experiencing symptoms, hyperarousal/being on guard, and/or avoiding situations that remind(s) you of the trauma.

Depression: Have you been experiencing sadness, feelings of hopelessness/helplessness, lack of energy, difficulty concentrating, and/or poor sleep?

Risk Assessment: Have you had thoughts of harming yourself or others?

Veterans Crisis Line 1-800-273-8255 (Press 1)
or 1-844-MyVA311 (698-2311)

Blood Borne Viruses (Hepatitis & HIV)

- Do you have tattoos? Have you ever injected or snorted drugs, such as heroin, cocaine, or methamphetamine?
- Have you ever been screened for Hepatitis C or HIV? If not, would you like to be screened for these?

Common Service-Related Exposure Concerns

Military Environmental Exposures (Any Era)

Burn Pit Smoke	Hexavalent Chromium
Cold Injuries	Mustard Gas
Contaminated Water (benzene, trichloroethylene, vinyl chloride)	Nerve Agents
Endemic Diseases	Pesticides
Heat Stroke/Exhaustion	Radiation (Ionizing & Non-Ionizing)
	Sand, Dust, Smoke, and Particulates
	TCDD, herbicides, other dioxins

Occupational Hazards: Asbestos, Industrial Solvents, Lead, Radiation, Fuels, PCBs, Noise/Vibration, Chemical Agent Resistant Coating (CARC)

Gulf War/Southwest Asia (Afghanistan, Kuwait, Iraq)

Animal Bites/Rabies	Malaria Prevention: Mefloquine
Blunt Trauma	– Lariam
Burn Injuries (Blast Injuries)	Mental Health Issues
Chemical or Biological Agents	Multi-Drug Resistant Acinetobacter
Chemical Munitions Demolition	Oil Well Fires
Combined Penetrating Injuries	Reproductive Health Issues
Depleted Uranium (DU)	Spinal Cord Injury
Dermatologic Issues	Traumatic Amputation
Embedded Fragments (shrapnel)	Traumatic Brain Injury
	Vision Loss

Immunizations: Anthrax, Botulinum Toxoid, Smallpox, Yellow Fever, Typhoid, Cholera, Hepatitis B, Meningitis, Whooping Cough, Polio, Tetanus

Infectious Diseases: Malaria, Brucellosis, Campylobacter jejuni, Coxiella burnetii, Mycobacterium tuberculosis, nontyphoid Salmonella, Shigella, visceral Leishmaniasis, West Nile Virus

Vietnam, Korean DMZ & Thailand

Agent Orange Exposure	Cold Injuries	Hepatitis C Risks
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Cold War

Chemical Warfare Agent Experiments	Nuclear Weapons Testing or Cleanup
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WWII & Korean War

Chemical Warfare Agent Experiments	Nuclear Weapons Testing or Cleanup
Cold Injuries	Biological Warfare Agents

“Help me understand my medical condition.”

“I had some unique experiences while serving our country, many that civilians would never have. Some of those experiences may be affecting my health, and that is why I am here at VA.”

“Help me understand my medical condition, and please be patient with me. Some of my memories may be painful or difficult to discuss.”



Asking the questions on this card will be helpful in understanding my medical problems and concerns.

Office of Academic Affiliations

www.va.gov/oa/pocketcard/

Post-Deployment Health Services

www.publichealth.va.gov/about/postdeploymenthealth/

Veterans Health Initiative Independent Study Courses

www.publichealth.va.gov/healthinitiative/

War-Related Illness and Injury Study Center

www.warrelatedillness.va.gov

Information for Veterans: Compensation & Pension Benefits

www.benefits.va.gov/compensation/



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Find out more about military exposures
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