“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.”

“Can you tell me more about that?”

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

- 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.
Ask all military service members and all Veterans

**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?

**Military Environmental Exposures (Any Era)**

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

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

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

**Vietnam, Korean DMZ & Thailand**

- Agent Orange Exposure
- Cold Injuries
- Hepatitis C Risks

**Cold War**

- Chemical Warfare Agent Experiments
- Nuclear Weapons Testing or Cleanup

**WWII & Korean War**

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

Tell your patient about VA’s

www.myhealth.va.gov

Gateway to Veteran Health Benefits and Services

Find out more about military exposures

www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/