



HER VOICE

WOMEN VETERAN IN NORTHERN CALIFORNIA HEALTH CARE SYSTEM



HER STORY

Many laws have recently passed with the title Deborah Sampson. These laws help women Veterans have greater access to quality health care and benefits through the VA. Who is Deborah Sampson, you may ask? Ms. Sampson was born on December 17, 1760. When the Revolutionary war began, Ms. Sampson disguised herself as Robert Shurtleff and joined the Fourth Massachusetts Regiment. She was assigned as a scout to neutral territories to assess the British Army, where she and other service members were involved in several scrimmages. Ms. Sampson was ultimately discovered after two years when she became ill during an epidemic. Ms. Sampson was honorably discharged on October 23, 1783. Ms. Sampson was one of the first women to receive a military pension. Due to Ms. Sampson's bravery and sacrifice, the VA provides better services to our women Veterans.

Women Veteran's in Northern California

Approximately 14,100 women Veterans in VA Northern California Health Care System (VANCHCS), and roughly 11,200 regularly receive services. We have ten Community-Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs) with 39 Women's Health (WH) Primary Care Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT) teams. A WH provider has received specialized training to deliver gender-specific care. There is a Women's Health champion at every CBOC to coordinate women's health services with the Women Veterans Program Manager (WVPM) at the main facility. In addition, the Women's Health Program has a myriad of services to include: mental health, maternity care, and breast care, & breast cancer navigation, mammography services with open scheduling, 3D tomosynthesis, ultrasound-guided biopsy, MRI services at some sites & many other services.

Inside this issue

- Yreka clinic..... 2
- Urinary incontinence.. 2
- Maternal Health 3
- Holistic Care..... 4
- MST..... 5
- Events/classes 6
- Meet WH 7
- Resources..... 8

Special points of interest

- I am not invisible campaign
- Breast Cancer Awareness Month
- Featured provider– Dr. Basaran
- We want to hear from you! Let us know the topics you would like to read about.

YREKA Community-Based Outpatient Clinics



The Yreka Rural Health Clinic originally opened in 2010 as a VA hybrid clinic (part private practice and part VA). However, in 2015 the Yreka clinic was doing so well that they were awarded the contract and expanded to complete VA services. This follows the VA Secretary's initiatives to have a patient-centered focus on medical care for Veterans by providing medical care at a location near their residence versus traveling up to 2 hours to the Redding Outpatient Clinic for care. In addition, the Rural Health Clinic allows the Yreka enrolled Veteran to access VA care Monday through Friday throughout the year.

There are currently over 1000 enrolled Veterans, of which 110 are women Veterans. They have also expanded their services to primary care, and some specialty services, including lab draws, Pulmonary, Sleep Apnea, Audiology, Diabetic Eye Screening, and other services available through telehealth technologies. Mental health services are available, including support groups and individual appointments. One of the highlights of the clinic is the "Wall of Heroes," with local Veterans are honored by having their picture hung on the wall of the clinic

"Women Veterans may have unique risk factors that put you at greater risk of pelvic floor concerns and urinary conditions related to your military service"

I Am Not Invisible

There are over two million women Veterans, making up over 10% of the Veteran population and growing. Yet, women Veterans continue to face significant barriers and challenges in accessing necessary health care and other services while experiencing a lack of recognition.

The I Am Not Invisible (IANI) project, developed in Oregon, aims to increase awareness and dialogue about women Veterans, as well as open viewers' eyes to the myriad of contributions, needs, and experiences of women who have served in the military.

Urinary Incontinence—Mind over Bladder

Across the Nation, more than 28 million women suffer from pelvic floor disorders. In addition, women Veterans may have unique risk factors for pelvic floor concerns and urinary conditions related to their military service. For example, active-duty women are often exposed to conditions that may increase their risk of urinary tract infections (UTI), such as poor hygiene, decreased access to care and bathrooms, postponed urination, and fluid restriction. Also, female Veterans who have PTSD or traumatic brain injury can experience urinary incontinence at higher rates.

Urinary incontinence refers to the loss of bladder control and is a common condition that affects many women. The severity can range from occasionally leaking urine when you cough or sneeze to having an urge to urinate that is so sudden and strong you cannot make it to the bathroom in time.

The Women's Health Program is in the process of establishing an incontinence program that aims to take a multidisciplinary approach to treatment. Including one-on-one education, supplies, medications, nutrition counseling, mental health assistance, pelvic floor therapy, specialist evaluation if needed, and much more.

Incontinence is common and treatable! If you suffer from incontinence, speak to your doctor or healthcare provider to learn more about treatment options.

WE ARE NOT INVISIBLE



Maternal Health and Parenting Support Available Through Your VA



IT'S OKAY

Let go of perfect. VA is here to help.

- Virtual Mental Health Care
- VA Mindfulness Coach Phone App
- Maternity Care Coordinators
- Parenting Support and Classes
- Family Therapy
- Intimate Partner Violence Coordinators

Insert Custom Content Here:
Local Resources
Outreach number or program details

Women Veterans Call Center: 1-855-829-6636
www.womenshealth.va.gov | #WomenVets

VA U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Whether you want to start or expand your family, VA covers a full range of maternity care services to support you. To ensure the best care possible, VA provides maternity care by referral to local community obstetric (OB) providers. VA maternity care includes prenatal care, delivery, and postpartum care. It also includes care for your newborn baby for seven days after birth. To further support pregnant Veterans, every VA offers maternity care coordination. VA Maternity Care Coordinators understand your needs and can support you through every stage of your pregnancy. If you are pregnant and want to find a VA Maternity Care Coordinator near you, talk to your VA provider. You can also call or text the Women Veterans Call Center at 1-855-829-6636.

Women's Health—Healthy Teaching Kitchen Program

Society can create challenges around food and our bodies, some of which impact women more.

There is a growing effort to move away from dieting towards building sustainable habits and a healthier relationship with food and ourselves.

The **VA Healthy Teaching Kitchen (HTK) for Women Veterans Program** supports this healthier weight-neutral approach by building a healthy relationship with food through experiential cooking with peers and dietitians.

The **VA Healthy Teaching Kitchen (HTK) for Women Veterans Program** is an online, video 8-week course with two (2) classes per week:

Wednesdays: 1.5 hours live, virtual cooking classes to increase nutrition knowledge, cooking skills and build confidence in cooking at home with healthy, minimally processed foods.

Thursdays: 1.0 hour live, virtual nutrition education classes discussing women's health. Topics include body image, relationship with food, stress, calcium and vitamin D, sleep hygiene, and much more.

All participants will receive a FREE kit of basic cooking supplies and kitchen tools for cooking classes. Call **916-213-6548** for more information and/or to enroll.

SHE WEARS THE BOOTS PODCAST

She Wears the Boot is an official VA-sponsored podcast. We highlight how the VA is your partner in health by interviewing experts on topics that matter to you. We recognize that while women Veterans have the exact health care needs as non-Veteran women, Veterans are at a higher risk for certain conditions requiring specialized care.

We cover topics including:

- Breast Health
- Heart Health
- Infertility
- LGBTQ care
- Maternity care
- Menopause
- Mental Health
- Reproductive Health
- Vaccine Safety
- Women's Health
- And More!

You can download, subscribe, and listen to the She Wears the Boots podcast from your phone or computer - anywhere you listen to podcasts.



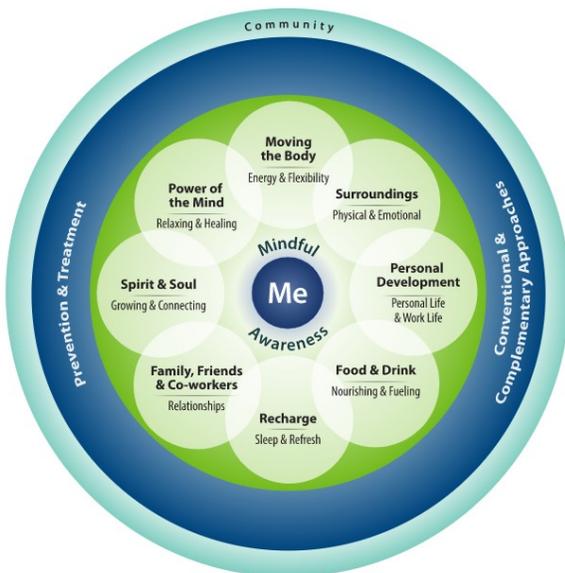
<https://www.speaker.com/show/she-wears-the-boots-a-podcast-for-women>

Whole Health Approach

Whole Health is VA's cutting-edge approach to care that supports your health and well-being. Whole Health centers around **what matters to you**, not what is the matter with you. This means your health team will get to know you as a person before working with you to develop a personalized health plan based on your values, needs, and goals.

Find out how you can #LiveWholeHealth from home through VA's ongoing self-care blog series. <https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/tag/livewholehealth/>. This series highlights Whole Health resources—such as video sessions for yoga or meditation—that you can follow along at home to live healthier and happier.

The VA also offers an introduction to the Whole Health group through video conference! Classes are available Mondays from 8 am-10 am, Tuesdays from 11 am-1 pm, and Wednesdays from 1 pm-3 pm. This class is open to all veterans and can be scheduled by calling the appt line at 1-800-382-8387 or the front desk staff at your primary care clinic.



October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Breast cancer is the most common cancer in women (after skin cancer) and the second leading cause of cancer death in women, so it is understandably a topic on many women Veterans' minds. VA offers state-of-the-art, coordinated care and resources for Veterans who want to get checked for breast cancer to help ensure their overall health and well being. Breast care resources available through VA include screening and diagnostic mammograms, breast ultrasound and MRI, genetic counseling and testing, cancer treatment and more. Women Veterans may visit <https://www.womenshealth.va.gov/> to learn more about their breast health today.

Concerned about your breast cancer risk?

VA offers state-of-the-art breast care.



Talk to your Women's Health provider today.

Women Veterans Call Center: 1-855-829-6636
www.womenshealth.va.gov | #WomenVets

VA U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

We want to hear from you!

This newsletter is for YOU, so we want to know what topics YOU would be interested in reading, seeing, or getting more information on. If you are interested in it, then likely other women are as well! So please feel free to email us through myHealthVet Women's Health Program-NCHCS_WMS with your ideas! We will research the topics and make every effort to get them included in the upcoming newsletters.



FEATURED PROVIDER

Dr. Basaran, Joann

Dr. Joann Basaran is currently the lead physician for Mare Island and Fairfield CBOC's.

Dr. Basaran was on Active Duty Air Force from 1989 until 1996, stationed at Ankara & Incirlik Turkey & Travis Air Force base at David Grant Medical Center. While in Turkey she directly supported the NATO operation of Provide Comfort to the Kurds in Northern Iraq. Dr. Basaran then transitioned to an Individual Mobilization Augmentee (IMA) provider from 1997-2013, & then a reservist from 2013-2014 with the 349th Medical Reserve Squadron when she retired with 26 years of military service.

Working for the VA was natural for Dr. Basaran, where she takes care of Veterans. "I like the excellent quality of care that we give to all of our Veterans and the comprehensive care that the VA provides."

Dr. Basaran's training is in Family Medicine, with having special interest in taking care of Women and their special and different health needs. Women's health is an extension of Family Medicine and allows me to take care of the whole person in Medicine.

"Women's health is an extension of Family Medicine and allows me to take care of the whole person in Medicine" ~~ Dr. Basaran

MST

One and four women Veterans who receive VA health care reports experiences of sexual assault during military service. To support their recovery, VA Northern California Health Care System (VA NorCal) offers free assessment and treatment to veterans for Military Sexual Trauma (MST). "Sexual assault is not a women's issue; it's a crime that can happen to anyone," said Dr. Catherine Novotny, Ph.D., VA NorCal MST Recovery Coordinator. "Everyone has a responsibility to confront and play a role in ending sexual violence." In addition, each year in April, VA NorCal joins the nation in recognizing Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM) to raise awareness about sexual assault and its prevention.

Last year, VA NorCal provided 12,997 MST-related visits for Women Veterans across Northern California and offered MST recovery at all 11 sites, along with referrals for VA residential programs nationwide. It also offers web-based recovery tools and a growing number of VA Video Connect appointments that veterans may access from home. To learn more about MST recovery resources, please watch the following YouTube video: <https://bit.ly/2XP2tWd>. For additional information, contact Dr. Novotny at 925-372-2554 or Catherine.novotny@va.gov. For assistance with MST claims, you can contact Rebecca at 916-366-5453

Women's Health Program VANCHCS

Upcoming Events

Get your Flu vaccine between Sept through November 7th, get entered to win a prize.

Flu vaccines are now available! Walk-In clinic at Mather Mon-Fri 8am-4pm.

Check your local outpatient clinic for site specific days & times.

VA Town Hall Meeting, November 2nd, 2021, 12:00 PM—1:30 PM: Meeting will be broadcasted as a live video on the VA NCHCS Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/VANCHCS>. Public Affairs will be taking questions in the live event's comment section.

Honoring Her Voice Women Veteran Appreciation Day Virtual Event, Nov 11th, 2021, Time: 10 AM—12:30 PM

Whole Health Focus Group, December 8th, 12:00 PM—1:00 PM, to register, contact Vanessa Garcia at 916-843-7328 or vanessa.garcia@va.gov.

Upcoming classes

Women Veteran Support and Resource Group— build a supportive network and support other women Veterans for enhancement of self growth. Microsoft Teams Meeting online every Thursday from 11am-12pm. Call Rebecca at 916-366-5453 for more information.

Women's Health Spiritual Journey to Physical and Emotional Wellbeing-Meditation group with healthy breathing, gentle body movements and flute music. Video Conference call every Wednesday from 11:30am-12:45pm. Call Rebecca at 916-366-5453 to register.

Women's Health Healthy Teaching Kitchen— Classes are Wednesdays and Thursdays. Please see page 3 for more information on this class and how to get signed up.

Open to all Veteran's (men and women)

If interested in any of the groups below, ask your primary care team for a referral.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) for Insomnia— Learn about thoughts, feelings, and expectations about sleep. Develop sleep habits to improved quality of sleep. Webex video conferencing on Thursdays from 9am-10:30am.

Coping with Chronic Illness Group— Virtual VVC group for Veterans experiencing depressed mood related to a chronic medical condition (diabetes, cancer, HIV/AIDS, gastrointestinal disorders). Tuesdays from 9am -10:30am.

Cardio-Metabolic Disease Reversal Program— Lifestyle/behavior modification program for treatment of atherosclerotic cardiovascular diseases, type 2 diabetes, and/or history of a stroke. Tuesdays from 9am-11am.

COVID Support Group/Friendship VVC Group— Video conferencing group to help provide ongoing support for all Veterans during COVID.

Northern California VA

The VA Northern California Healthcare System provides you with outstanding health care, trains America's future health care providers, and conducts important medical research. We provide you with health care services at 14 locations in northern California. Facilities include our Sacramento VA Medical Center, our Martinez VA Medical Center, and 12 community-based outpatient clinics in Auburn, Chico, Martinez, McClellan Park, Redding, Fairfield, Vallejo, Yreka, and Yuba City.

Resources

Appointments 1-800-382-8387

Sacramento/Mather Main number 916-843-7000

Community Care 707-562-8430

Enrollment/Eligibility 916-843-7035

Mental Health 916-843-9460

Patient Advocate 916-843-7034

Pharmacy 866-600-8279

Suicide Help Line 800-273-8255, option 1

Women Veterans Call Center 855-829-6636

Register today for My HealtheVet @ www.myhealth.va.gov

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration
Patient Care Services
Women's Health Services