



# TOXIC EXPOSURE SCREENING INFORMATION

*VA is committed to providing screening, health care, and resources to Veterans with toxic exposure concerns from military service.*

## TOXIC EXPOSURES

While toxic exposure is defined by law, generally there are several types of possible exposures or hazards Veterans may have experienced during their military service. Some common examples appear below.

- » **Open Burn Pits/Airborne Hazards:** Contaminants or substances in the air including smoke and fumes from open burn pits and fine particulate matter.
- » **Gulf War related exposures:** Veterans may have been exposed to a variety of environmental hazards including pesticides and oil well fires.
- » **Agent Orange:** An herbicide used to thin-out thick foliage commonly found in jungles and fields.
- » **Radiation:** Exposure from sources such as nuclear weapons.
- » **Camp Lejeune contaminated water exposure:** Between August 1, 1953, and December 31, 1987, Veterans and their families may have been exposed to contaminated drinking water.
- » **Other exposures:** There are other potential toxic exposures that may occur during military service.

## MANAGE YOUR HEALTH

Proactively developing a long-term health care plan with your care team can help detect conditions early and treat or lessen the effect of complications resulting from exposure(s).

## TALK WITH A VA PROVIDER:

- » Call **1-800-MyVA411** then **press 8**, or a local VA clinical care team
- » **Send a secure message** to your clinical care team through your patient portal:  
My HealtheVet at: [www.myhealth.va.gov](http://www.myhealth.va.gov) or My VA Health at: [patientportal.myhealth.va.gov](http://patientportal.myhealth.va.gov)
- » Discuss exposure concerns at your next VA appointment

## ENROLL IN VA CARE:

- » Online [www.va.gov/health-care/apply/application/introduction](http://www.va.gov/health-care/apply/application/introduction)
- » Call 877-222-VETS (8387)
- » Visit your nearest VA medical center and enroll in person: [www.va.gov/find-locations](http://www.va.gov/find-locations)



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## REGISTRY HEALTH EXAMS

Registry health exams are no-cost voluntary environmental exposure medical exams. VA has several health registries - these include: Agent Orange, Airborne Hazard and Open Burn Pit, Gulf War (includes Operations Iraqi Freedom and New Dawn), Ionizing Radiation, Depleted Uranium Follow-Up Program, Embedded Fragment Surveillance Center.

- » You may be eligible to participate in one or more of these health registries. *Note: The registry evaluation is not a compensation exam or required for other VA benefits.*
- » Registries can alert you to possible health problems related to your military service and help VA better understand and respond to these health problems more effectively.

## SCHEDULE A REGISTRY EXAM WITH YOUR LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH COORDINATOR

- » Online [www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/coordinators.asp](http://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/coordinators.asp)
- » Call 1-800-MyVA411, then press 8
- » Visit your local VA Medical Center

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## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- » Visit [www.va.gov/PACT](http://www.va.gov/PACT) or call 1-800-MyVA411, then press 8
- » Information on military environmental exposures: [www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/index.asp](http://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/index.asp)
- » Exposure benefits information: [www.va.gov/disability/eligibility](http://www.va.gov/disability/eligibility)
- » Download the free VA Exposure Ed mobile app: [mobile.va.gov/app/exposure-ed](http://mobile.va.gov/app/exposure-ed)

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## VA PRESUMPTIVE CONDITIONS

Veterans may be eligible for disability benefits and/or compensation if they have a health condition that results in disability and was connected to their military service. For many health conditions, you need to prove that your service caused your condition. For some conditions, we automatically assume (or “presume”) that your service caused your condition. We call these “presumptive conditions.” We consider a condition presumptive when it’s established by law or regulation. If you have a presumptive condition, you do not need to prove that your service caused the condition. You only need to meet the service requirements for the presumption.

## BENEFITS

- » Veterans with presumptive diseases may be eligible for benefits such as disability compensation
- » Surviving spouses, dependent children and/or parents of deceased Veterans may be eligible for benefits such as dependency and indemnity compensation and accrued benefits
- » Veterans who had claims that were previously denied can file supplemental claims
- » **To File a Claim for Benefits**
  - Submit online: [www.va.gov/disability/how-to-file-claim](http://www.va.gov/disability/how-to-file-claim)
  - Access VA benefits: [www.ebenefits.va.gov](http://www.ebenefits.va.gov)
  - Call VA Benefits hotline: 800-827-1000 for help filing a claim
  - Locate a local Veteran Service Officer [www.va.gov/ogc/apps/accreditation/index.asp](http://www.va.gov/ogc/apps/accreditation/index.asp)



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## How can Veterans apply for service compensation?

- **Call the VA benefits assistance center** schedule an appointment to meet with a benefits counselor:  
**1-800-827-1000**
  
- **Call the Togus Regional Benefits Office**  
**1-207-621-6938**
  - Appointments can be made at the Togus Regional office located at 1 VA Center, Augusta ME 04330
  
- **Applications can be done online or via paper**
  - To apply directly online using a MHV or ID.me account visit:  
<https://www.va.gov/disability/how-to-file-claim/>
  - Or **VA Form 21-526EZ** can be printed and mailed to:

Department of Veterans Affairs  
Claims Intake Center  
PO Box 4444  
Janesville, WI 5354

### Tips:

- Speak with someone at the VBA first before submitting your application, as the form can be confusing and wording you use is important
- Veteran Service Officers (VSOs) can also help with submitting claims and assisting with self-advocacy, see contact information below

Veterans Benefits Administration Togus Regional Office Building 248 Office Phone: 207-621-6938	Paralyzed Veterans of America Building 248, Room 112 Veterans Service Officer Phone: 207-621-7394
Bureau of Maine Veterans' Services Building 248 Room 110 Veteran Service Officer Phone: 207-287-9933	Veterans of Foreign Wars Building 248, Rm 117 Veterans Service Officer Phone: 207-623-5723
Disabled American Veterans Building 248, Room 114 Veteran Services Officer Phone: 207-623-5725	American Legion Building 205 Room 318 Veteran Services Officer Office Phone: 207-623-5726



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