

“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/oaal/pocketcard/

Post-Deployment
Health Services

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

Veterans Health Initiative
Independent Study Courses

www.publichealth.va.gov/vethealthinitiative/

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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General Questions

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

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

What type of work do you/did 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 see combat, enemy fire, or casualties?
- 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 ever become ill while you were in the service?
- 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 VBA at 1-800-827-1000

Sexual Harassment, Assault, and Trauma

Would it be ok to talk about sexual harassment or trauma that you might have experienced while serving in the military?

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.

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?

Ask all military service members and all Veterans

Exposure Concerns

Would it be ok 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	Radiation	Vehicular crash
Munitions or bullet wound	Shell fragment	Noise/Vibration
	Heat	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.

Blood Borne Viruses (Hepatitis & HIV)

- Have you ever injected or snorted drugs, such as heroin, cocaine, or methamphetamine?
- Have you ever been screened for Hepatitis C or HIV?
- Would you like to be screened for these?

Post Traumatic Stress/Symptoms

- **Would it be ok to talk about stress?**

In your life, have you ever had an experience so horrible, frightening, or upsetting that, in the past month you...

- Have had nightmares about it or thought about it when you did not want to?
- Tried hard not to think about it or went out of your way to avoid situations that reminded you of it?
- Were constantly on guard, watchful, or easily startled?
- Felt numb or detached from others, activities, or your surroundings?

Veterans Crisis Line 1-800-273-8255 (Press 1)

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, Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) & Operation New Dawn (OND)

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



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/