

Information and Resources for Combat Veterans

*Easing your transition
from one health care
system to another*



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The Road to Recovery

If you have served in a combat zone or received hazardous duty pay and believe you have sustained a disease or disability connected to your service—rest assured—many programs and resources are available to help you. This brochure offers a snapshot of the health services and resources offered by your military treatment facility (MTF), TRICARE network providers, and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Additional resources that may be available to assist you and your family through your recovery and beyond are also highlighted in this brochure.*

** Future health services are dependent upon line of duty and disability determination processes.*

An Important Note About TRICARE Program Changes

At the time of printing, the information in this brochure is current. It is important to remember that TRICARE policies and benefits are governed by public law. Changes to TRICARE programs are continually made as public law is amended. For the most recent information, contact your regional contractor or TRICARE Service Center.

TRICARE: Helping You Heal

If you are injured while serving on active duty (including National Guard and Reserve members who were serving on active duty at the time of disability or disease), it's important to know that we are here to meet your medically necessary health care needs.

Remember that you are covered for care received for an illness, injury, or disability sustained or aggravated in the line of duty. Your care requires authorization by an MTF or designated service point of contact (SPOC).

The SPOC is a person or uniformed services office responsible for coordinating civilian health care for National Guard and Reserve service members and active duty service members enrolled in TRICARE Prime Remote (TPR). SPOCs are members of the armed forces (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, and Coast Guard) stationed at the Military Medical Support Office (MMSO).

The SPOC reviews requests for specialty and inpatient care to determine how it might affect your fitness for duty. You may be directed to an MTF or a civilian facility for approved care.

Line-of-duty care covers your immediate medical, surgical, and follow-up treatment necessary for an injury, illness, or disability that occurred in the line of duty. Once separated or retired, National Guard and Reserve service members may obtain treatment for their line-of-duty injury through the Department of Defense (DoD) and/or VA health care system depending on eligibility.

Specialized DoD/VA Services

The DoD and VA offer many specialized services focusing on specific injuries and health care needs. Here is an overview of some of the specialized services that may be approved for you.

Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center (DVBIC)

Serves active duty military and veterans with traumatic brain injury. To learn more, visit www.dvbic.org, call 1-800-870-9244, or send an e-mail to info@dvbic.org.

Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) and Spinal Cord Disorder (SCD) Centers

Promotes health, independence, quality of life, and productivity of individuals with SCI or SCD. These centers provide specialized rehabilitative services to individuals with the onset of SCI and SCD. Visit www.va.gov for more information.

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Centers

Offers TBI rehabilitation to ensure service members with brain injuries receive coordinated, comprehensive care. Specialized TBI services are available at four TBI Centers (Minneapolis, MN; Palo Alto, CA; Richmond, VA; and Tampa, FL). Contact your local VA medical center for more information about TBI services available.

Blind Rehabilitation Program Office

Includes adjustment to blindness counseling, patient and family education, benefit analysis, comprehensive residential inpatient training, outpatient rehabilitation services, the provision of assistive technology, and research. Physician referrals can be directed to the Blind Rehabilitation Program Office at 1-202-273-8482 or visit www.va.gov for more information.

Transitioning from TRICARE to VA

When you leave active duty, you may be entitled to or eligible for benefits offered by TRICARE and VA, depending on whether you retire or separate. If you are retiring, you are eligible for TRICARE as a military retiree and may also be eligible for certain VA benefits. Service members who separate (not retire) due to a disease or disability connected to their military service may be eligible for VA benefits and certain TRICARE benefits.

Note: National Guard and Reserve members activated by federal orders and serving on active duty may obtain veteran status for VA purposes. The United States Code defines veterans as those who served in the active military, and who were discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable.

Separating from Active Duty

Transitional Health Coverage

If you are separated from active duty under honorable conditions, you and your family members may be eligible for transitional health care benefits through the Transitional Assistance Management Program (TAMP). This provides 180 days of additional TRICARE coverage.

Active duty sponsors and family members enrolled in TRICARE Prime who desire to continue their enrollment upon the sponsor's separation from active duty status are required to reenroll. If you do not reenroll in TRICARE Prime, you are eligible for coverage under TRICARE Standard and TRICARE Extra. Additional information about TAMP is available at www.tricare.mil.

Note: National Guard and Reserve members separating from active duty for a period of more than 30 consecutive days in support of a contingency operation are also eligible.

When your TAMP coverage ends, you may purchase additional transitional health coverage for you and your family members within 60 days under the Continued Health Care Benefit Program (CHCBP). CHCBP is similar to health care coverage civilian employers offer to separated employees. Enrollment is required within 60 days of TAMP coverage ending. For more information about CHCBP, visit www.humana-military.com/chcbp/main.htm.

TRICARE Reserve Select

The TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS) health plan may be available to you and your family if you are a National Guard or Reserve member who served in support of a contingency operation on or after September 11, 2001. You will also need to agree to stay in the Selected Reserve for one or more whole years. TRS is a premium-based health plan that offers comprehensive coverage similar to TRICARE Standard and TRICARE Extra. For more information about TRS, visit www.tricare.mil/reserve/reserveselect/index.cfm.

Department of Veterans Affairs

VA provides a medical benefits package to enrolled veterans that emphasizes preventive and primary care, and offers a full range of outpatient and inpatient services within the VA health care system.

VA requires annual enrollment to place veterans into priority groups for receipt of health care. Ranging from 1 to 8, with Priority Group 1 being

the highest priority and Priority Group 8 the lowest. This allows VA to manage the provision of hospital and outpatient medical care and treatment. Currently, VA is limiting the number of new Priority 8 enrollments for veterans who apply for enrollment after January 16, 2003.

Eligibility for VA benefits is based on active military service in regular components of the military and discharge under other than dishonorable conditions. However, National Guard and Reserve members, called to active duty by federal Executive Order, may also qualify for VA benefits.

Service members, including National Guard and Reserve members who serve on active duty in a theater of combat operations after November 11, 1998, are eligible for free health services for a period of two years. These services begin on the date of separation from active duty service for conditions potentially related to their service in the theater of combat. These veterans are placed into Priority Group 6, unless they are eligible for a higher priority group. At the end of that two-year period, VA will reassess your eligibility status to determine your next priority group placement.

To apply for VA medical benefits you can visit any VA Medical Center and complete VA Form 10-10EZ, *Application for Health Benefits*. You may also visit www.va.gov/healtheligibility/ application and apply electronically or you may call VA's Health Benefits Service Center toll-free at 1-877-222-VETS (8387), Monday through Friday between 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m.

Eastern Time. Visit www.va.gov for more information about VA benefits.

Some family members may be eligible for Civilian Health and Medical Plan for the Department of Veterans Affairs (CHAMPVA) benefits through VA. For more information about CHAMPVA, visit www.va.gov/hac/forbeneficiaries/champva/champva.asp.

Retiring from Active Duty

When you retire from active duty, you may be eligible for certain VA health benefits in addition to your TRICARE retiree health care benefits. If eligible, you can receive care under either program. However, once you begin treatment under one of these programs, you must continue to seek care under that same program until the end of that particular episode of care. The rules and costs of whichever program you choose will apply.

Note: You may also be dual-eligible—eligible for both TRICARE and VA. This means your health care needs may be covered by TRICARE and/or VA. For most of your health care needs, TRICARE may be your main source of health care coverage. Many VA facilities have agreed to be TRICARE network providers. Your regional contractor or the TRICARE representative at your local VA facility can offer more information about using a VA TRICARE network provider. Copayments, cost-shares, and deductibles may apply.

See the following pages for a quick comparison of TRICARE and VA-covered benefits.

TRICARE-Covered Health Care Services

Some of the services listed below may require a referral and/or authorization from your primary care manager* (PCM), or your regional contractor. Copayments, cost-shares, and deductibles for your TRICARE health plan option will apply. For more detailed information about TRICARE-covered services, visit www.tricare.mil or contact your regional contractor.

Outpatient Services

- Ambulance services
- Ancillary services (laboratory, X-ray, etc.)
- Emergency outpatient care (in military or civilian facilities)
- Eye examinations*
- Home health care
- Medical or surgical outpatient care (individual provider services)
- Maternity/obstetric services
- Mental/behavioral health
- Pediatric services

Inpatient Services

- Emergency inpatient care (in military or civilian facilities)
- Hospitalization
- Mental/behavioral health
- Skilled nursing facility care
- Substance abuse
- Surgical care

* Available to retirees enrolled in TRICARE Prime.

VA-Covered Health Care Services

When seeking care at VA, your eligibility and copayment responsibility is based on factors such as character of discharge, service-connection, or income. For more information about VA-covered services, visit www.va.gov or contact your local VA medical center.

Ambulatory (Outpatient) Services

- Ancillary services (laboratory, X-ray, etc.)
- Bereavement counseling
- Chiropractic care
- Eye examinations
- Home health care**
- Maternity/obstetric services
- Medical or surgical outpatient care
- Mental/behavioral health
- Substance abuse
- Surgical (including reconstructive/plastic surgery as a result of disease or trauma)
- Transportation services**

Hospital (Inpatient) Services

- Emergency inpatient care**
- Hospitalization
- Nursing home**
- Medical care
- Centers of excellence (e.g., multiple sclerosis, spinal cord injury, blind rehabilitation, mental health)
- Polytrauma centers
- Surgical (including reconstructive/plastic surgery as a result of disease or trauma)
- Mental/behavioral health
- Substance abuse

** This care or service may have certain restrictions; see www.va.gov/healthbenefits for more information.

TRICARE-Covered Health Care Services

Preventive Care Services

- Health education and counseling
- Hearing screening
- Immunizations
- Physical examinations
- Screening tests (mammograms, Pap smears, cardiac screenings, prostate exams, colorectal exams, cholesterol, blood pressure, skin cancer, etc.)
- Vision screening*

Medications and Supplies

- Durable medical equipment
- Medical supplies
- Prescription medications (covered under TRICARE pharmacy programs; costs depend on the formulary status of the drug)
- Prosthetic devices

Dental Care

- Dental benefits are available for purchase through the TRICARE Retiree Dental Program (TRDP).
- TRDP is available to members of the uniformed services who are entitled to retired pay, including those age 65 and over, and to members of the National Guard and Reserve, regardless of their age, who have transferred to Retired Reserve status (as defined under Title 10 of the U.S. Code, Section 10141(b)).
- Visit www.trdp.org for more information.

* Available to retirees enrolled in TRICARE Prime.

VA-Covered Health Care Services

Preventive Care Services

- Health education and counseling
- Hearing Screening
- Immunizations
- Mental Health Screening
- Physical Examination
- Screening tests (mammograms, Pap smears, cardiac screenings, prostate exams, colorectal exams, cholesterol, blood pressure, skin cancer, etc.)
- Vision Screening

Medications and Supplies

- Durable medical equipment
- Medical and surgical supplies
- Over-the-counter medications
- Prescription medications (prescribed by a VA provider and generally only available under VA's national formulary system)
- Prosthetic devices
- Sensori-neural aids (i.e., eyeglasses, contact lenses, hearing aids)**

Dental Care

- Eligibility for VA dental benefits is based on specific guidelines and differs significantly from eligibility requirements for medical care. Visit www.va.gov for a list of eligibility criteria.

Note: Recently discharged veterans must apply to VA within 90 days of discharge for one-time correction of dental conditions, provided such dental care was not completed prior to discharge.

** This care or service may have certain restrictions; see www.va.gov/healthbenefits for more information.

Supporting a Smooth Transition

To help you obtain the services you need, VA has placed benefit counselors and VA Liaisons at key military hospitals where severely injured service members frequently go. VA benefit counselors and VA Liaisons can help you obtain VA services, coordinate health care, and facilitate discharge planning. VA staff at military hospitals will help you experience a smooth transition from military to VA care.

The following lists the MTFs with VA Liaisons on site:

- Brooke Army Medical Center, Ft. Sam Houston, San Antonio, TX
- Darnell Army Community Hospital, Ft. Hood, TX
- Eisenhower Army Medical Center, Ft. Gordon, Augusta, GA
- Evans Army Community Hospital, Ft. Carson, CO
- Madigan Army Medical Center, Ft. Lewis, Tacoma, WA
- National Naval Medical Center, Bethesda, MD
- Naval Hospital, Camp Pendleton, Oceanside, CA
- Naval Medical Center, San Diego, CA
- Womack Army Medical Center, Ft. Bragg, NC
- Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Washington, D.C.

For more information on transitioning from military to VA care, visit www.seamlesstransition.va.gov.

Additional Resources

Many resources are available for you and your family when you sustain a severe injury.

Military Severely Injured Center

You may receive personalized assistance from ombudsmen through the Military Severely Injured Center. Assistance is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, worldwide at no cost to severely injured service members and their families.

- In the United States, call toll-free: 1-888-774-1361.
- Outside of the United States, dial “0” for operator assistance and ask to be connected to 1-888-774-1361.
- E-mail: severelyinjured@militaryonesource.com.
- Visit: www.military.com/support.

The Military Severely Injured Center strives to prepare severely injured service members for their return to duty or successful reintegration into the civilian community. The center provides personalized assistance tailored to meet your unique needs during recovery and rehabilitation, including:

- Medical care and rehabilitation
- Education, training, and job placement
- Personal mobility and functioning
- Home, transportation, and workplace accommodations
- Personal, couple, and family issues counseling
- Financial resources

Fisher House Foundation

The Fisher House Foundation provides free or low-cost housing for military families of seriously ill or injured patients receiving treatment at MTFs. This enables family members to be close to a loved one at the most stressful time. For more information or to find a Fisher House location, visit www.fisherhouse.org.

Military HOMEFRONT

This is the official DoD Web site for reliable “quality of life” information designed to help troops, their families, commanders, and service providers. Whether you live the military lifestyle or support those who do, you’ll find what you need. Visit www.Military.HOMEFRONT.dod.mil for more information.

Military OneSource

Free help and information is available online or on the phone with a trained consultant. Assistance is available to ADSMs and their families, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Visit www.militaryonesource.com or call 1-800-342-9647 for assistance.

Air Force Palace HART

This is a program designed to support airmen who have been wounded in action until they return to active duty, or are medically retired. Follow-up assistance is provided for five to seven years post injury. The Air Force strives to retain injured service members on active duty, if at all possible. However, if an airman is unable to return to active duty, the Air Force will place the service member in a civilian position within the Air Force.

U.S. Army Wounded Warrior Program

Provides severely disabled soldiers and their families with a support network to assist them as they transition back to military service or into the civilian community. Learn more at www.aw2.army.mil or call 1-800-237-1336.

Marine For Life Injured Support Program

The Marine For Life Program supports injured Marines and their families and provides transition assistance to Marines who honorably leave active duty service and return to civilian life. Learn more at www.m4l.usmc.mil.

Wounded Soldier and Family Hotline

This hotline offers wounded, injured, or ill soldiers and their family members a way to share concerns on the quality of patient care. It also provides senior Army leaders with visibility on medically-related issues so they can properly allocate resources to better serve soldiers and families. The hotline is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, at 1-800-984-8523.

Navy Safe Harbor Program

Personalized support and assistance is available to severely injured sailors and their families. Learn more at www.npc.navy.mil/CommandSupport/SafeHarbor, by calling 1-877-746-8563, or sending an e-mail to safeharbor@navy.mil for assistance.

Military Medical Support Office (MMSO)

MMSO officers coordinate civilian health care services for National Guard and Reserve service members and active duty service members enrolled in TPR. Visit <http://mmso.med.navy.mil> or call 1-888-674-6676 for assistance.

Department of Veterans Affairs Resources

Readjustment Counseling	Assists veterans who served on active duty in a war or conflict in readjusting to civilian life. Counseling is provided at Vet Centers. To find a Vet Center near you, visit www.va.gov/rcs or call 1-800-827-1000.
Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program	Assists qualified service-disabled veterans to prepare for, obtain, and maintain suitable employment. For veterans who are severely disabled and gainful employment is not an option, independent living assistance may be provided. Visit www.vba.va.gov/bln/vre for more information.
National Center for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)	Aims to advance the clinical care and social welfare of qualified Veterans through research, education, and training on PTSD and stress-related disorders. This site is an educational resource on PTSD and traumatic stress for veterans, but it is also for behavioral health care providers, researchers, and the general public. For more information, visit www.ncptsd.va.gov/nemain/index.jsp .
War-Related Illness and Injury Study Center (WRIISC-DC)	Provides a second opinion for veterans referred with difficult-to-diagnose war-related illnesses and injuries. WRIISC-DC provides an in-depth examination and evaluation of the medical problems of combat veterans with debilitating symptoms that remain unexplained after medical examinations by a VA medical center. Combat veterans with medically unexplained illnesses may request a referral from their VA physician to the center. The evaluation is multidisciplinary and focuses on the particular problems of each veteran. Diagnoses are made when possible, and, in all cases, recommendations for management of the veteran's medical problems are given to the referring medical center. For more information, visit www.va.gov/WRIISC-DC .

Advocate Assistance

The following organizations provide free professional services to veterans, service members, and their families in navigating through the VA system.

- Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) www.vfw.org, 1-800-VFW-1899
- American Veterans (AMVETS) www.amvets.org, 1-301-459-9600
- Disabled American Veterans (DAV) www.dav.org, 1-202-554-3501
- Paralyzed Veterans of America www.pva.org, 1-800-424-8200
- The American Legion www.legion.org, 1-202-861-2700
- The Military Order of the Purple Heart www.purpleheart.org, 1-888-668-1656

Other Useful Resources

- Veterans service organizations (VSO), www.va.gov/vso
- National Military Family Association (NMFA), www.nmfa.org, 1-800-260-0218
- The Military Coalition (TMC), www.themilitarycoalition.org, 1-800-234-6622
- Tragedy Assistance Programs (TAPS), www.taps.org, 1-800-959-TAPS (8277)
- Veterans and Families, www.veteransandfamilies.org, 1-916-422-5005
- Blinded Veterans Association (BVA), www.bva.org, 1-202-371-8880
- National Amputation Foundation, Inc. (NAF), www.nationalamputation.org, 1-516-887-3600
- Computer/Electronic Accommodation Program (CAP), www.tricare.mil/cap, 1-703-681-8813

For Information and Assistance

TRICARE North Regional Contractor

Health Net Federal Services, LLC
1-877-TRICARE (1-877-874-2273)
www.healthnetfederalservices.com

TRICARE South Regional Contractor

Humana Military Healthcare Services, Inc.
1-800-444-5445
www.humana-military.com

TRICARE West Regional Contractor

TriWest Healthcare Alliance Corp.
1-888-TRIWEST (1-888-874-9378)
www.triwest.com

TRICARE Overseas

TRICARE Europe, TRICARE Latin America and Canada, and TRICARE Pacific
1-888-777-8343

DEERS—Verify and Update Information

1-800-538-9552
www.tricare.mil/DEERS

TRICARE Mail Order Pharmacy

1-866-DoD-TMOP (1-866-363-8667)

TRICARE Retail Pharmacy Program

1-866-DoD-TRRX (1-866-363-8779)

TRICARE Dental Program

1-800-866-8499
www.TRICAREdentalprogram.com

TRICARE Retiree Dental Program

1-888-838-8737
www.trdp.org

Military Medical Support Office (MMSO)

1-888-MHS-MMSO (1-866-674-6676)
<http://mmso.med.navy.mil>

Reserve Affairs

www.defenselink.mil/ra