Help With Filing A U.S. Department Of Veterans Affairs (VA) Claim

Veterans with prostate cancer may be eligible for U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) benefits, including healthcare and disability compensation. For information from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, download the 2013 Federal Benefits for Veterans, Dependents and Survivors Guide at www1.va.gov/opa/publications/benefits_book.asp or call (800) 827 - 1000.

The VA can direct veterans to national and state service officers accredited by the VA for help in filing for benefits. Visit the local regional office for personal assistance in filing out claim forms, or get help online through the Veterans Online Applications program at www.va.gov.

My Prostate Cancer Roadmap* and Partner Organization

Visit My Prostate Cancer Roadmap at www.myprostatecancerroadmap.com and our partner’s website at www.mantoo.org for more information about prostate cancer and where you can get support.

Prostate cancer is an important medical priority for America’s veterans. In a study of Veterans Affairs patients, prostate cancer was the most common cancer diagnosed, comprising a third of all cancer cases.1 Most cases of prostate cancer—about 60% of them—are diagnosed in men over the age of 65.2 Approximately two-thirds of male U.S. veterans are in this age group or are approaching it.3

What Is Prostate Cancer?

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men in the U.S. (excluding skin cancer), with an estimated 233,000 men diagnosed in 2014. Approximately one in seven men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer during his lifetime. It’s the second leading cause of cancer death for men in the U.S.2

Advocacy Connector

A resource to help connect patients with relevant advocacy group resources, both on their own and with the help of their healthcare providers.

Where is the Prostate Located?
The prostate is located in the pelvis, below the bladder and in front of the rectum. It surrounds part of the urethra. The urethra is the tube that carries urine to the outside of the body.

Risk Factors
- Men older than 65
- Family history
- African American men and Caribbean men of African descent have the highest documented prostate cancer incidence rates.
- Inherited conditions associated with increased risk include Lynch syndrome and the BRCA2 mutation phenotype.
- Exposure to Agent Orange, especially Vietnam veterans

Diagnosis
For many men, prostate cancer has no symptoms until the disease reaches an advanced stage. If you have any of the following symptoms, you should tell your doctor so that problems can be diagnosed and treated. Most often, these symptoms are not due to cancer. Benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH), an infection, or another health problem may cause them.

- Trouble passing urine or a frequent urge to urinate, especially at night
- Weak or interrupted urine stream
- Pain, burning or blood when urinating
- Painful ejaculation or blood in the semen
- Nagging pain in the back, hips or pelvis

Early detection tests may help detect prostate cancer before symptoms are present, while follow-up testing may be performed to pursue a diagnosis.

Treatment Decisions
Options are an individualized discussion between men, their family members and loved ones, and their physician or healthcare team. Factors to consider may include a man’s life expectancy, age, additional health risks, his preference regarding treatment and the potential side effects of treatments.

Options specifically for men with advanced disease may include radiation therapy, hormone therapy (androgen deprivation therapy or ADT), secondary hormone therapy, immunotherapy, chemotherapy and radiopharmaceutical therapy.

This process may involve seeing multiple physicians or healthcare professionals and could involve obtaining a second opinion, if necessary.

Men may also seek other resources, such as information from support groups or others who understand the disease.

VIETNAM VETERANS AND EXPOSURE TO AGENT ORANGE
According to the Veterans Health Service, veterans who served in Vietnam between January 9, 1962 and May 7, 1975 may have been exposed to Agent Orange. Some studies suggest there is an association between development of certain disabling medical conditions, including prostate cancer, and exposure to Agent Orange.

Vietnam veterans who were exposed to Agent Orange may be twice as likely to develop prostate cancer as Vietnam veterans who were not exposed.

They may also develop the disease at a younger age and may develop more aggressive disease than Vietnam veterans that were not exposed.

To learn more about Agent Orange-related health issues and veterans, there is a downloadable resource available from Vietnam Veterans of America at www.vva.org/Committees/AgentOrange/AO_Brochure.pdf or call (800) 882 - 1316.

Veterans who were exposed to Agent Orange or other herbicides during military service may be eligible for a variety of VA benefits, including an Agent Orange Registry health exam, health care, and disability compensation for diseases associated with exposure. Visit the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs’ Agent Orange website at www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/agentorange/index.asp or call (800) 827 - 1000.

To download a detailed self-help guide from Vietnam Veterans of America on Service-Connected Disability Compensation for Exposure to Agent Orange, visit www.vva.org/Guides/AgentOrangeGuide.pdf or call (800) 882 - 1316.