Thank You Veterans!

www.visn8.va.gov
A well-rounded you

Adopting a more well-rounded view of your health can help you to reach your goals. Working on one area, such as physical health, can also help improve other areas, like mental health. This is called “whole health.” Your VA health care team will help you develop a personalized health plan based on your values, needs, and goals.

Whole health for you may mean working on areas, such as:

- **Your diet:** A healthy diet makes for a healthy body, and can have a positive impact on your mental and social health.

- **Your physical activity:** Staying in shape helps keep you strong and healthy, and elevates your mood.

- **Your sleep:** Getting adequate, quality sleep equips you to meet every health challenge.

- **Your relationships:** How you relate to others impacts your physical, mental, and emotional health.

Go to www.va.gov/patientcenteredcare/explore/about-whole-health.asp to fill out the MyStory: Personal Health Inventory.

---

Exercise mind, body, soul

There are a variety of physical activities you can do to help improve many areas of health, all at once:

- **Yoga:** Slow movements to control breathing for better flexibility and relaxation

- **Walking meditation:** “Mindful walking” where you are more aware of your environment and surroundings while moving

- **Tai chi:** Graceful movements done in a fluid manner to build strength, increase flexibility, and reduce stress

- **Pilates:** Similar to yoga, but is more focused on building strength and endurance

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**My Healthy Living Goals**

- I will try one new exercise this week that benefits my whole body, such as yoga.

- I will talk to my health care team this week about tips to help the health of my mind, body, and soul.

**My Goal:**

I WILL make one goal I can DO! I will talk to my health care team about it, set a date, and meet it.

(You can download a QR reader from your device’s app store.)
RECORD minutes exercised, blood pressure & blood sugar and/or log these on My HealtheVet at www.myhealth.va.gov

Health Tip: Doing activities with others can help you have good physical and mental health.
Enjoy the benefits of chocolate

Chocolate is a favorite choice to satisfy our craving for something sweet. Why not choose the kind of chocolate that can also give you some health benefits?

Compared to milk chocolate, dark chocolate is a healthier choice because it contains less sugar and much more cocoa (70% or higher). The more cocoa the chocolate has, the more “antioxidants” it has. These are beneficial ingredients that may help protect our body from illnesses, such as heart disease. So, the next time you crave some chocolate, look on the label for at least 70% cocoa.

To satisfy your sweet tooth with dark chocolate:

- Enjoy a small piece (e.g., one to two ounces) occasionally.
- Sprinkle a few dark chocolate chips on top of some low-fat Greek yogurt and fresh fruit.
- Make a dip by melting dark chocolate and use with strawberries or sliced bananas.
- Make a cup of homemade hot cocoa. Use unsweetened cocoa powder, low-fat milk, sugar, and a drop of vanilla extract for extra flavor.

Other healthy sweets

- Grab a small handful (about 1/4 cup) of dried fruit, a naturally sweet and good-for-you choice.
- Have some berries, on their own, or make a parfait by layering Greek yogurt with berries and granola.
- Enjoy your favorite “sweet” occasionally but choose a single serving (e.g., one scoop of ice cream or one chocolate chip cookie).
- Freeze grapes for a refreshing, sweet snack.
- Grab a small handful (about 1/4 cup) of dried fruit, a naturally sweet and good-for-you choice.
- Have some berries, on their own, or make a parfait by layering Greek yogurt with berries and granola.
- Enjoy your favorite “sweet” occasionally but choose a single serving (e.g., one scoop of ice cream or one chocolate chip cookie).
- Freeze grapes for a refreshing, sweet snack.

My Healthy Living Goals

- This week, I will buy some single-serving raisins to keep in my car or at my desk.
- During my next shopping trip, I will buy some dark chocolate that contains at least 70% cocoa.

I WILL make one goal I can DO! I will talk to my health care team about it, set a date, and meet it.

My Goal:
Health Tip: To keep from eating too much, don’t buy high-calorie sweets or candy in bulk.
Explore alternatives for pain relief

If you have chronic pain, there are many different treatment options for managing your condition. Doctors often use pain medications, like opioids, but they can have serious side effects. So, it’s important to explore with your health care team other options to help manage your chronic pain.

- Some side effects from opioids may include sleepiness, mental confusion, depression, and sleep apnea (breathing stops during sleep). If you take them long enough, you could develop a dependency and need higher doses to get the same pain relief.
- Some non-opioid medications, like inflammation-reducing drugs, are safer to use.
- Other pain-relief therapies include: pain management support groups, chiropractic care, exercise, sleep management, massage, yoga, tai chi, and meditation.
- Another treatment option is battlefield acupuncture which uses smaller needles than traditional acupuncture. It is now being offered at many VA facilities.

Find what works for you. Talk to your health care team about what programs and resources are available at your VA facility. Learn more at www.va.gov/painmanagement/resources.asp.

Exercise to manage pain

Exercising is one way to safely manage chronic pain. Aim to exercise for at least 30 minutes a day, five days a week.

- Endorphins are chemicals that your body produces when you work out. Endorphins give you a natural high, which can help reduce pain.
- Exercise increases blood flow to the body, which can help heal injuries faster.
- Exercise helps keep your mind and body busy, which is an effective way to manage chronic pain.

My Healthy Living Goals

- I will make an appointment this week with my health care team about treating my chronic pain.
- I will pick an exercise activity I like and do it for 30 minutes, three days this week.

I WILL make one goal I can DO! I will talk to my health care team about it, set a date, and meet it.

My Goal:

Learn more:
Scan the QR code with your smart phone or tablet to watch a short video on how to use the naloxone drug to reverse an opioid overdose.

(You can download a QR reader from your device’s app store.)
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**Health Tip:** Talk to friends and family about how they manage their pain.

**Daylight Saving Time Begins**
(Turn clocks ahead one hour.)
Be active in your care

When you take an active role in your health care, it’s easier to become a partner with your health care team. Here are some ways to stay involved:

• **Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT)** – Collaborate with your PACT to plan and coordinate your care and appointments. Your PACT is made up of a provider, nurses, clerk, and other clinicians, as needed.

• **MyHealtheVet** – Sign up at [www.myhealth.va.gov](http://www.myhealth.va.gov) for secure, online tools to communicate with your PACT, track your health information, refill prescriptions, and more.

• **Vets.gov** – This easy to use website has tools and resources to learn about and manage your VA health care and other benefits.

**Did you know?**

With the new Veteran Appointment Request App, you can also cancel Primary Care and Mental Health appointments, if needed, so another Veteran can be served. To get this smartphone app, visit the VA App Store: [mobile.VA.gov](http://mobile.VA.gov).

**Nutrition services and resources**

• **Nutrition consult** – Work with your PACT to schedule time with a VA dietitian who can help manage many kinds of health and medical conditions, such as diabetes.

• **Healthy Teaching Kitchen (HTK)** – Sign up for a class to learn about healthy cooking and food choices.

• **Nutrition online resources** – Find helpful nutrition tips at [www.nutrition.va.gov](http://www.nutrition.va.gov).

• **MOVE!** – Learn how this weight management program can improve your health at [www.move.va.gov](http://www.move.va.gov).

• **Virtual HTKs** – View many HTK cooking sessions online. Go to [www.youtube.com/user/VeteransHealthAdmin](http://www.youtube.com/user/VeteransHealthAdmin) and search for “Healthy Teaching Kitchens.”

**My Healthy Living Goals**

• Within the next two weeks, I will learn a new feature of My HealtheVet that works for me.

• By the end of this week, I will contact my local VA medical center to see if they offer HTK classes.

I WILL make one goal I can DO! I will talk to my health care team about it, set a date, and meet it.

**My Goal:**

(You can download a QR reader from your device’s app store.)
**RECORD** minutes exercised, blood pressure & blood sugar and/or log these on My HealtheVet at [www.myhealth.va.gov](http://www.myhealth.va.gov)

**Health Tip:** Track your blood pressure, weight, food intake, and blood sugars at My HealtheVet.

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**April 2018**

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My Healthy Living Goals

My Goal:

Learn more:
Scan the QR code with your smart phone or tablet to watch a short video to identify your “health age” and make recommendations to improve your health.

Did you know?
When you write down what you hear, you may listen more carefully to what your health care provider is saying. During your appointment, take notes about the main points, especially the answers to the Ask Me 3™ questions. Then, review your notes with your health care provider.

Walk, talk and enjoy

Exercise and socializing go together. You get aerobic benefits from exercise while talking with others. You also: increase self-esteem, improve memory, and sharpen thinking.

At your next get-together, suggest a family walk or other activity. Catch up with friends and family, and get some exercise, all at the same time!

Try Ask Me 3™

Sometimes, it’s difficult to remember what you want to ask during a visit with your health care provider. It can help to focus on three things you should know before you leave their office. To get the information you need, ASK:

1. What is my main problem?
Ask your health care team to talk about your diagnosis in simple terms. If something is not clear to you, ask for clarification.

2. What do I need to do?
Ask them to write down specific actions you should take every day to take care of yourself.

3. Why is it important for me to do this?
Ask your health care team to explain how the treatment plan will help you feel better and live healthier.

Did you know?
When you write down what you hear, you may listen more carefully to what your health care provider is saying. During your appointment, take notes about the main points, especially the answers to the Ask Me 3™ questions. Then, review your notes with your health care provider.

My Healthy Living Goals

- I will start using the Ask Me 3™ questions at my next visit.
- I will invite my family to take a short walk while we socialize at our next gathering.

I WILL make one goal I can DO! I will talk to my health care team about it, set a date, and meet it.

My Goal:

(You can download a QR reader from your device’s app store.)
RECORD minutes exercised, blood pressure & blood sugar and/or log these on My HealtheVet at www.myhealth.va.gov

Health Tip: Know the names of your medicines and why you take them.

May 2018

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Memorial Day
Outpatient Clinics Closed
Stay healthy when traveling

While traveling, your home VA can arrange for care at another VA facility closest to your location. This helps ensure you receive the care you need when traveling. The key is to plan early with your health care team.

- Four to six weeks before your trip, contact your PACT or Specialty Care Provider.
- Provide arrival and departure dates, temporary address, and contact phone number.
- Identify any medical concerns you may have during your time away from home.

- VA Traveling Veteran Coordinator will coordinate your medical care with a VA facility or clinic closest to where you are staying. Examples include: follow-up appointments, blood tests, and injections.
- Medication refills can also be coordinated and mailed to your temporary address.

Learn more about Traveling Veterans Coordinator Program at www.va.gov/healthbenefits/access/seamless_care.asp.

Nutrition tips for road trips

- Pack healthy and travel-friendly snacks, such as whole-grain crackers, low-fat cheese sticks, fruit, water, and 100% fruit or vegetable juice.
- Take a cooler with frozen gel packs or ice packs to keep cold foods cold.
- Make healthier choices when you stop to eat. Choose salads, grilled chicken or vegetarian dishes, and water or unsweetened tea. Avoid “up-sized” portions.
- For more tips, visit www.choosemyplate.gov/ten-tips-eating-foods-away-home.

My Healthy Living Goals

- One month before my trip, I will contact my PACT to coordinate my medical care while I’m away.
- One week before my road trip, I will buy at least four healthy snacks I can bring with me.

I WILL make one goal that I can DO! I will talk to my health care team about it, set a start date, and meet it.

My Goal:

Learn more:
Scan the QR code with your smart phone or tablet for road safety tips.

(You can download a QR reader from your device’s app store.)
Size matters

It’s great to enjoy some fries and soda every once and a while. But, say NO to “up-sizing.” Remember, all those extra calories add up over time. Burning them off isn’t nearly as easy as it is to put them on!

Cut the calories, not the fun

Next time you eat out, try these tips for healthier choices:

- Eat half your meal and take the rest home for the next day.
- Share a meal with a friend.
- Choose a single-patty burger over a double-patty.
- Choose unsweetened iced tea or water over soda.
- Order your food from the children’s menu.
- Swap unhealthy ingredients for healthier ones (replace mayo with mustard or mashed avocado, or request whole-grain bread when choosing sandwiches or burgers).
- Select your meal from the menu and avoid the “all-you-can-eat” buffet.
- Ask your server to skip the bread basket for your table.
- Include a green salad with your meal to help feel full sooner and avoid over-eating.
- Many menus now include nutrition information so you can compare choices.

What goes in, must come off

If you eat a fast food meal of a double cheeseburger, large fries, and a large soda, it contains 1,330 calories. To burn off these calories, you will need to do one of the following:

- Bike: 2 hours*
- Run: 2-1/2 hours*
- Dance: 4 hours*
- Strength training: 6 hours*

*Based on an average man who weighs 170 pounds.

My Healthy Living Goals

- I will replace my usual order with a small hamburger when I eat at a fast food restaurant.
- I will order water or other unsweetened beverage instead of soda when I eat out.

I WILL make one goal I can DO! I will talk to my health care team about it, set a date, and meet it.

My Goal:

(You can download a QR reader from your device’s app store.)
Live well with VA resources

As a Veteran, you have a range of online resources and tutorials to help you learn how to live well. Whether you’re looking for health care, help finding a job, or ways to stay connected with fellow Veterans, there’s information available to get started.

- **VA YouTube** – find helpful videos on a range of health and wellness topics ([www.youtube.com/user/VeteransHealthAdmin](http://www.youtube.com/user/VeteransHealthAdmin))

- **Veterans Health Library** – a one-stop resource for health information to help you stay healthy and well-informed ([www.veteranshealthlibrary.org](http://www.veteranshealthlibrary.org))

- **VA App Store** – Be an active participant in your health care and securely access your patient data using your smartphone ([mobile. VA.gov](http://mobile.veteranshealthlibrary.org)). Here are a few mobile apps to check out:

  - **PTSD Coach**
  - **Moving Forward**
  - **VA Video Connect**
  - **Parenting2Go**

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Stay safe next time you eat fish

- Considered “brain food,” fish are great sources of Omega-3 fatty acids and lean protein.

- Environmental hazards, like mercury, can accumulate in fish – creating health dangers for people, especially infants and young children.

- Some “safer” fish with lower mercury and other toxin levels include southern flounder, tilapia, canned salmon, and light tuna.

- Some fish to avoid include largemouth bass, snapper, cod, mahi-mahi, canned albacore tuna, and swordfish.

  Search “mercury levels in fish” at [www.consumerreports.org](http://www.consumerreports.org). Check mercury levels of your favorite fish using their “mercury calculator.”

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My Healthy Living Goals

- I will explore [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov) this week.

- I will avoid eating fish with high mercury levels, and choose a different fish.

I WILL make one goal I can DO! I will talk to my health care team about it, set a date, and meet it.

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My Goal:

(You can download a QR reader from your device’s app store.)
**RECORD** minutes exercised, blood pressure & blood sugar and/or log these on My HealtheVet at [www.myhealth.va.gov](http://www.myhealth.va.gov)

**Health Tip:** Find out what VA benefits you are eligible for at [www.ebenefits.va.gov](http://www.ebenefits.va.gov).

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**Weight Tracking**

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- Day 30

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- Day 28
- Day 31
Plan your future care

VA wants you to have the best possible care at every stage of your life and your health. The Life Sustaining Treatment Decisions Initiative (LSTDI) is a new VA health care program. It provides you a way to be an active participant in deciding your future medical care if you should become seriously ill.

- LSTDI starts with you having a Goals of Care conversation (GoCC) with your health care team. This is the foundation for treatment decision-making. It identifies your values, goals, and treatment preferences if a serious illness occurs.
- Treatment plans that include a variety of medical procedures are developed and placed in your medical record for future reference.
- Treatment plans may be modified over time, if needed.
- LSTDI provides more specific guidelines for treatment than guidelines that are found in an advance directive or a living will.
- For more information, contact your health care team.

Physical activities for older adults

Older adults (65 years and older) should aim for at least 150 minutes of aerobic activities a week to work your heart and lungs. This is less than 20 minutes per day. Plus, you should do muscle-strengthening activities twice a week, for 15 minutes each time.

- Aerobic activities include: walking, swimming, water aerobics, cycling, dancing, and gardening.
- Muscle-strengthening activities include: exercises using hand weights or hand bands, tai chi, yoga, and carrying groceries.

My Healthy Living Goals

- I will discuss my advance directives and living will with my family this month.
- I will create an exercise plan that works for me within the next week. I will try it for two weeks.

I WILL make one goal that I can DO! I will talk to my health care team about it, set a start date, and meet it.

Scan the QR code with your smart phone or tablet to learn about advance directives.

(You can download a QR reader from your device’s app store.)
RECORD minutes exercised, blood pressure & blood sugar and/or log these on My HealtheVet at www.myhealth.va.gov

Health Tip: You may accomplish more if you set small goals you can achieve in a short amount of time.

September 2018

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2 Labor Day
Outpatient Clinics Closed

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Get your flu shot

All Veterans are encouraged to get their annual influenza (flu) vaccine, or “flu shot.” It is available at your local VA facility or other non-VA clinics or community sites that offer free or low-cost shots.

- The flu is a respiratory illness caused by a virus. It can spread very easily when an infected person sneezes, coughs, talks, or laughs through air droplets that can travel up to six feet away.
- The flu vaccine is your best option. It protects you from catching the flu and it helps others from catching it from you.
- This vaccine takes two weeks to work fully. This is why people may think it gave them the flu.
- Fall is a good time to get your flu shot. The flu season starts in the fall and goes well into spring.
- The flu shot is normally recommended for everyone who is six months and older. If in doubt, check with your health care provider.

More Flu Protection

- Wash your hands frequently.
- If you are caring for someone who may have the flu, remember to clean surfaces that are often touched, such as light switches, TV remotes, and door handles.

Immunity-boosting foods

These nutrients help boost your body’s defenses and protect you from infection.

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<th>Protein: Lean meat, poultry, seafood, beans, and lentils</th>
<th>Vitamin A: Sweet potatoes, carrots, spinach, red bell peppers, and apricots</th>
<th>Vitamin C: Citrus fruits, strawberries, green bell peppers, and tomatoes</th>
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| Vitamin E: Fortified cereals, sunflower seeds, almonds, peanut butter, and vegetable oils | Zinc: Lean meat, poultry, seafood, beans, whole grain products, seeds, and nuts | Probiotics: Fermented foods, such as yogurt, kefir, kimchi, and sauerkraut |

My Healthy Living Goals

- I will get my flu shot by the end of this month to protect myself and others.
- I will eat at least five servings of citrus fruit each week to help boost my immunity.

I WILL make one goal that I can DO! I will talk to my health care team about it, set a start date, and meet it.

My Goal:

(You can download a QR reader from your device’s app store.)
Record minutes exercised, blood pressure & blood sugar and/or log these on MyHealtheVet at www.myhealth.va.gov.

Health Tip: Pick up your 2019 VISN 8 Healthy Living Calendar when you get your flu shot at your VA facility!

Columbus Day
Outpatient Clinics Closed

October 2018
What is vaping?

Some tobacco users have started using vaporizers, also called e-cigarettes, to quit smoking. Called vaping, these electronic pipes may seem like a better choice, but they could be as dangerous as cigarettes. Plus, it has not been shown that they help you quit using tobacco.

- **Vaporizers contain many dangerous chemicals and toxins, including nicotine and heavy metals like lead and cadmium.**
- **Young people are more likely to go on to smoke cigarettes or chew tobacco if they now vape.**
- **Smokers who use e-cigarettes are less likely to successfully quit smoking than smokers who do not use e-cigarettes.**

To quit tobacco for good, use tried-and-true methods, such as nicotine replacement products and behavior-change programs. Try these VA resources:

- **TeleQuit** – talk to your health care team about this effective tobacco-cessation program
- **Stay Quit Coach** – use this app from mobile.va.gov to help you quit
- **Quit Tobacco** – visit this website for more help and resources to quit (www.smokefree.gov/veterans)

Fun ways to avoid tobacco

Find activities to do in place of smoke breaks and other times when you would use tobacco or would be vaping. Here are some options:

- **Find a new hobby or sport that can keep you busy.**
- **Try games that exercise the mind, like crossword puzzles or brain-building smartphone apps.**
- **Make a reading list for the year and read through it.**
- **Start a new daily routine so you do other activities during the times you would normally use tobacco or e-cigarettes.**

My Healthy Living Goals

- This week, I will look for the best option for me to quit smoking, chewing, or vaping.
- This week, I will ask those who smoke, not to smoke around me.

I WILL make one goal I can DO! I will talk to my health care team about it, set a date, and meet it.

My Goal:

(You can download a QR reader from your device’s app store.)
### Grocery List
- 2 apples
- 1 loaf of bread
- 1 bottle of milk
- 1 bag of chips
- 1 container of yogurt
- 1 container of sliced cheese
- 1 bag of carrots
- 1 box of cereal
- 1 bottle of water
- 1 pack of tea

### Health Tip
Tobacco users must be checked 3 to 4 times a year for oral cancer.

### Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUNDAY</th>
<th>MONDAY</th>
<th>TUESDAY</th>
<th>WEDNESDAY</th>
<th>THURSDAY</th>
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**November 2018**

*Daylight Saving Time Ends*
(Turn clocks back one hour.)

*Veterans Day Observed Outpatient Clinics Closed*

*Thanksgiving Day Outpatient Clinics Closed*
What you gain by drinking less

It doesn’t take long to see positive changes in your body when you cut down on alcohol.

- **Lose weight:** By drinking fewer calories from alcohol, your metabolism goes up and you may eat healthier.
- **Reduce disease risk:** Your risk goes down for some cancers, heart disease, and stroke.
- **Get better sleep:** You sleep more soundly and wake up with more energy.
- **Have better skin:** Your skin looks less tired because it is better hydrated.
- **Save money:** You can save hundreds or thousands of dollars each year.

### Healthy holiday eating

- Bake healthier. Use recipes with unsweetened applesauce or mashed banana instead of butter. Reduce the amount of sugar by one-third. Use cinnamon, allspice, or nutmeg for added flavor.
- Include a variety of vegetable dishes at your celebration.

For more ideas, visit [www.choosemyplate.gov/ten-tips-make-healthier-holiday-choices](http://www.choosemyplate.gov/ten-tips-make-healthier-holiday-choices).

- **Enjoy your favorite holiday foods, but eat smaller portions.**
- **Avoid high-calorie snacks and dishes that you could have at any time of the year.**
- **Go easy on gravy and sauces for the main and side dishes.**

### My Healthy Living Goals

- During the holiday season, I will not increase my alcohol intake.
- I will prepare two additional vegetable dishes for my family’s next holiday meal.

I WILL make one goal that I can DO! I will talk to my health care team about it, set a start date, and meet it.

**Learn more:**
Scan the QR code with your smartphone or tablet for information on limiting how much alcohol you drink.

(You can download a QR reader from your device’s app store.)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUNDAY</th>
<th>MONDAY</th>
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<td>CHRISTMAS DAY</td>
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<td>Outpatient Clinics Closed</td>
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**Record** minutes exercised, blood pressure & blood sugar and/or log these on My HealthVet at [www.myhealth.va.gov](http://www.myhealth.va.gov)

**Health Tip:** Drinking water throughout your day keeps you hydrated and helps you feel fuller.

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**December 2018**

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**NOVEMBER 2018**

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**JANUARY 2019**

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</table>
Know Your Medicines

When you take medications for your health and well-being, be sure to discuss and review them with your health care team on a regular basis. This will help ensure your health care stays effective and safe.

- When medications are prescribed, ask what they are for and how they should be taken.
- Identify if you have any drug allergies or had problems taking medications in the past.
- Visit the Veterans Health Library (www.veteranshealthlibrary.org) for information on many prescribed and over-the-counter (OTC) medications, vitamins, and dietary supplements.

- Keep an up-to-date list of the medications you take. (Record at www.myhealthevet.va.gov).
- Include the name of each medication, how much, and how often you take each one.
- Include all prescription and OTC medications, vitamins, and dietary supplements.
- Print the list and carry it with you. Update the list as needed.
- When you meet with your health care team, compare your medication list with your VA medication list.
- Share your list with all of your health care providers, including your dentist.

VA Mindfulness Coach App

The VA Mindfulness Coach App will help you practice “mindfulness,” a kind of meditation. Get it at mobile.va.gov/app/mindfulness-coach, or talk to your health care team about classes that may be available at your VA facility.

Want to know more about managing stress?

Visit VA’s Healthy Living Center and click on “Manage Stress” at www.prevention.va.gov/Healthy_Living.

Rest Your Mind

Is your daily life too chaotic? Do you struggle to relax and clear your mind? Try one of these suggestions to reduce stress:

- Practice meditation. Sit still in a quiet space, close your eyes, and focus on your breathing for five minutes.
- Visit a calm place in nature, like a park or quiet garden.
- Do something physically active and challenging to take your mind off a difficult day.
- Spend quality time with loved ones to help shift your mood.
- Get a good night’s sleep to feel more refreshed the next day.
SMART Goals

For the most effective goal-setting, make sure your goal is SMART:

**S = Specific**
Be specific – what is your goal?
*Not specific:* To feel more rested.
*Specific:* To get enough quality sleep each night.

**M = Measurable**
Progress is able to be tracked by numbers/other units.
*Not measurable:* To sleep more.
*Measurable:* To get 7 hours of sleep each night.

**A = Action-oriented**
Related to behaviors you will DO.
*Not Action-Oriented:* I will sleep 7 hours each night.
*Action-Oriented:* I will go to bed at 10 p.m. and wake up at 5 a.m. every day.

**R = Realistic**
Doable in terms of time, energy, and mental and physical health.
*Not realistic:* I will stay out until 9:45 p.m. and be in bed asleep by 10 p.m.
*Realistic:* I will adjust my schedule so I am home by 9 p.m. so I can be in bed by 10 p.m.

**T = Time to complete**
When will you accomplish this goal?
*Not time-based:* I will start as soon as I can.
*Time-based:* I will start my new sleep schedule by next Monday night.

Once this goal is met, set another one!
Take Care of Your Teeth

Having good dental hygiene is important for your overall health, and many aspects of your life. Your mouth, teeth, and gums can impact your ability to:

- Speak and use muscles to make facial expressions
- Taste, chew, and swallow
- Show feelings and emotions

Minor dental problems can lead to major pains if left untreated. Tooth decay can turn into an abscess tooth, leading to tooth loss. Plaque build-up can lead to gum disease and bone loss around the teeth. About 50,000 people get oral cancer every year.

Your teeth may tell a story about what’s happening in other areas of your health, too. There may be a link between periodontitis and other health conditions, such as heart disease and stroke. Routine dental check-ups every six months can help spot issues before they get too serious.

VA Dental Care

Some Veterans can receive a one-time course of free dental care from the VA. To check your eligibility, go to www.va.gov/dental. If you do not qualify, check with your dental department or social worker about other free or low-cost dental clinics.

Tips for Better Oral Health

There’s a lot you can do to keep your teeth, tongue, and gums healthy, and help you avoid tooth decay and gum disease. Follow these tips:

- Floss once a day to keep teeth and gums healthy.
- Brush at least twice a day.
- Eat fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, calcium-rich foods, nuts, and seeds.
- Avoid sugary foods, sticky foods like caramels, and sugar-sweetened drinks. Acidic food and drinks, like oranges and soda, can also speed up tooth decay.
- Don’t eat sugary foods, sticky foods like caramels, and sugar-sweetened drinks. Acidic food and drinks, like oranges and soda, can also speed up tooth decay.
- Schedule a dental cleaning and exam every six months. Have dental X-rays done as your dentist recommends.
- Avoid cigarettes and other tobacco products which can lead to gum disease and oral cancer.
### Health Screenings

Discuss which health screenings you need with your health care team.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Screening Test or Exam</th>
<th>New Recommendation</th>
<th>Date Given</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blood cholesterol:</td>
<td>Every 5 years: Men age 35 and older. Men ages 19–34 at increased risk for heart disease. Women age 20 and older at increased risk for heart disease.</td>
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<tr>
<td>LDL (bad) – cholesterol</td>
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<tr>
<td>HDL (good) – cholesterol</td>
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<tr>
<td>Triglycerides</td>
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<tr>
<td>Colon cancer screening</td>
<td>Age 50–75. How often tests are done will be decided by your provider.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>Yearly</td>
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<td>High blood pressure</td>
<td>Every 2 years</td>
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<td>HIV infection</td>
<td>Once</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overweight &amp; obesity</td>
<td>Every year</td>
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<tr>
<td>Syphilis</td>
<td>Talk with your provider to determine your need to be tested.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tobacco</td>
<td>Every visit</td>
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</table>

### FOR MEN

- Prostate cancer: Age 45–70. Talk with your provider to determine your need to be tested.
- Abdominal aortic aneurysm: One time, age 65–75 if ever smoked.

### FOR WOMEN

- Breast cancer: for women not at high risk: Every year ages 45–54. Women of other ages should discuss with their provider when to be tested.
- Cervical cancer: for women not at high risk: Pap test — Every 3 years (age 21–65). Pap Test & Papillomavirus (HPV) test — Every 5 years (age 30–65).
- Chlamydia & gonorrhea: All sexually active age 24 & younger. All sexually active age 25 and older who are at increased risk.
- Osteoporosis: One time, age 65 and older. Age 18-64. Talk with your provider.


### Know Your Numbers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Blood pressure (mm Hg)</th>
<th>Ranges</th>
<th>My Goal</th>
<th>Keep Records</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Normal blood pressure</td>
<td>&lt; 120/80</td>
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<tr>
<td>High blood pressure</td>
<td>&gt; 140/90</td>
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Ask your doctor what your target goal is. Prehypertension is between the normal and high blood pressure ranges.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Blood cholesterol (mg/dL)*</th>
<th>Ranges</th>
<th>My Goals</th>
<th>Keep Records</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total cholesterol</td>
<td>&lt; 200</td>
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<td>LDL (bad) cholesterol</td>
<td>&lt; 130</td>
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<td>HDL (good) cholesterol</td>
<td>&gt; 40 Men</td>
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<tr>
<td>Triglycerides</td>
<td>&lt; 150</td>
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*Ask your doctor about using target lipid goals. He or she may prescribe treatment that can include medication (such as a statin), based on your age, health conditions, and 10-year risk for cardiovascular disease.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Body Mass Index (BMI)</th>
<th>Ranges</th>
<th>My Goal</th>
<th>Keep Records</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Underweight</td>
<td>Below 18.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Healthy weight</td>
<td>18.5-24.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overweight</td>
<td>25.0-29.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Obese</td>
<td>30.0+</td>
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Find your BMI at [www.bmi-calculator.net](http://www.bmi-calculator.net)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Waist Size (inches)</th>
<th>Ranges</th>
<th>My Goal</th>
<th>Keep Records</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Desirable for men</td>
<td>&lt; 40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Desirable for women</td>
<td>&lt; 35</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Blood Glucose (mg/dL) (fasting)</th>
<th>Ranges</th>
<th>My Goals</th>
<th>Keep Records</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Normal blood glucose</td>
<td>80-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pre-diabetes</td>
<td>100-125</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diabetes</td>
<td>126+</td>
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<tr>
<td>A1C (if you have pre-diabetes)</td>
<td>5.7-6.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>A1C (if you have diabetes)</td>
<td>6.5+</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Health Contacts & Phone Numbers

EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS

Emergency Medical Service: 911 or ___________________________________________
Ambulance Service: _______________________________________________________
Fire: ___________________________________________________________________
Police: _________________________________________________________________
Poison Control Center: 1-800-222-1222

HEALTH CARE TEAM MEMBERS & OTHER HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS

My VA Facility: ________________________________
Name:  _______________________________________
Phone #: ______________________________________

Name: _______________________________________
Phone #: ______________________________________

My Provider: ________________________________
My Nurse: ____________________________________
My Nurse: ____________________________________

My Pharmacist: ______________________________
Pharmacy Refill: ______________________________

VISN 8 Telcare Nurse Advice Line: 1-877-741-3400
Make an Appointment Phone #: __________________
Cancel an Appointment Phone #: __________________
Patient Representative (Advocate): __________________
Transportation Service: ________________________

January 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUNDAY</th>
<th>MONDAY</th>
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<th>THURSDAY</th>
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New Year’s Day
Outpatient Clinics Closed

Martin Luther King Jr. Day
Outpatient Clinics Closed
VA Services

Veteran Benefits
1-800-827-1000
www.va.gov
www.vets.gov
www.ebenefits.va.gov

Health Care Benefits
1-877-222-8387
www.va.gov/healthbenefits

Burial and Memorials
1-800-827-1000
www.cem.va.gov

Center for Minority Veterans
www.va.gov/centerforminorityveterans

Devices for the Deaf (TDD)
Dial 711

Education and Training
1-888-442-4551
www.benefits.va.gov/gibill

Homeless Veterans
1-877-424-3838
www.va.gov/homeless

Life Insurance
1-800-419-1473
www.insurance.va.gov

Mental Health
www.mentalhealth.va.gov

Military Exposures
(Agent Orange, Gulf War Illnesses, etc.)
1-877-222-8387
www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures

National Center for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
Call Your VA or 1-802-296-6300
www.ptsd.va.gov

Survivor Benefits
1-800-827-1000
www.va.gov/survivors

Traveling Veterans Coordinator Program
www.va.gov/healthbenefits/access/seamless_care.asp

VHA National Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention
www.prevention.va.gov

VA National Center for Patient Safety
www.patientsafety.va.gov

Veterans Choice Program
1-866-606-8198
www.va.gov/opa/choiceact

Veterans Crisis Line
1-800-273-8255 Press “1”
OR text to 838255
www.veteranscrisisline.net

VA Resources

VA Facility Locator
www.vets.gov/facilities

MOVE! Program
www.move.va.gov

MyHealthbeVet
1-877-327-0022
www.myhealth.va.gov

MyVA 311: one number to reach VA
1-844-MyVA311 (1-844-698-2311)

MyVA
www.va.gov

SmokeFreeVET
1-855-QuitVET (855-784-8838)
Text VET to 47848
Smokefree.gov/Veterans

VA Caregiver Support Line
1-855-260-3274
www.caregiver.va.gov

Veterans Health Library
www.veteranshealthlibrary.org

Women Veterans Call Center
1-855-829-6636
www.womenshealth.va.gov

VA Mobile Health – mobile.va.gov

Ask a Pharmacist
Kidney
MOVE!® Coach

DS Logan Education
Pressure Ulcer Resouce
Appointment Request
VA Sunshine Healthcare Network

www.visn8.va.gov

at all Medical Centers

Find a VA hospital or clinic near you:
www.va.gov/health/FindCare.asp

Bruce W. Carter Dept. of VA Medical Center
1201 NW 16th Street
Miami, FL 33125
305-575-7000 • 888-276-1785
www.miami.va.gov

C.W. Bill Young VA Medical Center
10000 Bay Pines Blvd.
Bay Pines, FL 33344
727-398-6661 • 888-820-0230
www.baypines.va.gov

James A. Haley Veterans’ Hospital
13000 Bruce B. Downs Blvd.
Tampa, FL 33612
813-972-2000 • 888-811-0107
www.tampa.va.gov

Lake City VA Medical Center
619 South Marion Avenue
Lake City, FL 32025
386-755-3016 • 800-308-8387
www.northflorida.va.gov

Malcom Randall VA Medical Center
1601 SW Archer Road
Gainesville, FL 32608
352-376-1611 • 800-324-8387
www.northflorida.va.gov

Orlando VA Medical Center
13800 Veterans Way
Orlando, FL 32827
407-631-1000 • 800-922-7521
www.orlando.va.gov

West Palm Beach VA Medical Center
7305 North Military Trail
West Palm Beach, FL 33410
561-422-8262 • 800-972-8262
www.westpalmbeach.va.gov

VA Caribbean Healthcare System
10 Casia Street
San Juan, Puerto Rico 00921
787-641-7582 • 800-449-8729
www.caribbean.va.gov

Puerto Rico
St Thomas
St Croix