Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner Claudia Kowalski examines Veteran patient Donald J. Hindes for skin abnormalities during a dermatology appointment at the VA medical center in Gainesville, Fla.

Common Skin Conditions – What to Look For

Your Healthy Aging Journey

Health Screenings and Vaccines

Scan this QR code to see a digital version of this magazine.
To Our Readers

Our skin is our largest organ and one of the first lines of defense against many diseases. That is why it is important to know what to look for if you notice a change in how your skin looks or feels. The article on pages four and five will help you understand more about the signs and symptoms of some common skin conditions, including one of the most serious skin diseases: skin cancer.

Veterans of all ages strive to live a healthy and fulfilling life. While there are differences that come with getting older, the key parts of living a whole and fulfilling life remain the same. That is what you will read more about on page six.

Keeping up to date with health screenings and vaccines helps you stay healthy at any age. Which ones are recommended and right for you depend on many factors, including your personal health risks, values, and preferences. On page three, learn about key health screening tests and vaccines that may be recommended for you.

Get ready for the word (un)scramble puzzle on page seven to give your brain a workout. You will also find a recipe that offers one more way to enjoy apples.

Be well and stay safe!

Miguel H. LaPuz, M.D., MBA
Network Director, VISN 8

VA Mobile App Spotlight:
Live Whole Health

Live Whole Health is a free, easy to use mobile application created for Veterans and others who are ready to take the next step in their Whole Health journey. Whole Health is VA’s holistic approach to care that supports your health and well-being. This approach centers care around what matters to you, not what is the matter with you. With this app, you can fill out your personal health inventory, set goals, get virtual coaching, and more.

This app is available for download in the Apple App or Google Play stores. It is not meant to replace professional care for clinical or mental health conditions. To learn more, visit mobile.va.gov/app/live-whole-health.
Health Screenings and Vaccines

Which ones are right for you?

Keeping up with recommended screening tests and vaccinations helps prevent many kinds of illnesses and diseases. Which ones are right for you depend on your age, sex, family history, and other risk factors. When you meet with your health care team, ask about their recommendations for screening tests and vaccines that best fit your needs and your preferences.

Health Screening Tests
These tests help find health problems or diseases before you can notice any signs or symptoms. When found early, treatments for these diseases work much better. If you have a symptom that you notice, talk with your provider. This includes if you were recently screened and no problem was detected.

Vaccinations
Getting recommended vaccines is one of the easiest and safest ways to protect your health. For adults, this includes receiving a flu shot every year and a tetanus shot every five to ten years. Other shots that may be recommended for you are for shingles, hepatitis A and B, pneumococcal disease, and Human Papilloma Virus (HPV). If you have not received a COVID-19 vaccine yet, talk to your provider. COVID-19 vaccines are highly effective in preventing serious illness.

### Screening Test or Exam
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abdominal aortic aneurysm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blood cholesterol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colon cancer screening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High blood pressure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV infection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overweight &amp; obesity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syphilis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobacco use</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### FOR MEN
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prostate cancer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### FOR WOMEN
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Breast cancer for women not at high risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cervical cancer for women not at high risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chlamydia &amp; gonorhea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Osteoporosis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Talk with your health care team about screenings for diabetes, Hepatitis B and C, PTSD, lung cancer, and military sexual trauma.

---

Watch the Video!
Check out the video, “Health Screenings and Vaccines – Which Ones Are Right for You?” at visn8.va.gov/visn8/news/publications.asp.
Common Skin Conditions

*What to look for*

When there is something that irritates, clogs, infects, or inflames it, your skin can show symptoms that include redness, swelling, burning, oozing, and itching. Some of these symptoms can signal the presence of certain diseases or problems with your immune system. While many of these skin conditions are considered minor health issues, some can signal something more serious. If you think you have one of the following common skin problems, ask your provider to check it out.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>PSORIASIS</strong></th>
<th><strong>Possible Cause</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Signs &amp; Symptoms</strong></td>
<td><strong>Possible Cause</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thick, red patches of skin with white scales on the scalp, elbows, knees, and lower back</td>
<td>Something triggers the immune system and skin cells grow too quickly.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>ECZEMA (also called atopic dermatitis)</strong></th>
<th><strong>Possible Cause</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Signs &amp; Symptoms</strong></td>
<td><strong>Possible Cause</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red, dry, and itchy skin that may become swollen, sore, and leak clear fluid on the elbows, hands, and in skin folds</td>
<td>Stress, irritants (soap), climate, or allergy triggers a flareup.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>ROSACEA</strong></th>
<th><strong>Possible Cause</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Signs &amp; Symptoms</strong></td>
<td><strong>Possible Cause</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redness on the nose, chin, cheeks, and forehead, which can get redder over time and show blood vessels. May also include thickened skin, bumps, and pimples.</td>
<td>Tendency to flush easily runs in families and may be related to an infection or an immune response.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>RASH FROM PLANTS</strong></th>
<th><strong>Possible Cause</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Signs &amp; Symptoms</strong></td>
<td><strong>Possible Cause</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starts with a red rash line and swelling at the contact site, then becomes itchy. Blisters form within one to three days.</td>
<td>Contact with plants such as poison ivy, oak, or sumac</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>SHINGLES (herpes zoster)</strong></th>
<th><strong>Possible Cause</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Signs &amp; Symptoms</strong></td>
<td><strong>Possible Cause</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Painful skin rash, usually with blisters that can appear on one side of the face or body</td>
<td>Varicella zoster virus reactivates years later after a person recovers from chicken pox.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Spotlight: Skin Cancer

Skin cancer is the most common type of cancer. People of all skin colors can get skin cancer. It occurs mostly on the face, neck, hands, and arms. The most common types are squamous cell and basal cell skin cancers. Melanoma, although less common, grows and spreads quickly, which makes it a more deadly form of skin cancer.

Health screening for skin cancer includes a skin exam. Your provider checks moles, birthmarks, or other areas that look abnormal in color, size, shape, or texture. If you notice a worrisome change in your skin tell your provider.

Being exposed to ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun or tanning beds is a risk factor for cancer. Practice sun safety year round to reduce your risk.

What is Teledermatology?

This is telemedicine to help diagnose and treat Veterans who have skin conditions. Dermatology is a highly visual type of medicine. Smartphones, tablets, and laptops can easily take and send photos to VA providers and dermatology specialists to review. Plus, Veterans can have virtual dermatology visits when it is more convenient.
Your Healthy Aging Journey

No matter what your age is, the basics of living a healthy and fulfilling life are the same. Yes, there are some differences that come with aging. But what it takes to live a whole and healthy life does not change. Whether you are a young adult, a mature adult, or somewhere in between, how you take care of your physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health will make a difference today and for years to come.

Live Your Whole Health
VA’s Whole Health approach to care supports you through life’s many changes, transitions, and milestones. Strive to be mindful of what truly matters to you. This will help you focus on what it takes to live your life to the fullest, at any age.

- **Move your body.** Stay active to keep your body and mind strong, avoid or manage chronic health problems, and reduce the risk of falls. If you have physical limitations, talk to your provider about making adjustments that are right for you.
- **Make smart food choices.** Focus on foods that give you plenty of nutrients without a lot of extra calories to help you manage or lower your weight.
- **Get quality sleep.** Although you may need less sleep as you get older, your need for getting quality sleep does not change. If you have sleep problems, such as insomnia, talk with your provider.
- **Prioritize mental health.** Find ways to relax to help manage stress and calm your mind. Stay connected with friends, family, and your community to avoid feeling lonely. Stay positive and keep challenging your brain. Seek help when you need it.
- **Support your spiritual health.** Find deep meaning, connection, and a sense of purpose. Examples include having a religious practice, connecting to nature, and volunteering.
- **Limit alcohol and quit tobacco.** Reducing or quitting will help prevent or manage heart disease, some cancers, diabetes, and other serious conditions.

Regular Checkups, Screenings, and Immunizations
Schedule regular checkups with your provider, dentist, eye doctor, and other health specialists. Stay up to date with recommended health screenings and immunizations to prevent illnesses and certain diseases. Know your health numbers, such as blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood glucose levels to help manage health risks. Stay connected with your health care team to help monitor any health condition you have or medicines you take.

What Matters to You
Learn more about how you can live Whole Health at every age! Visit va.gov/WHOLEHEALTH.
Word (Un)Scramble
Unscramble these letters to find words from the stories in this issue of Veterans Health Matters. Good luck!

1. NOOCL RCNAEC
2. V19OICD ECVCAI
3. AMZECE
4. LAHYHET NGAGI
5. OMANMLAE
6. TEMLAN HAHEETL
7. FNLMDIU
8. RSP0IASSI
9. ILSGHNES
10. KNSI
11. YEOLOMDGERTLTAO
12. NTAEUST
13. OHESW LHTAEH

Apple Coleslaw

INGREDIENTS
2 cups white or red cabbage
1 large apple
1 medium carrot
1/2 chopped green or red bell pepper
5 tablespoons low fat plain yogurt
1 tablespoon low fat mayonnaise
1 teaspoon lemon juice
1/2 teaspoon chopped dill weed (optional)
1/8 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon black pepper

DIRECTIONS
1. Wash all vegetables. Cut cabbage into fine shreds. Peel and grate the carrot with a grater. Remove the core from the apple and chop.
2. Put all the prepared vegetables in a large mixing bowl and stir together.
3. In a small bowl whisk together the yogurt, mayonnaise, lemon juice, dill weed, salt, and pepper.
4. Pour the dressing mixture over the salad and toss to mix.

Nutritional information: (4 servings). Per serving: 66 calories, 1 g total fat, 0 g saturated fat, 13 g carbohydrates, 3 g dietary fiber, 2 g protein, and 60 mg sodium.

Free Veterans Health Matters Subscription
To request your free copy of Veterans Health Matters and how you would like to receive your subscription, visit www.healthylife.com/SubscribeVHM.

You can also request your free subscription using the following methods: by U.S. mail, email, or phone.

By Mail:
Fill out your information (please print below) and put in a stamped envelope with this address:
American Institute for Preventive Medicine
c/o VISN 8 – VHM
30445 Northwestern Hwy., Ste. 350
Farmington Hills, MI 48334

(Please print)
First Name
Middle Initial
Last Name
Address
City
State Zip

By Email:
VISN8VHM@healthylife.com
Be sure to include the above information.

By Phone:
(800) 345-2476 – press 5 for English or press 6 for Spanish
Get Your COVID-19 Vaccine!
Talk to your provider if you have questions.
Visit va.gov/health-care/covid-19-vaccine

VA Sunshine Healthcare Network
www.visn8.va.gov

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 33744
727-396-6661 • 888-820-0230
www.baypines.va.gov

James A. Haley Veterans’ Hospital
13000 Bruce B. Downs Blvd.
Tampa, FL 33612
813-972-2000 • 888-716-7787
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 Healthcare System
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