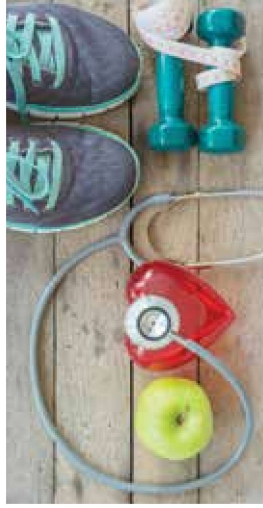




HEALTHY LIVING!

Veterans & Their Families



2019
CALENDAR





Whole Health & You

VA uses the Whole Health model of care to empower and prepare you to take charge of your physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health and well-being. Whole Health links all parts of health care together to treat and prevent health problems.

The circle above shows how your Whole Health is connected.

- **YOU are at the center of the circle.** Being mindful of what matters most to you helps you make better decisions about your health.
- **Self-care** – Everyday choices and practices will help you prevent and manage diseases.

Many self-care classes and programs are already available within VISN 8. These include *MOVE! Weight Management*, getting better sleep, developing mindfulness, healthy relationships, and so much more.

- **Professional services and therapies** – Conventional and complementary approaches.
- **Community** – People and groups in your life who help keep you healthy.



Get Started with Whole Health

- Review “MyStory: Personal Health Inventory (PHI)” near the back of this calendar or visit www.va.gov/patientcenteredcare.
- Attend a Whole Health orientation class to explore what matters most to you. Get help completing your PHI, and create your personal health plan (PHP).
- Discuss your PHP with your Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT).



- Sign up for “Taking Charge of My Life” and ask about other Whole Health sessions at your facility.
- Meet with a Whole Health coach to guide you further.
- Take self-care classes and programs to help live your life to the fullest.

My Healthy Living Goals

- I will sign up for the Whole Health class this month.
- I will review the PHI in this calendar before I attend the Whole Health orientation class.

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 the short video “Pathway to Whole Health.”

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



January 2019

RECORD minutes exercised, blood pressure & blood sugar
and/or log these on My HealthVet at www.myhealth.va.gov

Health Tip: You can pick and
choose parts of the Whole Health
program that work best for you.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
DECEMBER 2018 S M T W Th F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31		New Year's Day Outpatient Clinics Closed	1	2	3	4
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20	Martin Luther King Jr. Day Outpatient Clinics Closed	21	22	23	24	25
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FEBRUARY 2019
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Don't Forget Strength-Training.....

Adding strength training to your exercise routine could provide you with important health benefits. These exercises build muscle to protect your joints and improve your balance. Strength training can also help you manage your weight, and get more restful sleep. The key is to work your muscles to create resistance which builds strength.

- **Equipment:** You can use your own body weight to start. You can also use household items like water bottles filled with sand. Fill a sock with beans and tie at both ends. Hand and ankle weights, resistance bands, and exercise balls are other great additions.

- **How Much, How Often:** Try doing strength-training exercises 2-3 times per week. You can start by using light weights, or no weight at all, depending on your fitness level. Then gradually increase weight or resistance. You can also increase the number of repetitions of an exercise.

Safety Matters

Before you start a new exercise program, especially if you haven't exercised in a while, talk to your VA provider to review any safety concerns.

Do More for Your Core

Pilates® are a type of strength-training exercise originally developed to help injured soldiers regain their health during WWI. These exercises focus on core (belly) muscles and proper spinal alignment.

To learn the basics, take a core-strengthening class. You can also get resources online or from your library. This will let you do these exercises at home on your own time.



You may already be doing some of these exercises (e.g., plank exercise), but there are lots more available to help strengthen your core and other muscle groups.



Learn more:

Scan the QR code with your smartphone or tablet to learn more about strengthening your core muscles.

(You can download a QR reader from your device's app store.)

My Healthy Living Goals

- I will do at least 15 minutes of core-strengthening exercises, twice a week.
- I will discuss starting a strength-training program at my next VA health care appointment.

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:



February 2019

Health Tip: Warm up your muscles with 5-10 minutes of basic walking or walking in place before starting your strength-training routine to help prevent injury.

RECORD minutes exercised, blood pressure & blood sugar and/or log these on My HealtheVet at www.myhealth.va.gov

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
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17	18 Presidents' Day Outpatient Clinics Closed	19	20	21	22	23
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Limit Added Sugars

Did you know most adults eat or drink about 18 teaspoons of added sugar every day? These are sugars and syrups added to foods during processing or just before eating them. They add a lot of extra calories but almost zero nutrients.

Too much added sugar can lead to weight gain and obesity. Your risk for heart disease, some cancers, and tooth decay can increase when you consume added sugars. Your brain learns to “crave” more sugar, which can be tough to overcome. Most added sugars come from regular soft drinks, fruit drinks (not juice), cakes, cookies, candy, and other sweets.

How much added sugar?



Regular soda:
20 oz.=16 tsp.

12 oz. can= 10 tsp.



Fruit drink:
20 oz.=17 tsp.



Chocolate chip
cookie: 5 tsp.



Coffee latte:
5 tsp.



1/6 slice pie: 6 tsp.



1 tsp. jam: 1 tsp.

What is Mindful Eating?



1. Before you begin eating, ask yourself how hungry you truly are. Then, take a few deep breaths of gratitude for the food.
2. Avoid distractions while eating. Turn off or step away from the T.V. or smartphone.
3. Chew each bite at least 20 times.

This mind-body practice is about being aware of every bite you take so you taste more and eat less. It can help you cut down on portions, avoid stress-eating, and realize when you feel full. Here's how to get started on eating more mindfully:

For more tips visit www.va.gov/patientcenteredcare/Veteran-Handouts/Mindful_Eating.asp.

My Healthy Living Goals

- I will try to chew each bite at least 20 times before swallowing.
- I will limit my intake of soda to three 8-oz. servings per 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 smartphone or tablet to watch a short video on making small healthy changes to your beverage choices.

(You can download a QR reader from your device's app store.)



March 2019

RECORD minutes exercised, blood pressure & blood sugar
and/or log these on My HealtheVet at www.myhealth.va.gov

Health Tip: Instead of jelly, add fruit
slices to your peanut butter sandwich
for some natural sweetness.

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Stay Alert While Driving

Distracted driving puts all of us at risk. This includes the driver, passengers, bystanders, and the occupants of other cars. Recent research shows distracted driving killed more than 3,400 persons in one year.

Any non-driving activity you do while driving is a distraction. This increases the risk of being in a crash or other types of accidents.

It takes at least five seconds to read a short text, and that means your eyes are off the road while reading. Do you know that is like driving at 55 mph and reaching the end of an entire football field with your eyes closed?

To help protect yourself, passengers, other drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists:

- Put all electronic devices out of reach before driving.
- Speak up when you are a passenger. Ask your driver to wait until they can safely come to a complete stop before they use their cellphone or electronic device.
- Set a good example for other drivers, especially young drivers, by giving your full attention to driving. Talk about safe driving with your kids, grandkids, and other drivers in your life.

Drive & Walk - Together

Think about how you could fit in some walking when you reach your driving destination, or break up long drives to include walk breaks.



- Park where you can walk at least five minutes before reaching your final destination.
- Take walking breaks at road-side rest stops or parks at least every two hours.
- Bring along comfortable walking shoes - your feet will thank you.
- Don't be a "distracted walker." Avoid browsing or texting while walking to avoid collisions with other pedestrians, cyclists, and motor vehicles.



Learn more:

Scan the QR code with your smartphone or tablet to watch a video about the importance of not texting while driving.

(You can download a QR reader from your device's app store.)

My Healthy Living Goals

- When driving, I will pull over to a safe location to answer my cellphone.
- I will offer to make the call when I am a passenger and the driver wants to use their cellphone.

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:



April 2019

RECORD minutes exercised, blood pressure & blood sugar
and/or log these on My HealthVet at www.myhealth.va.gov

Health Tip: Remember, no call
or text is worth losing a life.
Stay safe while driving.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
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Make Small Changes for the Better

Focus on making small changes - not big changes - in how you nourish and move your body. Over time, this approach will bring you closer to your healthy weight goal. Try some of these tips:

- Ask for fewer pumps of syrup in your coffee drink. Instead add a sprinkle of cinnamon or cocoa for more flavor.
- When eating out, pick dishes that highlight veggies, like a chicken and broccoli dish, or a vegetable stir fry.
- Add frozen vegetables to a packaged pasta or rice dish.
- Switch to salsa instead of sour cream on baked potatoes.

- Take a 10-minute walk in the morning or evening.
- Instead of sitting, walk around while watching an outdoor sporting event.
- Do something active during T.V. commercial breaks – dance on the spot, do some bicep curls, or walk up and down stairs a few times.

To explore more ways to make simple healthy lifestyle changes, visit VA's *MOVE!* Weight Management Program at www.move.va.gov.

Food-Smart Shopping

Healthy eating starts with making smart choices at the grocery store. This can be a challenge with the many thousands of foods to choose from. To help you out:

- Choose items that have five ingredients or fewer.
- Spend at least half of your time in the produce section. Select vegetables and fruit with a variety of colors to get the most nutritional benefits.



- Make a weekly meal plan and a grocery list to follow when shopping.
- Shop the outer edges of the store where the healthiest foods are usually found.



Learn more:

Scan the QR code with your smartphone or tablet to make small changes to on-the-go breakfasts.

(You can download a QR reader from your device's app store.)

My Healthy Living Goals

- I will make a meal plan to follow at least 3 days every week.
- I will walk for 5 minutes before I begin my job or other activity, 5 times per 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:



May 2019

RECORD minutes exercised, blood pressure & blood sugar
and/or log these on My HealtheVet at www.myhealth.va.gov

Health Tip: Whenever you
can, stand or walk instead of
sitting to burn more calories.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
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19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	Memorial Day Outpatient Clinics Closed	27	28	29	30	31



Beware of Binge Drinking

Binge drinking can take a toll on your body. It increases your risk for serious health problems, even when drinking only one or two days a week.

- **Your brain** – Changes your mood and behavior, and makes it difficult to think clearly.
- **Your heart** – Your heart tissue can be damaged. You may develop an irregular heartbeat, high blood pressure, or have a stroke.
- **Your liver and pancreas** – Can cause cirrhosis of the liver, or alcoholic hepatitis. If your liver and/or pancreas gets dangerously inflamed you cannot digest food properly.

- **Your immune system** – Weakens your ability to fight diseases and infections, like pneumonia and tuberculosis. This effect can last up to 24 hours after being intoxicated.
- **Your risk for certain cancers** – Includes cancers of the mouth, esophagus, throat, liver, colon, and breast.

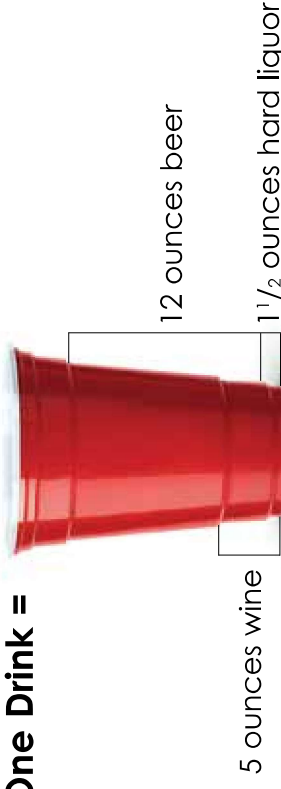
If you are concerned about how much you drink, take a short survey at www.myhealth.va.gov/mhv-portal-web/alcohol-use-screening, and/or talk to your VA health care team.

Limit Alcohol Guidelines

	Choosing to Drink Alcohol*	Binge Drinking Is:
Men	Limit it to 2 drinks a day	More than 4 drinks in 2 hours
Women (and 64+)	Limit it to 1 drink a day	More than 3 drinks in 2 hours

*Limit alcohol guidelines are from www.prevention.va.gov.

One Drink =



5 ounces wine

12 ounces beer

1 1/2 ounces hard liquor



Learn more:

Scan the QR code with your smartphone to access a VHA YouTube video on the healthy limits of alcohol.

(You can download a QR reader from your device's app store.)

My Healthy Living Goals

- For the next month, I will be mindful of how much alcohol I drink on weekends and holidays.
- I will buy a case of low-calorie sparkling water within the next week.

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:



June 2019

RECORD minutes exercised, blood pressure & blood sugar
and/or log these on My HealtheVet at www.myhealth.va.gov

Health Tip: There are many programs
and resources within VA if you have
concerns about alcohol. Just ask!

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
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Add More Outside

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Getting outdoors more often helps improve your mental health and manage your stress. Spending time in nature changes your brain chemistry which improves mood.

An outdoor experience gives your brain a break from being overstimulated. Your attention level is restored so you can return to a busy schedule with renewed energy and enthusiasm.

- **Exercise outdoors** – Don't spend all your exercise time at the gym or other indoor space. Include activities that you can do outside, such as brisk walking, jogging, hiking, cycling, or swimming.

- **Spend quality time with friends and family** – Visit a park or go for a walk together. Organize activities you can do as a group, like playing football, having a picnic, or going on a camping trip.

- **Head to the water** – Try kayaking, canoeing, or paddle boating. Many parks offer rentals and classes.
- **Get quiet** – Find a comfortable and peaceful place to sit quietly for a while. Read a book, listen to the birds, or meditate to help connect with your mind, body, and spirit.

Mosquito & Tick Safety Tips

Keep these safety tips in mind to help avoid disease-spreading mosquito and tick bites:

- Use insect repellent with diethyltoluamide (DEET), or other active ingredient registered with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Visit www.epa.gov/insect-repellents.
- Wear dark, long-sleeved shirts, pants, socks, and shoes from dusk to dawn when mosquitoes are most active.
- Walk in the center of the trail to avoid high grass and bushes where ticks are found.
- Do a "tick check" after leaving an area likely to have ticks. Be sure to check your body, clothing, and even your pet.
- Treat clothing and outdoor gear with 0.5% permethrin, which kills ticks on contact.



Learn more:

Scan this QR code with your smartphone or tablet to learn how to safely remove a tick from your body.

(You can download a QR reader from your device's app store.)

My Healthy Living Goals

- I will spend one hour outdoors at least three days a week.
- I will learn how to remove a tick within the next 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:



July 2019

RECORD minutes exercised, blood pressure & blood sugar
and/or log these on My HealthVet at www.myhealth.va.gov

Health Tip: Check and empty items
that hold water around your yard so
mosquitoes can't lay eggs.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
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AUGUST 2019
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Get Screened: Colorectal Cancer

VA recommends colorectal cancer screening for adults between 50 and 75 years with an “average” risk. Getting screened will help discover and remove any precancerous tumors before they turn into cancer. Screenings can also find cancer early when it is easier to treat successfully.

Screening tests have different risks and benefits. How often the screening is done depends on which test is used. VA options include:

- Stool-based tests.
- Direct colon tests (e.g., colonoscopy – a flexible scope placed in the colon).
- CT colonography (CT scan looking at the colon).

- If you are younger than 50, or 76 to 85 years old, the screening recommendation for colorectal cancer is based on your overall health and prior screening history.
- Talk with your provider about the right test for you based on your medical risk and family history.

Veterans are encouraged to get all recommended screenings and vaccines.

Visit www.prevention.va.gov for a complete listing. Some screenings are listed near the back of this calendar.

Camera-To-Camera

Talk to your provider about your colon health and concerns. Want to save time, travel, and

- A safe, secure, and private location so you can hear clearly.

More information about VA Video Connect can be found near the back of this calendar (“You & Your Appointments”).



copay? Ask about VA Video Connect to discuss screenings.

To have this “virtual” appointment where you meet with your provider online, you will need your own:

- Internet or Wi-Fi connection.
- Smartphone, computer with webcam, or tablet.
- An active email account.



Learn more:

Scan this QR code with your smartphone or tablet to watch a VHA YouTube video on how to prepare for a colonoscopy test.

(You can download a QR reader from your device's app store.)

My Healthy Living Goals

- I will ask my VA provider about getting screened for colorectal cancer during my next visit.
- I will offer to take my neighbor's dog for a walk 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:



August 2019

Health Tip: Diets high in vegetables, fruits, and whole grains, and low in red and processed meats are linked to lower colorectal cancer risk.

RECORD minutes exercised, blood pressure & blood sugar and/or log these on My HealthVet at www.myhealth.va.gov

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
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Photo taken by Tom Cole from Medical Media

Reach Out to Other Veterans

We can all do our part to help prevent Veteran suicide. Knowing what to do can be difficult. Sometimes it's as simple as showing someone you care so they feel less alone and more supported. Here are some ways you can "be there" for Veterans:

- Email, text, or call to ask how they are doing.
- Bring dinner, meet for coffee, or offer to do some errands.
- Drive them to appointments.
- Offer to work out with them.

You can also learn the warning signs of a crisis so you can help identify someone in need. These signs may include:

- Hopelessness, feeling like there's no way out.
- Withdrawing from loved ones.
- Anxiety, sleeplessness, or mood swings. Rage or anger.
- Risky behaviors without thinking. Increasing alcohol or drug abuse.

Remember, help is always available 24/7 at the Veterans Crisis Line. Text to 838255, or have a confidential chat at www.veteranscrisisline.net. You can also check out the "Be There" page.



Stress – How Much is Too Much?

If you think you might be under too much stress or suffering from depression, take this confidential survey at www.vetselfcheck.org/welcome.cfm.

- Once you complete the survey, a VA Chat Responder will review it and leave a personal response for you.



- The next step is up to you. You can continue online with VA Chat or talk with a VA Responder without giving your name. Or, you can ask your VA provider for a referral to see someone for help.
- If you don't want to do anything right now, that's okay, too. It's your choice if and when you want to seek out further services.

My Healthy Living Goals

- I will call at least one Veteran to get re-connected within the next week.
- I will learn the signs of a crisis this week to see if I might know someone in need and reach out to them.

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 this QR code with your smartphone or tablet to watch a VHA YouTube video on coping with depression.

(You can download a QR reader from your device's app store.)



2019 September

RECORD minutes exercised, blood pressure & blood sugar
and/or log these on My HealthVet at www.myhealth.va.gov

Health Tip: Offering to work out with
another Veteran helps them, and it will
help both of you get more exercise.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 Labor Day Outpatient Clinics Closed	2	3	4	5	6	7 WEIGHT
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OCTOBER 2019
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Fight the Flu with 3 Actions

Now that flu season is here, it's time to take the three most important steps to prevent getting and spreading the flu:

1. **Get the annual flu shot.** This is your *best flu protection*, and it protects others around you from getting infected. The flu shot is recommended for everyone who is six months and older.

The flu shot is available to all Veterans enrolled in VA health care at your local VA facility. It is also available at non-VA sites that offer free or low-cost shots.

2. **Be mindful of everyday actions to prevent the spread of flu.** Cover your coughs and sneezes with tissue, or cough into your elbow. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth. Wash your hands well and avoid close contact with people who have the flu as much as you can.

3. **Stay home if you are sick, unless you need medical care.** You are most likely to spread the flu virus for at least five days after your first symptoms and at least 48 hours after your last fever.

Handwashing Matters

Wash hands well to prevent the spread of infectious diseases, including the flu. Compare your handwashing technique to these recommended steps:

1. Wet hands with clean, running, warm or cold water, and apply soap.
2. Lather all parts of your hands by rubbing them together.

3. Scrub for 20 seconds or hum the "Happy Birthday" song in your head two times.
4. Rinse well under clean, running water.
5. Dry hands using a clean towel or air dry them.



Learn more:

Scan this QR code with your smartphone to watch a VHA YouTube video about the importance of getting the flu shot.

(You can download a QR reader from your device's app store.)

My Healthy Living Goals

- I will hum the Happy Birthday song twice when washing my hands, at least three times a day.
- I will get the flu shot at my VA facility or at Walgreens as soon as it's available.

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:



October 2019

RECORD minutes exercised, blood pressure & blood sugar
and/or log these on My HealthVet at www.myhealth.va.gov

Health Tip: If soap and water are not
available to wash your hands, you can use a
hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
SEPTEMBER 2019 S M T W Th F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30						
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14 Columbus Day Outpatient Clinics Closed	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

NOVEMBER 2019
S M T W Th F S
 1 2
 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
 10 11 12 13 14 15 16
 17 18 19 20 21 22 23
 24 25 26 27 28 29 30



S.T.A.R.T. to Quit Tobacco

Quitting tobacco is one of the best things you can do for your health.

Now is the time to get started with your quit plan.

Set a quit date. Mark it on your calendar where you can easily see it.

Tell your family and friends.

It's easier to quit when you have support from the important people in your life. Be specific about what support you want and don't want. Help your loved ones find ways to help you.



Anticipate and plan for challenges. Making a plan helps you stay in control. Identify what triggers you to want tobacco, and avoid those situations. Decide how you will fight cravings, including the possible use of tobacco cessation medications.

Remove cigarettes, and anything associated with them, from your home, car, and work.

Talk to your VA health care team about the many resources available to help you succeed.

For more information visit www.smokefree.gov/veterans or call the VA smoking hotline 1-855-QUIT-VET.

Mindful Awareness Exercise

This powerful mind-body practice can improve your Whole Health. Try this easy 2-minute exercise to help ease stress and find calmness.

- When your thoughts wander - and they will - gently return your attention back to breathing without judging what you were thinking.

- Sit comfortably with a straight back and feet on the floor. Turn all of your awareness to your breathing but don't change it. Pay close attention to how it feels in your body to breathe in and out, including the pauses between your breaths.

To learn more about mindful awareness training resources, talk with your VA health care team.



My Healthy Living Goals

- I will sign up this week to receive texts to help me quit at www.smokefree.gov/veterans.
- I will find out if my facility offers a mindful course this week. If they do, I will sign up.

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 smartphone or tablet to watch a fun video on the health benefits of practicing tai chi.

(You can download a QR reader from your device's app store.)



November 2019

RECORD minutes exercised, blood pressure & blood sugar
and/or log these on My HealtheVet at www.myhealth.va.gov

Health Tip: If you are already
tobacco-free, give all the support you
can to someone who wants to quit.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			OCTOBER 2019 S M T W Th F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	DECEMBER 2019 S M T W Th F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	1	 2
Daylight Saving Time Ends (Turn clocks back one hour.)	4	5	6	7	8	 9
10	11 Veterans Day Outpatient Clinics Closed	12	13	14	15	 16
17	18	19	20	21	22	 23
24	25	26	27	28 Thanksgiving Day Outpatient Clinics Closed	29	 30



Navigate the Holiday Buffet

Holiday gatherings often feature a buffet table, filled with tempting, high-calorie dishes. For many of us, this makes it easier to overeat and gain weight. But, there's a healthy way to find your way around the buffet, too.

- Take a festive vegetable platter to a holiday party. This will help increase healthy options, for you and other guests.
- Spend some time socializing with others before heading to the buffet table.
- Take a lap around the table before filling your plate. Plan ahead what to choose and what to limit.

- Start your meal with a veggie-packed salad with lots of variety and color. Choose a vinaigrette salad dressing for a dose of healthy olive or canola oil.

- Eat slowly for maximum enjoyment. This is a great opportunity to practice mindful eating.
- Select smaller portions when choosing those “special” treats that are a part of your holiday traditions. Once you make your selection, walk away from the table to enjoy it.

Be sure to thank your host for providing healthy options!

Ancient Practices-Modern Healing

Tai chi and qigong are ancient Chinese practices that are common today to help reduce stress. You can use them to practice mindfulness and improve physical fitness. They combine slow, deliberate postures that flow together.



- You can take a class or do the exercises on your own.
- Both practices can be easily adapted for individuals in wheelchairs or recovering from surgery.
- Tai chi and qigong often take place outdoors in a park.

As you move, you breathe deeply and focus attention on the sensations in your body, which forms the basis of a kind of moving meditation.



Learn more:

Scan the QR code with your smartphone to watch a video on food safety tips for holiday buffets.

(You can download a QR reader from your device's app store.)

My Healthy Living Goals

- During the holidays, I will take a lap around the buffet table before I make my choices.
- I will contact my VA facility to ask if tai chi classes are offered, and I will sign up for a class.

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:



2019 December

RECORD minutes exercised, blood pressure & blood sugar
and/or log these on My HealthVet at www.myhealth.va.gov

Health Tip: Sparkling water flavored
with fruit slices makes a tasty, low-
calorie festive beverage.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25 Christmas Day Outpatient Clinics Closed	26	27	28
29	30	31	NOVEMBER 2019 S M T W Th F S 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 JANUARY 2020 S M T W Th F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31			

MyStory:

Personal Health Inventory (PHI)

To start a conversation about Whole Health with your PACT team, it helps to identify areas in your life that affect your health and well-being. The PHI identifies your strengths and areas to work on. Complete the PHI below, or you may simply choose to reflect on these questions before attending a Whole Health orientation class. (Online versions are available at www.va.gov/patientcenteredcare/resources/personal-health-inventory.asp.)

Rate where you feel you are on the scales below from 1-5, with 1 being miserable and 5 being great.

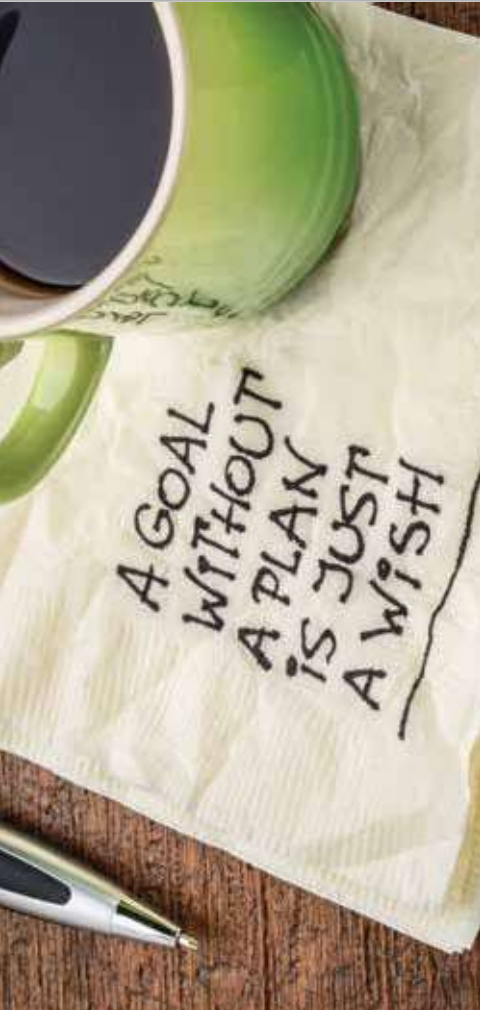
Physical Well-Being	1	2	3	4	5
Mental/Emotional Well-Being	1	2	3	4	5
How is it to live your day-to-day life?	1	2	3	4	5

What do you live for? What matters to you? Why do you want to be healthy?



For each area below, consider “where you are” and “where you want to be.” Then, write in a number between 1 (low) and 5 (high) that best identifies what you think.

Area of Whole Health	Where I am Now (1-5)	Where I Want to Be (1-5)
Working the Body: “Energy and Flexibility” Moving and doing physical activities.		
Recharge: “Sleep and Refresh” Getting enough sleep and relaxation.		
Food and Drink: “Nourish and Fuel” Eating healthy meals and beverages with plenty of fruits and vegetables each day.		
Personal Development: “Personal life and Work life” Developing abilities and talents. Balancing responsibilities where you live, volunteer, and work.		
Family, Friends, and Co-Workers: “Relationships” The quality of your communication with family, friends and people you work with.		
Spirit and Soul: “Growing and Connecting” Having a sense of purpose and meaning in your life. Feeling connected to something larger than yourself.		
Surroundings: “Physical and Emotional” Feeling safe. Having comfortable, healthy spaces where you work and live.		
Power of the Mind: “Relaxing and Healing” Tapping into the power of your mind to heal and cope. Using mind-body techniques like meditation or guided imagery.		
Professional Care: “Prevention and Treatment” Staying up to date on prevention and understanding your health concerns, care options, and treatment plan.		



S.M.A.R.T. Goals

To help you reach your goal, make sure it's SMART:

S = Specific

Be specific – what is your goal?

Not specific: To be more mindfully aware. *Specific:* To complete mindful awareness exercises.

M = Measurable

Progress can be tracked by numbers/other units. *Not measurable:* Practice mindful awareness. *Measurable:* I will do 10-minute mindfulness exercises.

A = Action-oriented

Related to behaviors you will DO.

Not Action-Oriented: I will do 10-minute mindfulness exercises.

Action-Oriented: I will do the

10-minute body scan my PACT team recommends.

R = Realistic

Doable in terms of time, energy, and mental and physical health.

Not realistic: I will do a daily body scan exercise for 1 hour.

Realistic: I will do the 10-minute body scan exercise 3 days a week.

T = Time to complete

When will you accomplish this goal? *Not time-based:* I will begin a body scan exercise when I can.

Time-based: I will begin the 10-minute body scan exercise next week, at least 3 days a week.

Once this goal is met, set another one!

My Health Choices

Be Involved in Your Health Care	Be Physically Active	Eat Wisely	Strive for a Healthy Weight	Get recommended screenings & immunizations					
Limit Alcohol	Be Tobacco Free	Manage Stress	Be Safe	Your Choice					
My goal for the next week: (Example: I will limit my intake of regular soda to three 12-oz. cans a week.)									
Things that might get in my way: (Examples: lack of time, peer pressure)									
What can I do to overcome these things? (Examples: bring water bottles with you in the car, explain to friends reasons why you want to limit soda.)									
I believe that I can reach my goal: (Circle how confident you feel.)									
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not At All			Somewhat		Sure		Very Sure		

Ask for copies of this form at your next appointment. For a digital version, visit www.prevention.va.gov/docs/VANCP_MyHealthChoicesV2508Fhr.pdf.



Benefits of MyHealthVet



MyHealthVet is an online resource to help Veterans communicate and manage their health with their VA health care team. It's a convenient and helpful way to stay in touch and be involved in your own care. All enrolled Veterans are encouraged to sign up for an account.

Basic Account – You can record and track your health measurements and information, such as blood pressure, blood sugar and cholesterol, along with your personal health goals.

Premium Account – When you upgrade to a Premium account from a Basic account, you can access even more tools and resources to get the most out of your MyHealthVet account. This upgrade first requires VA to verify your identity. Once upgraded, you can see parts of your medical record, handle your appointments, and refill prescriptions. For some health care teams, you can also use secure messaging for non-urgent issues.

To sign up for either type of MyHealthVet account, visit **www.myhealth.va.gov** or ask your VA provider.

You & Your Appointments

As a Veteran enrolled in VA health care, you have many options for keeping track and scheduling appointments. Choose what works best for you.



My HealthVet (www.myhealth.va.gov)

- If you have a Premium account, you can view VA appointments or add non-VA appointments, look up past appointments, and set email reminders for upcoming VA appointments. Plus, you can access VA online scheduling where you can schedule some kinds of appointments.



VA Online Scheduling - In addition to accessing this feature from your Premium MyHealthVet account, it's also available as a mobile app or on a web-based device. Use this convenient resource to request, view, and cancel appointments; send messages; and receive appointment notices.



VA Video Connect - Veterans can reach their VA health care team over a secure and private video connection. This may be more convenient for you and reduce travel time. It can be used as a mobile app or on a web-based device.



To download these apps, or to access web-based versions of VA Online Scheduling and VA Video Connect, visit VA's app store at **www.mobile.va.gov**.

Health Screenings

Always discuss which health screenings you need with your health care team based on your personal health risk and medical history.

Screening Test or Exam	Recommendation	Date Done
Blood cholesterol and Triglycerides	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.	
Colon cancer screening	Age 50–75. Discuss how often and which tests are recommended with your provider.	
Depression	Yearly	
High blood pressure	Every 2 years or more	
HIV infection	Once	
Overweight & obesity	Every year	
Syphilis	Discuss your need to be tested with your provider.	
Tobacco	Every visit	
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.	

Talk with your health care team about screenings for Hepatitis B and C, PTSD, military sexual trauma and diabetes. Visit www.prevention.va.gov/index.asp for the full recommended screening schedule.

Know Your Numbers

< is less than > is greater than

Blood pressure (mm Hg)	Ranges	My Goal	Keep Records
Normal blood pressure	< 120/80		
High blood pressure	> 140/90		

Ask your doctor what your target goal is.
Prehypertension is between the normal and high blood pressure ranges.

Blood cholesterol (mg/dL)*	Ranges	My Goals	Keep Records
Total cholesterol	< 200		
LDL (bad) cholesterol	< 130		
HDL (good) cholesterol	> 40 Men > 50 Women		
Triglycerides	< 150		

*Ask your doctor about using target 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.

Body Mass Index (BMI)	Ranges	My Goal	Keep Records
Underweight	Below 18.5		
Healthy weight	18.5–24.9		
Overweight	25.0–29.9		
Obese	30.0+		

Find your BMI at www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/assessing/index.html

Waist Size (inches)	Ranges	My Goal	Keep Records
Desirable for men	< 40		
Desirable for women	< 35		

Blood Glucose (mg/dL) (fasting)	Ranges	My Goals	Keep Records
Normal blood glucose	80–100		
Pre-diabetes (for diagnosing)	100–125		
Diabetes (for diagnosing)	126+		
A1C (for diagnosing pre-diabetes)	5.7–6.4		
A1C (for diagnosing diabetes)	6.5+		

Health Contacts & Phone Numbers

EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS

Emergency Medical Service: 911 or _____

Ambulance Service: _____

Fire: _____

Police: _____

Poison Control Center: 1-800-222-1222



January 2020

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			New Year's Day Outpatient Clinics Closed	1	2	3
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20 Martin Luther King Jr. Day Outpatient Clinics Closed	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

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: _____

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.benefits.va.gov/insurance

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



**Veterans
Crisis Line**
1-800-273-8255 PRESS 1

VA Resources

VA Facility Locator

www.vets.gov/facilities

MOVE! Program

www.move.va.gov

MyHealtheVet

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

VA Caregiver Support Line

1-855-260-3274
www.caregiver.va.gov

Veterans Health Library

www.veteranshealthlibrary.org

Whole Health

www.va.gov/patientcenteredcare

MyVA 311: one number to reach VA

1-844-MyVA311 (1-844-698-2311)

Women Veterans Call Center

1-855-829-6636
www.womenshealth.va.gov

MyVA

www.va.gov

SmokeFreeVET

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



VA Mobile Health – mobile.va.gov



Stay Quit Coach



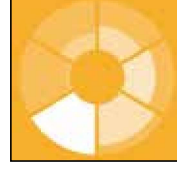
Mindfulness Coach



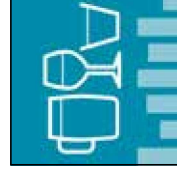
MOVE! Coach



Moving Forward



Mood Coach



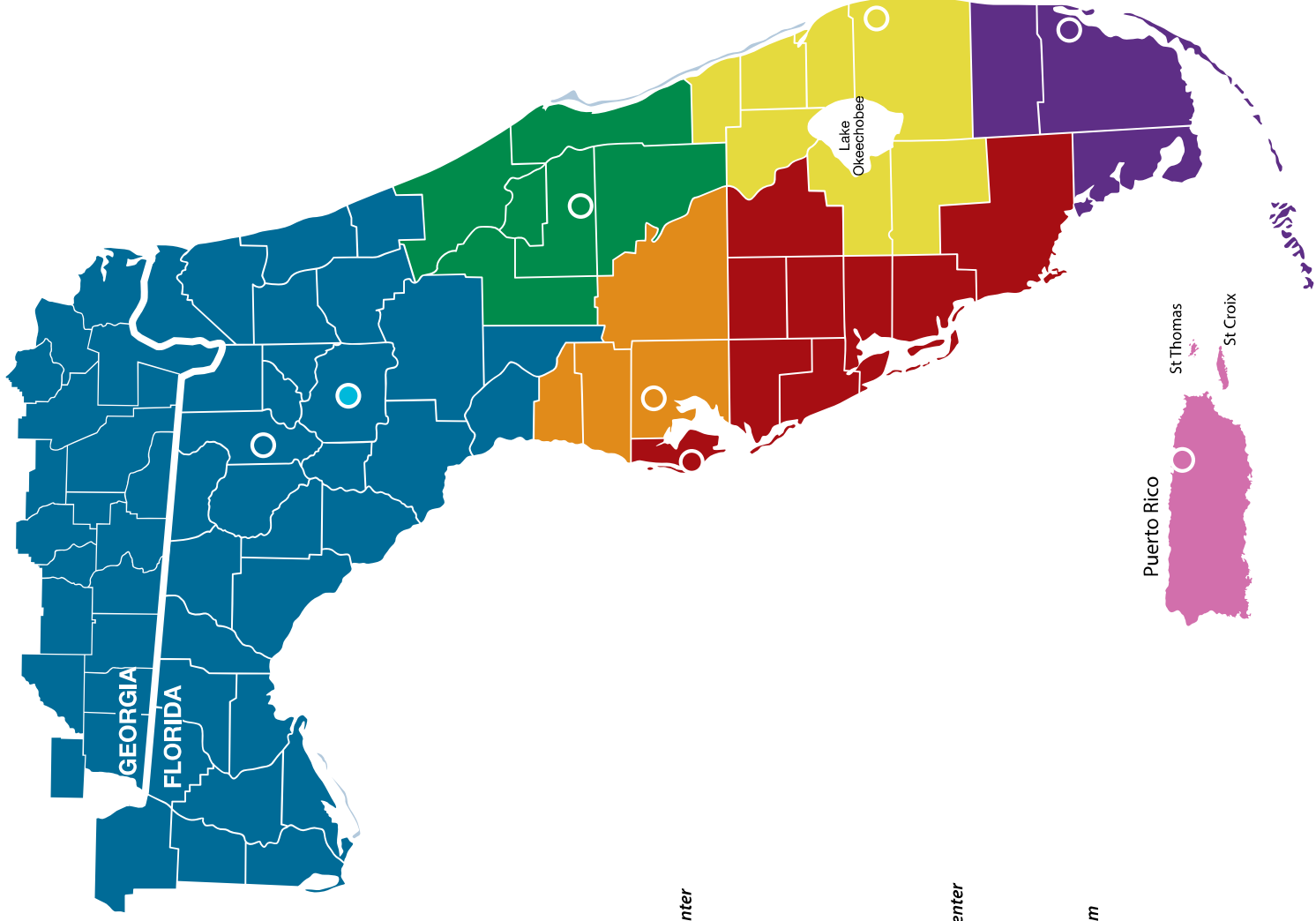
VetChange

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 33744
 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