



Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
VA MIDWEST HEALTH CARE NETWORK
Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) 23
Network Update
June 2013
www.visn23.va.gov



Were you at Camp Lejeune between 1957 and 1987?



You may be eligible for VA health care. From the 1950s through the 1980s, people living or working at the U.S. Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, were potentially exposed to drinking water contaminated with industrial solvents, benzene, and other chemicals.

New health benefits

Under a [law signed Aug. 6, 2012 \(215 KB\)](#), Veterans and family members who served on active duty or resided at Camp Lejeune for 30 days or more between Jan. 1, 1957 and Dec. 31, 1987 may be eligible for medical care through VA for 15 health conditions.

[Learn more](#) about Camp Lejeune health benefits and which conditions are covered by logging on to VAs public health website at <http://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/camp-lejeune/>



Smokers, Text 2 Be Smokefree

For smokers enrolled in VA health care, help with quitting just became more personal. VA has launched a new text messaging program, SmokefreeVET, to support smokers during a quit attempt. Veterans that opt in to the program will receive around-the-clock quitting tips and encouragement to prevent relapse.

The best part—these tips and words of encouragement can be tailored to unique situations. Users who wake in the morning with an urge for a cigarette can text the keyword “URGE” to IQUIT (47848) and receive a motivating message to help resist the craving. STRESS and SMOKED are additional keywords that can offer customized support.

To receive text messages, Veterans can choose to opt in to the eight-week program, which begins two weeks prior to and ends six weeks after, the quit date. There is no charge for this program. However, standard cellular message and data rates may apply. Full participation includes several text messages per day. As an alternative, users can use keywords to receive text messages only when they need or want them.

There are two ways to sign up for SmokefreeVET:

1. Text the word VET to IQUIT (47848) from your mobile phone or
2. Visit www.smokefree.gov/VET.

For more information about SmokefreeVET or VA’s smoking cessation resources, contact your VA providers or visit www.publichealth.va.gov/smoking.

We know quitting is hard, but you can do it. VA can help!

June is PTSD Awareness Month



What Is PTSD Awareness Month?

The National Center for PTSD promotes awareness of PTSD and effective treatments throughout the year. Starting in 2010, Congress named June 27th PTSD Awareness Day ([S. Res. 455](#)). Since then, during the month of June, we ask everyone to help us raise PTSD awareness.

Following trauma, most people experience stress reactions but many do not develop PTSD. Mental health experts are not sure why some people develop PTSD and others do not. However, if stress reactions do not improve over time and they disrupt everyday life, help should be sought to determine if PTSD is a factor. The purpose of PTSD Awareness Month is to encourage everyone to raise public awareness of PTSD and its effective treatments so that everyone can help people affected by PTSD.

Take the Step: Learn more about PTSD.

The 2013 PTSD Awareness Month campaign invites you to "Take the Step." Raise PTSD awareness by:

- Learning more about PTSD
- Challenging your beliefs
- Exploring the options
- Reaching out and making a difference

Each week VA will highlight a topic with specific information, resources, and support for you to use. Be prepared so you can help someone who has PTSD take the step to get needed care. Getting help for PTSD takes strength and support. To learn more, log on to VA National Center for PTSD website at http://www.ptsd.va.gov/about/ptsd-awareness/ptsd_awareness_month.asp. Or, contact a VA mental health professional at your local VA medical facility.

Minneapolis Patient Parking Ramp Construction

The Minneapolis VA Health Care System began construction of a new parking ramp on April 1, 2013. The project is expected to be completed in the fall of 2014. The new parking ramp will provide 520 parking spots in front of the main medical center with four levels of parking, elevator, and sidewalk to Building 70 Outpatient Entrance. During construction, patients and visitors are encouraged to use Lot 6, which is on the south side of One Veterans Drive. If the lot is full there is open/overflow parking in several lots toward 54th Street on the north side of campus. County Service van and Volunteer parking will not change during construction. We apologize for any inconveniences this is causing and we thank you for your patience during this construction. For more information on significant changes to parking assignments log on to the Minneapolis VA Health Care System website at <http://www.minneapolis.va.gov/news/MinneapolisPatientParkingRamp.asp>



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Fargo VA Health Care System to Host Drop-In Legal Clinic



On June 18th, the Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans (MACV) invites Veterans to participate in a free Drop-In Legal Clinic in the 3rd floor auditorium of the Fargo VA Health Care System from 9am to 3pm.

Attorneys, MACV staff and County Veteran Service Officers will be available throughout the day to assist Veterans with questions, legal forms and counsel. A range of topics, such as child support, family questions, employment, benefits, expungement and debt collection will be addressed by the representatives.

Veterans do not need to make an appointment, but they are asked to bring their VA identification card and any legal documentation that they would like to have reviewed. For more information about the Drop-In Legal Clinic for Veterans, contact Sara Sommarstrom at 651-224-0292 or email ssommarstrom@mac-v.org.

*Law Clinics are also held at the St. Cloud VAMC on June 4 and 18 from Noon – 2:00 PM, Building T-100

Encourage a Fellow Veteran to Apply for VA Health Care

VA has made it convenient and easy to enroll or update information. The fastest and easiest way is online at <https://www.1010ez.med.va.gov/>

OTHER OPTIONS INCLUDE...



By Phone

You can apply for enrollment of your benefits or update your information by phone by calling **1-877-222-VETS (8387)**, Monday through Friday, between the hours of 8:00 AM and 8:00 PM (Eastern Time). A VA representative will have your completed form sent to you for verification and signature.



By Mail

Print the [10-10EZ form](#) or [10-10EZR form](#) or call to have the form mailed to you. Complete and sign the application, then mail it to:

Health Eligibility Center
2957 Clairmont Road, Suite 200
Atlanta, GA 30329-1647



In Person

Visit a [VA Medical Center or clinic](#) nearest you to apply for enrollment or if you are already enrolled, to update your information in person.

Calendar of Events – June 2013

June 4 [Law Clinic](#), 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM (CST), St. Cloud VAMC, Bldg. T-100 June 5

June 4 [Women's Drum Circle](#), 5:30 – 6:30 PM (CST), St. Cloud VAMC, Building 8 (Basement)

June 6, [Cancer Survivor's Day - Festival for Life](#), 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM, Minneapolis VAMC, Flag Atrium

June 7 [Red Cross Blood Donation](#), 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM (CST), Minneapolis VAMC, Flag Atrium

June 7, 21, 28 [Tobacco Cessation](#), 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM (CST), Sioux Falls VAMC, Room F07, Lobby

June 7 [New Volunteer Orientation Course](#), 1:30 PM - 4:30 PM (CST), Omaha VAMC, 4101 Woolworth Ave, Omaha, NE, Education Conference Room

June 11 [Red Cross Blood Donation](#), 11:30 AM – 5:25 PM (CST), Minneapolis VAMC, Flag Atrium

June 11 [Women's Drum Circle](#), 5:30 – 6:30 PM (CST), St. Cloud VAMC, Building 8 (Basement)

June 12 [Re-Creation Musical](#), 2:00 PM – 5:00 PM, St. Cloud VAMC, Building 8 (Auditorium)

June 14 [Red Cross Blood Donation](#), 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM (CST), Minneapolis VAMC, Flag Atrium

June 15 [Veterans Freedom Music Festival](#), 9:00 AM-9 PM, 600 South 70th St., Lincoln, NE

June 15 [2013 Block Party](#), Circle Lot (Building 96)

June 18 [Law Clinic](#), 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM (CST), St. Cloud VAMC, Bldg. T-100

June 18 [Women's Drum Circle](#), 5:30 – 6:30 PM (CST), St. Cloud VAMC, Building 8 (Basement)

June 19 [VA Pantry](#), 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CST), Omaha VAMC, 4101 Woolworth Ave, Bldg D

June 19 [Voices for Veterans radio show](#), 8:10 - 8:45 AM (CST), AM 1240 WJON, (St. Cloud listening area)

June 21 [Red Cross Blood Donation](#), 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM (CST), Minneapolis VAMC, Flag Atrium

June 21 [New Volunteer Orientation Course](#), 1:30 PM - 4:30 PM (CST), Omaha VAMC, 4101 Woolworth Ave, Omaha, NE, Education Conference Room

June 25 [Red Cross Blood Donation](#), 11:30 AM – 5:25 PM (CST), Minneapolis VAMC, Flag Atrium

June 28 [Red Cross Blood Donation](#), 11:30 AM – 5:25 PM (CST), Minneapolis VAMC, Flag Atrium

July 1 [VA Pantry](#), 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CST), VA Clinic, 600 S. 70th St, Lincoln, Nebraska, Bldg 40, Rm 105

* Dates and times are correct as of May 31, 2013. Information may change, please check local VA Health Care System websites for the latest information.

For More information, call the Network Office at (651) 405-5600 or
Log on at www.visn23.va.gov or email sharyl.schaepe@va.gov

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www.centraliowa.va.gov
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