



Health Questions Your Doctor, Nurse, and Pharmacist Want to Answer

Every time you talk with a doctor, nurse, or pharmacist, use the Ask Me 3™ questions to better understand your health.

1. What is my main problem?
2. What do I need to do?
3. Why is it important for me to do this?



Bring your medicines with you the next time you visit your doctor or pharmacist. Or, write down the names of the medicines you take. Like many people, you may see more than one doctor. It is important that your doctors know all the medicines you are taking so that you can stay healthy.

Are you nervous to ask your health provider questions? Don't be. You may be surprised to learn that your medical team wants to know that you need help. Learn more at:
<http://www.minneapolis.va.gov/features/3Questions.asp>



Sign Up for Email Updates

It's easy. It's quick. Just a few clicks and you'll be connected.

We heard you. VA realizes that communications isn't "one size fits all" — each one of you expects to receive information in different ways, tailored to your specific needs.

VA's email updates let you determine how you want to get that information from your VA Medical Center or health area of interest.

Veterans and their families can sign up for email updates from their VA Medical Center and the numerous Veterans Health Administration program offices.

It's easy. It's quick. Just a few clicks and you will get regular updates on the latest information about VA's health programs and the numerous services available to Vets.

<http://www.va.gov/health/NewsFeatures/20120124a.asp>

- First, go to your VA Medical Center's home page or, start on the [VHA Health home page](#).
- On the right side of the page, find the Email Updates box.
- On the "New Subscriber" page, tell us if you want to receive email or text messages, enter your address and click Next.
- After you have successfully subscribed, click the "More topics" button to see other Veterans email topics you can subscribe to, like Returning Service Members, the Vantage Point blog, emergency notifications or other VA Medical Centers.

Try it! It works. It's the email you'll definitely want to open every day.

National Veterans Creative Arts Competition



If you are a Veteran with creative talent in music, dance, acting, writing or visual arts like painting, photography, crafts or sculpture, the call is out for you! If you are enrolled at a VA medical center, out-patient clinic or state Veterans home, you are welcome to participate in the National Veterans Creative Arts Competition. Contact a VA Recreation Therapist to learn how you can enter the competition. Read more at:

<http://www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/5776/national-veterans-creative-arts-competition/>

Women Veterans PTSD Retreat – Fort Meade, South Dakota



The specialized Post Traumatic Stress Disorder Outpatient Treatment Program (PCT) of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Black Hills Health Care System is hosting its semi-annual women's retreat April 27, 28, and 29, 2012 in Fort Meade, South Dakota.

The semi-annual weekend retreat is for women Veterans of all eras diagnosed with PTSD and female family members (wives, significant others, mothers, adult daughters, etc.) of male Veterans diagnosed with PTSD. The weekend retreat offers a condensed psycho educational, experiential format that educates participants of the debilitating symptoms of PTSD, effects on the family, with a particular emphasis on developing healthier coping strategies and increasing one's social support network.

Participants are responsible for all transportation costs. Should you not be able to afford transportation costs, "Air Compassion for Veteran's" program may be able to assist. To apply for assistance call their Operations Team: 888-662-6794 or Email the Operations Team at: ops@aircompassionforveterans.org.

Seating is limited to 35 participants and is on a first come, first served basis. Participants must be screened and pre-register by phoning the PCT Program at 605-720-7449 or 1-800-743-1070, ext. 7449.

For information on what is happening at any of your VA Health Care System visit your facility website:

VA Black Hills HCS	www.blackhills.va.gov
VA Central Iowa HCS	www.fargo.va.gov
Iowa City VA HCS	www.iowacity.va.gov
Minneapolis VA HCS	www.minneapolis.va.gov
VA Nebraska-Western Iowa HCS	www.nebraska.va.gov
Sioux Falls VA HCS	www.siouxfalls.va.gov
St. Cloud VA HCS	www.stcloud.va.gov
VISN 23	www.visn23.va.gov



VA
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VA MIDWEST HEALTH CARE NETWORK
Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) 23
Network Update
February 2012

Calendar of Events – February 2012

February 7-8: [VA Black Hills Health Care System](#) - **Wyoming Veterans Assistance**, from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. (MST) at the Crook County Courthouse, 309 Cleveland St., Sundance, Wyo. The event is put on by the Wyoming Veterans Commission and Veterans can get help with claims, health care and benefits.

February 10: [VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System](#) - **Free tax assistance for Veterans and employees**, from 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. (CST) in the Pioneer Room of the Lincoln VA Clinic, 600 S. 70th St., Lincoln, Neb. IRS-certified volunteers will prepare 2011 federal and Nebraska tax returns free of charge. The Lincoln Earned Income Tax Credit Coalition is sponsoring this program to assist Veterans and employees on a first-come first-served basis. For more information, call Jana Jacobson-Langhorst at 402-489-3802, ext. 6804.

January 17 - February 21: [St. Cloud VA Health Care System](#) - **2012 Physically Disabled Veterans Turkey Hunt**, The St. Cloud VA Health Care System, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and the Minnesota National Guard, Camp Ripley will hold the 8th Annual Physically Disabled Veterans Turkey Hunt April 24-26, 2012, at Camp Ripley near Little Falls. Applications will be taken January 17 - February 21. Applicants should contact Dennis Erie at the St. Cloud VA Health Care System's Voluntary Service Office, 320-255-6394

February 15: [VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System](#) - **Veterans Information Forum**, from 6 - 7 p.m. (CST) in the Lincoln VA Clinic, Prairie Room, 2nd floor, 600 S. 70th St., Lincoln, Neb. Veterans who receive VA health care at the Lincoln VA, or those who are interested in learning about the benefits you may be eligible for are encouraged to attend this quarterly information forum. You will also have a chance to ask questions from the leadership of our health care system. For more information, call the Office of Public Affairs at 402-995-5547 or email VHANWIPUBLICAFFAIRS@va.gov.

February 20: [VA Central Iowa Health Care System](#) - **Local Veterans Creative Arts Competition Stage Show**, from 2 - 4 p.m. (CST) in the CLC/Bldg. 12 Multipurpose Room, VA Central Iowa Health Care System, 3600 30th St., Des Moines, Iowa. Come participate in the local competition in the areas of music, dance, drama or creative writing, or just come watch the show! All entries are due in by Feb. 16 to suzanne.anderson4@va.gov at 515-699-5999, ext. 4949.

February 21: [VA Central Iowa Health Care System](#) - **Local Veterans Creative Arts Art Display** from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. (CST) in the main lobby of Building 1, VA Central Iowa Health Care System, 3600 30th St., Des Moines, Iowa.

March 28: [VA Central Iowa Health Care System](#) - **Women Veterans Lunch and Service Project**, from 11 a.m. - 12 p.m. (CST) in Room 1632 of Building 1, VA Central Iowa Health Care System, 3600 30th St., Des Moines, Iowa. Come share a light lunch with other female veterans and work on a simple service project, such as making fleece blankets for hospitalized female veterans. All supplies will be furnished. Just bring yourself (and a sharp pair of scissors if you like!). For more information, contact Michelle Finley, Women Veterans Coordinator at 515-699-5999 ext. 5824

For More information, call the Network Office at (612) 725-1968,
Log on at www.visn23.va.gov, or email sharyl.schaepe@va.gov