

Eligibility for Health Care Benefits

VA healthcare benefits are available to all eligible Veterans.

If you served in Vietnam or another area where *Agent Orange* was sprayed, you do not have to prove that you were exposed to *Agent Orange* in order to get VA health care benefits related to *Agent Orange* exposure. This includes Veterans who served aboard smaller river patrol and swift boats that operated on the inland waterways of Vietnam (also known as 'Brown Water Veterans').

For More Information on Eligibility for Health Care Benefits

<http://www.4.va.gov/healtheligibility/eligibility> · 1.877.222.8387

Eligibility for Disability Compensation

Veterans may be eligible for disability compensation if they have a service-related disability and were discharged under other-than dishonorable-conditions. There are different eligibility requirements for Vietnam Veterans and Veterans who were exposed to herbicides outside of Vietnam.

Veterans who served in-country Vietnam between 1962 and 1975 (including those who visited Vietnam even briefly) and who have a disease that VA recognizes as associated with *Agent Orange* exposure are presumed to have been exposed to *Agent Orange*. This includes Veterans who served aboard smaller river patrol and swift boats that operated on inland waterways of Vietnam. Vietnam Veterans with these specific diseases do not have to show that their diseases are related to their military service to get disability compensation.

Vietnam Veterans who believe they have a disease caused by herbicide exposure, but that disease is not on VA's list of diseases associated with *Agent Orange* exposure, may be eligible for service-connection on a 'direct' basis as explained above. These Veterans must show that they were exposed to herbicides during military service.

For More Information on Disability Compensation

<http://vabenefits.vba.va.gov/vonapp/mainasp> · 1.800.827.1000



butler.va.gov



facebook.com/VAButlerPA



twitter.com/VAButlerPA



talkshoe.com/tc/85029

Form: 529AO-01 Published: 7/10, 1/11, 7/11



Information for Vietnam Veterans

"Within the soul of each Vietnam Veteran, there is probably something that says 'bad war, good soldier.' Only now are Americans beginning to separate the war from the warrior."

Max Cleland
Former VA Chief, US Senator, Vietnam Veteran

Agent Orange

During the Vietnam conflict, the U.S. military sprayed millions of gallons of herbicides — **better known as Agent Orange** — to remove leaves from trees that provided cover for enemy forces in country. Some Vietnam Veterans were exposed to *Agent Orange*. VA and many other government departments and agencies have conducted research studies on the possible health effects of *Agent Orange* exposure on American Veterans — and recognizes certain illnesses associated with exposure to *Agent Orange*.

Veterans' Diseases Associated with Agent Orange Exposure

American Veterans who served in Vietnam may be eligible for disability-compensation and healthcare benefits for diseases that VA has recognized as associated with exposure to Agent Orange and other herbicides:

Acute and Subacute Peripheral Neuropathy — a nervous system condition that causes numbness, tingling and motor weakness. VA's rating regulations stipulate it must be at least ten percent disabling within one year of exposure to *Agent Orange* and resolved within two years after the date it began.

AL Amyloidosis — a rare disease caused by an abnormal protein, amyloid, that enters tissues or organs.

Chloracne (or Similar Acneform Disease) — A skin condition that occurs soon after exposure to chemicals and looks like common forms of acne seen in teenagers. Under VA's rating regulations, Chloracne must be at least ten percent disabling within one year of exposure to *Agent Orange*.

Chronic Lymphocytic Leukemia (Now Expanded to B Cell Leukemias) — a type of cancer which affects white blood cells. Currently, only Chronic Lymphocytic Leukemia is considered a 'presumptive' disease associated with *Agent Orange* exposure. However, on March 25, 2010, VA published a proposed regulation to establish B Cell Leukemias (includes chronic lymphocytic leukemia, hairy cell leukemia, and others) as associated with *Agent Orange* exposure. When the regulation is final, eligible Vietnam Veterans may receive disability compensation for other B Cell Leukemias.*

Diabetes Mellitus (Type 2) — a disease characterized by high blood sugar levels resulting from the body's inability to respond properly to the hormone insulin.

Hodgkin's Disease — a malignant lymphoma (cancer) that is characterized by progressive enlargement of the lymph nodes, liver and spleen and by progressive anemia.

Ischemic Heart Disease — a disease characterized by a reduced supply of blood to the heart that leads to chest pain. On March 25, 2010, VA published a proposed regulation that will establish Ischemic Heart Disease as associated with exposure to *Agent Orange*. When the regulation is final, eligible Vietnam Veterans may receive disability compensation for this disease.*

Multiple Myeloma — a disorder that causes an overproduction of certain proteins from white blood cells.

Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma — a group of cancers that affect the lymph glands and other lymphatic tissue.

Parkinson's Disease — a motor system condition with symptoms that include a trembling of the hands, imbalance and loss of facial expression. On March 25, 2010, VA published a proposed regulation that will establish Parkinson's disease as associated with *Agent Orange* exposure. When the regulation is final, eligible Vietnam Veterans may receive disability compensation for this disease.*

Porphyria Cutanea Tarda — a disorder characterized by liver dysfunction and by thinning and blistering of the skin in sun-exposed areas. Under VA's rating regulations, it must be at least ten percent disabling within one year of *Agent Orange* exposure.

Prostate Cancer — cancer of the prostate; one of the most common cancers among men.

Respiratory Cancers — cancers of the lung, larynx, trachea and bronchus.

Soft Tissue Sarcoma (other than Osteosarcoma, Chondrosarcoma, Kaposi's Sarcoma, or Mesothelioma) — a group of different types of cancers in body tissues such as muscle, fat, blood and lymph vessels and connective tissues.

Birth Defects in Children of Vietnam Veterans

VA has recognized certain birth defects associated with exposure to Agent Orange or service in Vietnam:

Spina Bifida (except Spina Bifida Occulta) — a neural tube birth defect that results from the failure of the bony portion of the spine to close properly in the developing fetus during early pregnancy.

Birth Defects in Children of Women Vietnam Veterans — covered birth defects include a wide range of conditions associated with women Veterans' service in Vietnam.

For specific information regarding Agent Orange, its associated diseases and/or birth defects in children of Vietnam Veterans, call the Toll Free Helpline at 1-800-749-8387, press 3.

* On March 25, 2010, VA published a proposed regulation that will establish this disease as associated with exposure to *Agent Orange*. When the regulation is final, eligible Vietnam Veterans may receive disability compensation for this disease.