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Dear Veteran:

Welcome to the Harry S. Truman Memorial Veterans’ Hospital and our Community Based Outpatient Clinics. It is our honor and privilege to serve our nation’s heroes. We are committed to providing high quality and compassionate health care to Veterans.

We believe that this handbook will help to inform you about our services. The information should make it easier for you to use our healthcare system. If you have any questions that are not addressed in this book, please ask a member of your healthcare team to help you.

It is our priority to give you the highest quality care in a timely manner using the most up-to-date technologies and services. You are our customer and our reason for being here. All of us at Truman VA and our Community Based Outpatient Clinics thank you for your service to our country.

Sincerely,

SALLIE HOUSER-HANFELDER, FACHE
Director
VA Health Care Services

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) places a high priority on providing excellent health care to Veterans. VA provides a full spectrum of health care services, including health promotion, disease prevention, diagnostic, therapeutic, rehabilitative and palliative care through the Veterans Health Administration (VHA).

VA currently has 153 Medical Centers located across the United States that provide a large range of treatment services such as surgery, critical care, mental health, orthopedics, pharmacy, radiology, and physical therapy. VA is proud to provide a team of highly qualified health care professionals dedicated to the health care needs of Veterans.

VA strives to ensure that Veterans have access to all needed services wherever they receive VA health care. This may be on-site during inpatient hospitalization, at one of the primary or specialty care clinics, at a Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC), in a Community Living Center or in a residential care facility. However, all services are not provided at every site where VA health care is provided. Sometimes Veterans need to travel to another VA facility or a contracted community care facility to obtain the needed service. If that is necessary for you, your VA Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT) will work with you to obtain these services.

Mission Statement:

To Improve the Health of the Veterans we serve by providing primary care, specialty care, extended care and related social support services in an integrated healthcare delivery system.

Core Values:

- **Integrity**: Act with high moral principle. Adhere to the highest professional standards. Maintain the trust and confidence of all with whom I engage.

- **Commitment**: Work diligently to serve Veterans and other beneficiaries. Be driven by an earnest belief in VA’s mission. Fulfill my individual responsibilities and organizational responsibilities.
• **Advocacy**: Be truly Veteran-centric by identifying, fully considering, and appropriately advancing the interests of Veterans and other beneficiaries.

• **Respect**: Treat all those I serve and with whom I work with dignity and respect. Show respect to earn it.

• **Excellence**: Strive for the highest quality and continuous improvement. Be thoughtful and decisive in leadership, accountable for my actions, willing to admit mistakes, and rigorous in correcting them.

**Goals:**

- Deliver exceptional health care as measured by VHA performance measures.
- Continuously improve the quality and safety of health care for Veterans.
- Improve and enhance employee satisfaction/development.
- Achieve the VHA access/timeliness national expectations.
- Create a healthcare environment characterized by patient-centered services and improved patient satisfaction with VA health care.

**History of the Columbia VAMC:**

The Columbia, Missouri VA facility was constructed between 1968 and 1972. The first patient was admitted to the hospital in April 1972 and, in 1975 -- by an act of Congress - - the facility was renamed the **Harry S. Truman Memorial Veterans' Hospital**. In order to accommodate a burgeoning demand for outpatient services, plans for a clinical addition were submitted for Congressional and VA approval in September 1993. The final scope and budget were approved and authority granted in May 1994. Ground-breaking for the new facilities was held on November 27, 1995, in front of the hospital, where the new building would be located. The Dedication Ceremony for the Ambulatory Care Addition was held on March 20, 1998. The largest expansion of the facility is underway currently with construction of new operating room suites and support functions. That major project should be completed in early 2013.

**Internet Address:** [http://www.columbiamo.va.gov/](http://www.columbiamo.va.gov/)
**Facebook Address:** [http://www.facebook.com/VAColumbiaMO](http://www.facebook.com/VAColumbiaMO)
**Twitter Address:** [http://twitter.com/VAColumbiaMO](http://twitter.com/VAColumbiaMO)

**Local Columbia Veteran Service Organizations**

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<tr>
<td>American Legion (AL)</td>
<td>(573) 814-6010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disabled American Veterans (DAV)</td>
<td>(573) 814-6002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missouri One Step: Workforce Development &amp; State Vocational Rehab.</td>
<td>(573) 814-6003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)</td>
<td>(573) 814-6007</td>
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Inpatient Care Services
VA inpatient care includes a full spectrum of treatment services:
- Acute Care Inpatient Units – Medical, Surgical and Psychiatric
- Intensive Care Unit and Step Down Unit

Ancillary Services
VA health care PACT teamlets often use ancillary services to help diagnose and/or treat a Veteran’s medical condition. These services include:

- Audiology (hearing)
- Dental
- Diagnostic Laboratory
- Nutrition and Food Service
- Nuclear Medicine (imaging)
- Occupational Therapy
- Pharmacy
- Physical Therapy
- Prosthetics (artificial limbs, equipment, devices)
- Radiology (x-rays and imaging)
- Recreation Therapy
- Respiratory Therapy
- Social Work (housing, discharge planning, family support)
- Speech Therapy
- Spinal Cord Injury
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Visual Impairment Services

Specialty Care Services
Specialty care services provide expert knowledge to optimize the treatment provided in unique or complicated courses of care. The list of VA specialty care services includes:

- Cardiology (heart and veins)
- Dermatology
- Diabetes and Endocrinology
- Infectious Disease
- Nephrology (kidney)
- Neurology (nerves)
• Oncology (cancer)
• Pacemaker (heart)
• Pulmonary (lungs)

**Surgery Services**
Surgery services also provide expert knowledge to optimize the treatment provided in unique or complicated courses of care. The list of VA surgical specialty care services includes:

• Anesthesiology
• Eye Care (Optometry & Ophthalmology)
• General Surgery
• Orthopedics (bone and muscle)
• Podiatry (feet)
• Urology
• Vascular Surgery

**Truman Community Living Center**
VA Community Living Centers were formerly known as VA Nursing Home Care Units. They serve Veterans:

• with chronic stable conditions that can be served in our care facility;
• who need rehabilitation in various areas such as physical, speech or occupational therapy or short-term specialized services such as wound healing or intravenous therapy;
• who need comfort and care at the end of life.

The goals of care are to restore Veterans to maximize function and independence, prevent further decline and/or provide comfort when dying. The Truman Community Living Center is located on the third floor of the facility.

**Behavioral Health Services**
VA places a high priority on providing mental health services for returning Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) Veterans as well as for those who served in prior eras.

VA provides specialty inpatient and outpatient mental health services at its medical centers and CBOCs. In addition, readjustment counseling services are available for Veterans and their families at Vet Centers across the nation. Our goal is to
support recovery and enable Veterans with mental health problems to live meaningful lives in their communities and achieve their full potential.

VA mental health services are available in specialty clinics, primary care clinics, nursing homes and residential care facilities where Veterans receive health care. Specialized programs such as mental health intensive case management, day centers, work programs and psychosocial rehabilitation are provided for those with serious mental health problems.

VA is integrating mental health care into the primary care setting. Veterans may receive mental health care from their primary care or from a collaborating behavior health provider based in the primary care clinic.

The list of VA mental health services and programs includes:

- Inpatient Care
- Residential Care
- Outpatient Mental Health Care
- Homeless Programs
- Specialized PTSD Services
- Military Sexual Trauma
- Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Recovery Services
- Substance Use Disorders
- Suicide Prevention
- Geriatrics
- Violence Prevention
- Evidence-Based Psychotherapy Programs
- Mental Health Disaster Response/Post Deployment Activities.

Health Promotion and Disease Prevention
Veterans receive clinical preventive services from their primary care PACT teamlets. These services include immunizations to prevent disease, screening tests to detect disease at an early stage and behavioral counseling to avoid or reduce risk factors for disease.

Veterans participate in health education programs to help them manage their health problems. They also participate in health promotion programs to learn healthy living skills.

Social Work Services
VA social workers have assignments in Behavioral Health, Primary Care, Home Based Primary Care, CBOCs, the Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom/
Operation New Dawn (OEF/OIF/OND) Program, the Community Living Center and Contract Nursing Homes/Contract Adult Day Health Care as well as in Caregiver Support. They provide and coordinate case management, psychosocial assessment and, as needed, clinical interventions with Veterans and their families. Social workers serve on interdisciplinary teams to coordinate care based on a Veteran’s individualized treatment plan.

**Prosthetics**

VA Prosthetics furnishes properly prescribed prosthetic equipment, sensory aids and devices to Veterans in accordance with authorizing laws, regulations and policies. Prosthetics serves as the pharmacy for assistive aids and as case manager for the prosthetic equipment needs of disabled Veterans.

**Women’s Health**

VA is committed to meeting the unique needs of Women Veterans by delivering the highest quality health care, while offering the privacy, dignity and sensitivity to gender-specific needs that Women Veterans deserve. Truman VA offers a variety of services including:

- Primary care and women’s gender-specific health care (mammograms, menopause evaluation and treatment, hormone replacement, birth control, breast and gynecological care, maternity, and limited infertility);
- Health promotion (healthy living, nutrition and weight management, stop smoking program, etc.);
- Disease prevention (osteoporosis and cancer screening);
- Mental health (management of depression, anxiety, and stress; adjustment from deployment; counseling and treatment for military sexual trauma, parenting and caregiver issues, violence and abuse, and alcohol and drug dependence);
- Medical specialties and surgical care services;
- Emergency services including having a nurse available to you by telephone 24 hours a day, 7 days a week;
- Special programs such as vocational rehabilitation, educational opportunities, Links to Job and Career Counseling, Services for Homeless Veterans; and
- Long term care.

Truman VA has a full-time Women Veterans Program Manager who can help facilitate your care with all the services you may need. Call (573) 814-6457.

**Voluntary Service:**

Voluntary Service is located on the third floor of Truman VA in Room D332. Normal hours of operation for the Voluntary Service office are 8 am - 4:30 pm, Monday-Friday. Contact Information: (573) 814-6000, extension 2538
Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteers are placed in assignments within the medical center and Truman VA’s CBOCs. Our goal is to meet the needs of Veterans and make good use of the talents, skills and interests of our volunteers. While volunteer assignments vary, these main categories of assignments comprise many of the opportunities available:

- **Patient Transport**: Assist patients to and from inpatient units and clinic areas; transport medical records, lab specimens and run errands.
- **Volunteer Drivers**: Drive patients to and from the medical center for appointments. Drivers are needed in Columbia, Kirksville, Jefferson City, Waynesville, Cuba, Buffalo and Springfield.
- **Cheer Cart**: Visit patient rooms offering books, magazines and newspapers or arts, crafts, and cards.
- **Clerical**: Assist in inpatient and outpatient settings with various clerical duties.
- **Volunteer Visitor**: Assist nursing staff by visiting patients and helping patients with personal tasks.
- **Coffee Cart**: Serve coffee and refreshments to Veterans, family members and visitors in waiting areas.
- **Information Desk**: Provide patients, family members and visitors with directions and needed information.
- **Recreation Therapy Service**: Assist staff with recreational and special events.

In addition to the coordination of volunteers, Voluntary Service is also responsible for all donations made to Truman VA. Monetary or material donations should be provided to Voluntary Service staff so that proper credit can be given to the donor and an acknowledgment letter can be provided for tax purposes. Many of the special events coordinated by Voluntary Service are made possible through the generous gifts of donors.

**Agent Cashier**

Agent Cashier is located on the first floor next to the front doors of the facility. Hours of operation are 8:30 am to 4:30 pm, Monday – Friday.

**Release of Information**

Release of Information is located in the basement in room E002. The phone number is (573) 814-6000 extension(s) 3174 or 3175. Hours of operation are 8:00 am to 4:30 pm.

**Veterans Canteen Service Retail Store**

The Veterans Canteen Service Retail Store is located on the first floor next to the Food Court. The hours of operation are 7:00 am to 4:00 pm., Monday-Friday, and 9:00 am to 2:00 pm, Saturday.
Pastoral Care
Truman VA offers pastoral care services and on-call chaplain service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Phone (573) 814-6000 extension 2201 or request a chaplain be paged for an emergency.
Eligibility and Benefits

Annually, VA publishes a booklet, *Department of Veterans Affairs Health Care Overview*, which contains up-to-date information on eligibility, enrollment and VA health care benefits. This booklet is the authoritative source for describing eligibility and health benefits for all Veterans. You received a copy of this booklet when you enrolled in VA health care. You can also download a copy of the booklet at: [http://www.va.gov/healtheligibility/library/pubs/healthcareoverview](http://www.va.gov/healtheligibility/library/pubs/healthcareoverview).

It is a very helpful resource and we encourage you to refer to it whenever you have questions about your eligibility for specific health care benefits. It also provides answers to frequently asked questions about eligibility and benefits.

Here are the topics in the booklet:

- Introduction and overview
- Veterans online access to VA health information and services (My HealtheVet)
- Eligibility and medical program benefits
  - Basic eligibility
  - Minimum duty requirements
  - Women Veterans eligibility
  - Readjustment counseling services
  - Suicide prevention lifeline
  - Medically related travel benefits
- VA health care enrollment
  - Enrollment restriction
  - Recently discharged combat Veterans
  - Means testing (financial assessment)
  - Geographically-based means testing
  - Catastrophically disabled
  - Income verification
  - Financial hardships
  - Veterans identification card
• Updating your information
• Private health insurance
• Insurance collections
• Medicare Part D prescription drug coverage
• Priority Group 8 enrollment relaxation (New in 2009)

• Priority Groups
  o VA Health Care Enrollment Priority Groups 1-8

• Co-pays
  • Types of co-pays—outpatient, medication, inpatient, long term care
  • Veterans who are not required to make co-pays
  • Services exempt from inpatient and outpatient co-pays

• Acute care benefits
  • Standard benefits—preventive care services, outpatient diagnostic and treatment services, inpatient diagnostic and treatment services, prescription drugs
  • Limited benefits—emergency care, ambulance services, dental care, durable medical equipment, eyeglasses, hearing aids

• General exclusions
  • VA foreign medical program

• Long-term care benefits
  • Standard benefits
  • Financial assessment for long-term care services
  • Limited benefits

• Additional VA health benefits for dependents and survivors.

Also, you can call toll-free (877) 222-VETS [8387] to get more information on VA health care eligibility and benefits.
How VA Health Care Works for You

Choose a Facility
You have a choice of facilities from which you can receive primary care.

Medical Center:
Harry S. Truman Memorial Veterans’ Hospital
800 Hospital Drive
Columbia, Missouri 65201
(573) 814-6000

Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOC):
Fort Leonard Wood  (573) 329-8305
Kirksville          (660) 627-8387
Jefferson City     (573) 635-0233
Lake of Ozarks     (573) 302-7890
Mexico             (573) 581-9630
Sedalia           (660) 826-3800
St. James          (573) 265-0448

CBOCs were established to provide care closer to a Veteran’s home. Requests for care at a CBOC will be based on your home address. Once you choose a facility, it is important to maintain your care with that facility so you can get to know your VA PACT teamlet and they can get to know you.

Assignment to a PACT teamlet
Primary Care is your gateway to VA health care. Your **Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT)** can take care of most of your health care needs and refer you to specialty care as needed. Each patient will be assigned a provider, RN nursing case manager, LPN and a scheduling clerk. That whole team, which most importantly includes the patient, will operate to provide efficient and evidence based care for acute and chronic illnesses. Disease prevention and health promotion are an important part of this new care model. Our goal is to provide care that is Veteran centered. Our goal is to improve access which may also include more nursing visits, telephone based care and eventually secure e-mail messaging.
Your PACT teamlet is responsible for:

- building a partnership with you to promote your health and well-being.
- providing or arranging for preventive health services such as immunizations and screenings.
- giving you medical care and coordinating your care with other services.
- providing you with education regarding healthy living habits, your health problems and any treatment you may need.

**Referrals**

Your PACT teamlet will coordinate all care for you. If you need to be evaluated or seen by a specialist, your Primary Care Provider will request a consultation from the specialty area you need. After the consultation request is made, the specialty care area will contact you about your appointment or your next step in care.

**Coordination of Care among VA Facilities**

Because you are enrolled in VA healthcare, you are eligible for care at any VA medical center. You will be asked to name your preferred facility, including the CBOCs. We encourage you to receive the majority of your care through your preferred facility and your primary care PACT teamlet.

If you travel a lot or live in more than one location, you may need to arrange for care at more than one VA facility. When you plan extended travel outside your usual VA care area, please give your primary care clinic and pharmacy:

- a temporary address and phone number; and
- the starting date of your travel and the expected date of return.

Routine prescription refills can be sent to you at your temporary address. Be sure to allow time (approximately 2 weeks) for the refills to arrive at your temporary address by mail.

**Fee Basis Care**

In certain circumstances, Truman VA may pay for care you receive from a non-VA provider. This can happen if the services you need are not available at a VA facility.

Services provided by community providers at VA expense must meet the VA’s quality standards and must be authorized in advance.
Disability Compensation Benefits

What Is VA Disability Compensation?
Disability compensation is a tax-free benefit paid to a Veteran for disabilities that are a result of or made worse by injuries or diseases that happened while on active duty, active duty training or inactive duty training. Disability compensation is also paid to certain Veterans disabled from VA healthcare.

Who Is Eligible?
You may be eligible for disability compensation if you have a service-related disability and you were discharged under other than dishonorable conditions.

How Can You Apply?
You can apply by filling out VA Form 21-526, Veterans Application for Compensation and/or Pension. If you have any of the following material, please attach it to your application:

- Discharge or separation papers (DD214 or equivalent);
- Dependency records (marriage & children's birth certificates);
- Medical evidence (doctor & hospital reports) for claimed conditions.

The completed forms can be given to accredited service officers from Veteran Service Organizations located on the 5th floor at the Truman VA or mailed to Harry S. Truman Memorial Veterans’ Hospital, 800 Hospital Dr., Columbia, MO, 65201-5297 attention the respective Service Organization. You may choose to work with any service organization representative who will serve as your liaison during this claim process. A listing of available organizations is located in this book for your convenience.

You can also apply online through our website at http://vabenefits.vba.va.gov/vonapp.

Related Benefits
Priority Medical Care
Vocational Rehabilitation
Clothing Allowance
Grants for Specially Adapted Housing
Automobile Grant & Adaptive Equipment
Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance
Federal Employment Preference
State/Local Veterans Benefits
Military Exchange & Commissary Privileges

Patient Rights and Responsibilities

Veterans Health Administration (VHA) employees will respect and support your rights as a patient. We are pleased you have selected us to provide your health care. We plan to make your visit or stay as pleasant for you as possible. Your basic rights and responsibilities are outlined in this document. Please talk with VA treatment team members or a patient advocate if you have any questions or would like more information about your rights.

(All bulleted items below are published by the Department of Veterans Affairs, National Veteran Service and Advocacy Program. In addition, asterisked (*) items are locally defined rights. Other asterisked (**) items are published by the Department of Veterans Affairs, Health Benefits Eligibility Center)

I. Respect and Nondiscrimination

• You will be treated with dignity, compassion and respect as an individual. Your privacy will be protected. You will receive care in a safe environment. We will seek to honor your personal and religious values.

• You or someone you choose have the right to keep and spend your money. You have the right to receive an accounting of VA held funds.

• Treatment will respect your personal freedoms. In rare cases, the use of medication and physical restraints may be used if all other efforts to keep you or others free from harm have not worked.

• As an inpatient or Community Living Center (CLC) resident, you may wear your own clothes and keep personal items. This depends on your medical condition.

• As an inpatient or CLC resident, you have the right to social interaction and regular exercise. You will have the opportunity for religious worship and spiritual support. You may decide whether or not to participate in these activities. You may decide whether or not to perform tasks in or for the Medical Center.

• As an inpatient or CLC resident, you have the right to communicate freely and privately. You may have or refuse visitors. You will have access to bedside or public telephones. You may participate in civic rights such as voting and free speech.

• As a CLC resident, you can organize and take part in resident groups in the facility. Your family also can meet with the families of other residents.
In order to provide a safe treatment environment for all patients or residents and staff, you are expected to respect other patients, residents and staff and to follow the facility’s rules. Avoid unsafe acts that place others at risk for accidents or injuries. Please immediately report any condition you believe to be unsafe.

Patients have the right to be free from mental, physical, sexual and verbal abuse, neglect, humiliation, and exploitation (*).

You will receive, to the extent you are eligible, prompt and appropriate treatment for physical or emotional disorders or disabilities, in the least restrictive environment necessary for that treatment, free from unnecessary or excessive medication(*).

If you are a female, you will have a female attendant present during pelvic examinations (*).

You have the right to request an attendant of the same sex when services are provided, which you may perceive as a personal intrusion or your dignity or privacy is perceived to be compromised(*).

You are responsible for safekeeping your clothing, money and personal items that you choose to keep with you while in the facility (*).

You may request a transfer to a different room if another patient or a visitor in the room is unreasonably disturbing you and another equally suitable room is available(*).

You are asked to respect the property of others and of the organization. This includes controlling noise, number of visitors and following smoking regulations. You will not bring weapons or non-prescription drugs into the facility(*).

You will be afforded the opportunity to write letters and be assisted in doing so when necessary(*).

As an inpatient or CLC resident, you will retain your legal rights while hospitalized except where State law provides otherwise(**).

If there is a reason to believe your mail may contain illegal materials, you will have to open the mail in the presence of an appropriate person(**).

II. Information Disclosure and Confidentiality

You will be given information about the health benefits that you can receive. The information will be provided in a way you can understand.
• You will receive information about the costs of your care, if any, before you are treated. You are responsible for paying for your portion of the costs associated with your care.

• Your medical record will be kept confidential. Information about you will not be released without your consent unless authorized by law (i.e., state public health reporting). You have the right to information in your medical record and may request a copy of your records. This will be provided except in rare situations where your VA provider feels the information will be harmful to you. In that situation, you have the right to have this discussed with you by your VA provider.

• You will be informed of all outcomes of care including any potential injuries. You will be informed about how to request compensation for any injuries.

• Data about your care may be grouped with data from other patients, excluding your name and personal information, to allow us to study the quality of care we provide(**).

• You have the right to access, request amendment to and obtain information relative to disclosures of your health information in accordance with law and regulation (*).

III. **Participation in Treatment Decisions**

• You, and any persons you choose, will be involved in all decisions about your care. You will be given information you can understand about the benefits and risks of treatment. You will be given other options. You can agree to or refuse treatment. You will be told what is likely to happen to you if you refuse treatment. Refusing treatment will not affect your rights to future care, but you take responsibility for the possible results to your health.

• Tell your PACT teamlet about your current condition, medicines (including over-the-counter and herbals) and medical history. Also, share any other information that affects your health. You should ask questions when you don’t understand something about your care. Being involved is very important for you to get the best possible results.

• You will be given, in writing, the name and professional title of the provider in charge of your care. You also have the right to know the names and titles of those who provide your care. This includes students, residents and trainees. Providers will properly introduce themselves when they take part in your care.

• You will be educated about your role and responsibilities as a patient or resident. This includes your participation in decision-making and care at the end of life.

• If you believe you cannot follow the treatment plan, you have a responsibility to notify your provider or treatment team.
• You have the right to have your pain assessed and to receive treatment to manage your pain. You and your treatment team will develop a pain management plan together. You are expected to help the treatment team by telling them if you have pain and if the treatment is working.

• As an inpatient or CLC resident, you will be provided any transportation necessary for your treatment plan.

• You have the right to choose whether you will participate in any research project. Any research will be clearly identified. Potential risks of the research will be identified and there will be no pressure on you to participate (and this will not jeopardize your right to care, treatment and services unrelated to research)(*).

If you choose to participate in a Research protocol, you will be made aware of how any information collected about you is to be used(**).

• You will be included in resolving any ethical issues about your care. You may consult with the medical center’s Ethics Consultation Service and/or other staff knowledgeable about health care ethics.

• If you or the medical center believes that you have been neglected, abused or exploited, you will receive help.

• You have the right to leave the medical center, if you so desire, against the advice of your provider(*)

• You or your surrogate has the right to request the withholding or withdrawing of life-sustaining treatment in this facility. Information regarding this right, as well as other information about Advance Directives, will be provided you upon request. Your right to review and/or revise your Advance Directive will be honored by this facility. The existence or lack of an Advance Directive will not determine your right to access care, treatment and services(*)

• You have the right to complete Advance Directives to plan and decide in advance what your wishes would be if faced with a life/death situation, an unexpected death or a terminal illness. If you wish, you may name someone else to make health care decisions for you(**).

• You have the right to be educated about your role and responsibility as a patient for the safe delivery of care(*)

• You have the right to reasonable continuity and coordination of care from the interdisciplinary team, including discharge planning, and to know in advance the time and location of appointments(*).
• You have the right to report unexpected changes in your condition to the health care staff and to the responsible practitioner(*).

• You have the right to be informed of any unanticipated outcomes of care, treatment and services(*).

• You have the right to give an informed consent before any procedure. This means you will be knowledgeable about the procedure, the alternate procedure or courses of treatment or non-treatment, risks and benefits of the procedure or treatment and the name(s) of the person(s) who will carry out the procedure or treatment. You or your surrogate’s wishes to withhold informed consent will also be honored by this facility. You or your surrogate also have the right to give or withhold informed consent to produce or use recordings, films or other images for purposes other than your care(*).

• When the facility cannot meet a request or need for your care due to a conflict with its mission or philosophy, you may be transferred to another facility when medically permissible. Prior to any transfer, you will receive complete information and explanation concerning the needs for, and alternatives to, such a transfer(*).

IV. **Complaints**

• You are encouraged and expected to seek help from your treatment team or a patient advocate if you have problems or complaints. You will be given understandable information about the complaint process and the phone number and address to file a complaint with the relevant state authority, as applicable. You may complain verbally or in writing without fear of retaliation.

• You are responsible for asking questions if you are unsure of, or do not understand, something. You have the right to expect a reasonable response to any reasonable requests made for service(*).

• You should assist by alerting staff when another patient is having difficulty(*).

• You should avoid interfering with the treatment of other patients, particularly in emergent situations(*).

• If you have any concern about patient safety in the facility that we have not addressed, you are encouraged to contact medical center management(*).

V. **Confidential Communications**

It is VA policy that all patients have a right to receive written communication or correspondence pertaining to health information in a confidential manner by alternative means or at an alternative location other than the patient's permanent address of record. Once requested, all future correspondence and
communication will be sent to the alternative address. In addition, a start date must be specified for use of the confidential address and a stop date may also be indicated when the use of this address should end(**).

VI. **Appealing Clinical Decisions**

A process has been established to handle disputes that you may have with your treatment team. Make your concerns known to the nurse or doctor who is treating you and then present any unresolved issues to the Patient Advocate(**).

VII. **Appealing Administrative Decisions**

If you disagree with VA's decision on your request for a benefit, you have one year from the date of notification of VA's decision to appeal. Contact the Health Eligibility Officer for further information and instruction(**).

**Helpful Information**

We take pride in our VA Medical Center and Community Based Outpatient Clinics, knowing that each will provide you with comprehensive health care in a warm, friendly environment. Should you have any concerns, please give us feedback. You can do so by speaking to our Patient Advocate or one of our service-based patient advocates.

If the concern in question cannot be resolved at this level, feel free to contact either The Joint Commission or the VA Office of Inspector General.

**You can contact the Joint Commission in any of the following ways:**

- **E-mail:** complaint@jcaho.org
- **Fax:** Office of Quality Monitoring  
  (630) 792-5636
- **Mail:** Office of Quality Monitoring  
  The Joint Commission  
  One Renaissance Blvd.  
  Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181
- **Phone:** (800) 994-6610, 8:30 am to 5:00 pm, weekdays, Central Time

**You can contact the VA Office of Inspector General**

- **E-mail:** vaoighotline@va.gov
- **Fax:** OIG  
  (202) 565-7936
- **Mail:** VA OIG Hotline  
  P. O. Box 50410  
  Washington, DC 20091-0410
- **Phone:** (800) 488-8244
Advance Directives/Living Will

As a VA patient, you have a say in the health care you receive. When you are ill your provider should explain what treatments there are for your illness so that you can decide which one is best for you. But if you were too ill to understand your treatment choices or to tell your provider what treatment you want:

- Who would you want to make decisions for you?
- What type of health care would you want?
- What type of health care would you not want?

Questions like these may be hard to think about, but they’re important. That’s why VA wants you to know about a legal form you can complete. It’s called an Advance Directive.

What is an Advance Directive?

An Advance Directive is a legal form that helps your providers and family members understand your wishes about health care. It can help them decide about treatments if you are too ill to decide for yourself, e.g., if you are unconscious or too weak to talk. There are two types of Advance Directives: durable power of attorney for health care and living will.

What is a Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care?

This form lets you name the person you trust to make health care decisions for you if you can’t make them yourself—your “health care agent.” He or she will have the legal right to make health care decisions for you. You can choose any adult to be your agent. It’s best to choose someone you trust, who knows you well and who knows your values. You should make sure the person is willing to serve as your agent. If you don’t choose an agent, your doctor will choose someone to make decisions for you in the following order: legal guardian (if you have one), spouse, adult child, parent, sibling, grandparent, grandchild or a close friend. Your health care team, or a court, will make decisions for you in accordance with VA policy if none of the above is available.
What is a Living Will?
A living will is a legal form that states what kinds of treatments you would or wouldn’t want if you become ill and can’t decide for yourself. It can help your health care agent and your provider make decisions in the way you want them. Writing down what kind of treatment you would or wouldn’t want can help make it easier for those who are asked to make decisions for you. Talk with your family, your health care agent and your provider about your wishes so they won’t have to wonder what you want and if they’re doing the right thing.

For more information
- For further information, please contact Social Work Service by telephone at 573-814-6000
- VA Form 10-0137, VA Advance Directive.
- http://www.myhealth.va.gov
Partner With Your VA PACT teamlet

Within your Primary Care Team is a teamlet of staff members dedicated to working together to facilitate your health care and wellness. The team will include a Primary Care Provider (PCP) who could be a Physician or Nurse Practitioner, RN nursing care manager, LPN and a scheduling clerk.

Veteran-centered Care

We will treat you with dignity and respect. We will ask you about and honor your values, preferences and needs. We will provide safe, high quality care that is designed for you. You will receive the right care, at the right time, in the right care setting. We will coordinate your care to make sure we meet your needs. We will explain your health problems and treatment options in ways you can understand. We will educate you about self-care and help you learn to manage your health problems. We call this Veteran-centered care. It means that all our efforts focus on providing you with what you need.

You are the center of your treatment team. The team wants to work with you to design the best care plan for you. The clinicians on the team have expertise in preventing, diagnosing and treating illness. You have expertise about your body and your life. Together, we can create a plan to maintain your health and well-being.

Health Care Partnerships

We know that patients who are actively involved in their health care have better outcomes and are more satisfied with their care.

There is no single “right” way to partner with your treatment team. There are many ways to work together and they may change over time. Members of your VA teamlet will talk with you about this. Together, you can find ways to build a partnership that meets your needs and offers you the best possible outcomes.

What You Can Do

There are many things you can do to take an active role in your health care.

- Give your treatment team accurate and complete information about:
  - Your current health problems
  - Your concerns about your health
• Past illnesses
• Hospitalizations
• Your medicines including over-the-counter and herbals
• Other matters related to your health.

• Plan ahead for your visits by writing down the questions and concerns you want to raise and share them with your teamlet at the beginning of each visit.

• Share your beliefs about your health problems and your treatment.
• Share your preferences for treatment options.
• Ask questions about anything that’s not clear to you.
• Ask for written information and instructions you can keep and share with your family.
• Gather information about your health problems from your treatment team, the VA library and websites such as My Health@Vet.
• Participate in decisions about your health care—you and your teamlet should agree on what will be done during each step of your care.
• Know your medicines and why you take each one.
• Ask when and how you will get results of any tests or treatments.
• Make sure you have the name and telephone number of a person to call if you have a problem.
• Let your team know if you face any obstacles to your care or if your condition changes.
• Have a family member or friend with you to help you, if you wish.
• Know the next steps in your care.
• Speak up if you have any concerns about the care you are receiving or if you think something is wrong.

What to Bring To your Primary Care Appointments:
• A copy of your medical record from your community doctor including your most recent physical exam, lab reports and x-rays;
• Records of your immunizations;
• Dates and results of screening procedures such as colonoscopy, mammogram and pap smear;
• A list of all medicines you take - both prescription and over-the-counter including vitamin and herbal supplements. Bring the medication bottles with you.

What Your VA PACT teamlet Will Do
To help you take an active role in your health care, your teamlet will:
• Ask if you have questions or concerns you want to discuss.
• Encourage you to talk about your health concerns and the impact on your life.
• Explain your health problems and treatment options in ways you can understand.
• Share their own treatment recommendations.
• Work with you so that, together, you can create a treatment plan that works for you.
• Ask you to take some responsibility for following the treatment plan you have developed together.
Co-Managed Care/Dual Care

We encourage you to receive all your medical care through VA and have a single VA primary care teamlet that coordinates all aspects of your care. However, we are willing to work with your private doctors to provide and coordinate your health care. We call this Co-managed Care or Dual Care. It means that your VA and private doctors must work together to provide safe, clinically appropriate and ethical medical care.

VA Policy

If you are seeking care, medications or supplies from VA, you must enroll in VA healthcare and have a Primary Care Provider (PCP) who manages your care, even if some of your care is provided in the community.

Specialty services will be provided according to the local facility or Veterans Integrated Services Network (VISN) policy once you are enrolled in Primary Care.

VA Provider Responsibilities

Your VA provider must have the final say about how the VA will meet your health care needs. Your VA provider does not have to re-write prescriptions or order tests for any health problem that the VA provider does not directly manage or if they do not agree with the plan. **However, any outside prescription you wish to be filled by VA will need to be re-written by your VA provider. Therefore, documentation by your local provider is needed by your VA provider to validate the need for the prescription or change in dosage.**

If your private doctor writes a prescription for a medicine that is not on the VA list of approved medicines, your VA provider may offer you another medicine that is very similar, safe and effective for your condition. If you choose, you may want to talk to your private doctor before changing to the VA medicine or you may want to get it filled privately.

Some medicines need special blood tests. Your VA provider will not write prescriptions for any high risk medicines unless you agree to have the tests done by VA. **If you live far away or have travel difficulty, you have the option of providing the written results from your private doctor’s blood tests to your VA provider.**
If you request a highly specialized medication, you must be seen by a VA provider who is competent in that specialty or the prescribing clinician must be in direct verbal or written contact, or acting on recommendations of, a VA provider competent in that specialty.

VA providers are under no obligation to follow a treatment or medication plan recommended by community physicians if they disagree with that plan or if that plan conflicts with national or local policies related to prescription of medications. VA providers will explain their rationale for medication changes or refusal to you.

If you receive controlled substances on an ongoing basis, close monitoring is required by one designated provider. Dual care is avoided unless your community provider and VA provider collaboratively determine that this is in your best interest.

**Patient Responsibilities**

You need to coordinate your care when you have more than one health care provider. You need to tell both your VA provider and your private doctor that you want to have your care coordinated.

You need to give your VA provider the name, address and telephone number of all your private doctors. You should also give your private doctors the same information about your VA provider.

You must have all necessary records and documents from your private doctor sent to VA. If you would like information from your VA medical record sent to your private doctor, you may contact the Release of Information office and sign a release form to have that done.

For your safety, let your VA provider know about all medicines you’re taking, including prescriptions written by your private doctor, over-the-counter medicines, vitamins and herbals. Also, you will want to tell your private doctor about any medicines prescribed by your VA provider.

You need to tell your VA provider about any changes in your health or changes in treatment or medicines made by your private doctor. You will want to tell your private doctor about any changes made by your VA provider.

You must pay any required VA co-payments.

Please feel free to talk further with your VA primary care teamlet about co-managed/dual care health benefits.

**You are required to be seen annually by your VA Primary Care Provider if you receive services or medications from VA.**
Ethics Consultation Service

Ethics Consultation is a service designed to help patients, families and staff resolve uncertainty or conflict about values or goals in health care. Recommendations are advisory in nature. If you feel involvement of an Ethics Consultant would be helpful, please ask your provider to initiate an Ethics Consult.
Your Medicines

VA Pharmacy Benefits
VA has excellent pharmacy benefits. You can get all formulary medications and medical supplies your VA provider orders for you.

If you are transferring your prescriptions to VA, your VA providers may need to replace some of your medications with similar medications carried by the VA pharmacy. They will work closely with your community provider to coordinate your care. You must bring information from your community provider that explains why the medication was prescribed, the name of the medication and the dose.

By law, the VA pharmacy cannot fill a prescription written by a non-VA provider. VA is not responsible to pay for medications filled at a private pharmacy.

Pharmacy Co-payments
You may need to pay a co-payment for medications based on your eligibility. You may apply for free medications based on your finances. You can get information about patient eligibility from the benefits counselor at your local VA facility.

New Prescriptions
A pharmacist will educate you about any new medicine your provider orders for you. You can pick up new prescriptions at the VA pharmacy or have them mailed to your home. Mailed prescriptions usually take 14 days.

Refills for Prescriptions
You can request refills in any of these ways:

1. **Online:** Register on My HealtheVet at [www.myhealth.va.gov](http://www.myhealth.va.gov).
   - Once you have registered, select the pharmacy tab and opt-in to the pharmacy agreement. You will then see a list of all your VA medications and be able to order refills.

2. **By phone:** The automated phone system will give you step-by-step instructions.
   - For local or out-of-state calls, dial 1-573-814-6697.
   - For non-local but within the state calls, dial toll free 1-800-349-8262.
A. Enter your **FULL** social security number  
B. Press the # key  
C. Press 2 for Pharmacy options  
D. Press 1 to enter your refill requests  
E. Enter your prescription number  
   (do not enter any letter that may appear at the end of the number)  
F. Press the # key after each prescription number  
G. Repeat steps 5-6-7 for each prescription  

**NOTE:** *We DO NOT automatically mail a prescription. You must request your refills.*

3. **By Mail:** Mail in the refill slip that comes with your prescription or drop them off at the VA pharmacy only if you are unable to use the internet or phone refill systems.

Request refills 2-3 weeks before you need more medicine to allow time for your prescription to be mailed to you. In general, for maintenance medications (other than controlled substance medications), refill requests can be submitted as early as you would like and they will be mailed out to you by the due date.

When you get the refill, check the bottle to make sure the following are correct:

- your name on the bottle  
- the name of the medicine  
- the color and shape of the medicine  
- the amount you should take for each dose  
- the directions you should follow for each dose.

If you have any questions about your refill, please call your VA PACT teamlet. You will be referred to pharmacy as needed.

Certain controlled medications cannot be refilled. A new prescription is needed for each month’s supply. You and your VA provider should discuss how and when you can get these prescriptions.

You will need a new prescription for medication you need to remain on when your current prescription shows no more refills remaining. Contact your VA teamlet as soon as possible to have the new prescription ordered. It’s a good idea to check your medicines before each visit with your PACT teamlet to see how many refills are left, so you can ask for a new prescription of the medication at the visit.
Additional Information
You can get more information about your medicines in several ways:

- talk to a VA pharmacist
- talk to your PACT teamlet
- use the Internet
  - log on to the My HealtheVet website at http://www.myhealth.va.gov
Suicide Prevention

Veterans Crisis Line
1-800-273-TALK (8255)
Press 1 for Veterans and you’ll be immediately connected with someone who can help you.

www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Get immediate help if you notice any of these signs:

- Thinking about hurting or killing yourself.
- Looking for ways to kill yourself.
- Talking or writing about death, dying or suicide.
- Self-destructive behavior such as drug abuse or weapons.

Additional Warning Signs:

- Hopelessness, feeling like there’s no way out;
- Anxiety, agitation, sleeplessness, mood swings;
- Feeling like there is no reason to live;
- Rage or anger;
- Engaging in risky activities without thinking;
- Increasing alcohol or drug abuse;
- Withdrawing from family and friends.

Call us if you or someone you know is experiencing any of these warning signs.

Pick up the phone if you are experiencing any emotional crisis and need to talk to a trained VA professional. You’ll be immediately connected with a qualified caring staff member who can help you.
Emergency Care

What is emergency care?
A medical emergency is when you have an injury or illness that is so severe that, without immediate treatment, the injury or illness threatens your health or life.

How do I know if what is wrong with me is an emergency?
Use your best judgment. If you believe you are suffering from something that is described in the section above, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.

VA Facilities
If your VA facility has an emergency department and you live nearby, you should go there for emergency care.

Non-VA Facilities
When it is not possible for you to go to a VA medical center, you should go to the nearest hospital that has an emergency room. If you are in an ambulance, the paramedics will usually take you to the closest emergency room.

Do I need to call the VA before I obtain emergency care?
No. Call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room. If you are admitted, your family, friends or hospital staff should contact the nearest VA medical center as soon as possible to provide information about your emergency room visit.

If the doctor wants to admit me to the hospital, must I obtain approval from the VA?
• No, if the admission is an emergency.
• Yes, if the admission is not an emergency. You, a friend, a family member, or someone from the non-VA hospital must call the closest VA medical center and speak to the Transfer Coordinator or Patient Administration representative. Please call during business hours. This must be done within 48 hours of your arrival at the emergency room. If a VA bed is available and if you can be safely transferred, you must be moved. If you refuse to be transferred, the VA will not pay for any further care.
Does my enrollment in the VA Health Care System change my coverage for emergency care?
It may. Your local VA medical center’s eligibility staff can explain your options.

Does my other insurance (TRICARE, Medicare, Medicaid, Blue Cross, etc.) change my VA coverage for emergency services?
It may. Your local VA medical center’s eligibility staff can explain your options.

Will VA pay for emergency care if I am in jail?
No. Usually the jail has responsibility for providing you with medical care.

Will VA pay for emergency care received outside the United States?
VA will only pay for emergency care outside the U.S. if your emergency is related to a service-connected condition. Contact the VA Health Administration Center at (877) 345-8179. You can find more information on the Foreign Medical Program at http://www.va.gov/hac/hacmain.asp.

How long do I have to file a claim for reimbursement for emergency medical care?
Time limits usually apply. Please file your claim with the nearest VA medical center quickly. If your regional office recently determined your benefits, you should submit a reimbursement claim as soon as you can. Contact your local VA medical center’s patient benefits counselor to explain these limits.

Will I have to pay for a portion of my emergency care?
You may have to pay for a portion of your emergency care, depending on the care you received. Your local VA medical center’s patient benefits counselor can explain these factors and how they affect your obligation to pay for part of your care.

If I am admitted to the hospital as a result of an emergency, what will VA pay?
This depends on your VA eligibility status and other factors. VA may pay all, some or none of the charges after you are admitted. Your local VA medical center’s patient benefits counselor can explain these factors and their impact on your situation.

Where can I get more information?
You can get more answers to your questions on the Health Administration Center Internet website at http://www.va.gov/hac/hacmain.asp under Non-VA Care.

You may also contact our eligibility staff for details about your situation. Phone number: (573) 814-6000, extension 3071.
Directory of Health Education Programs and Services

This section lists all the health education programs and services available to you at this VA facility. Participating in these programs will help you:

- maintain your health and well-being;
- learn to manage any health problems you may have.

Please talk to your VA PACT teamlet if you have questions about any of the programs and services on the list or contact the person listed for that particular program.

**Truman VA offers the following Classes and Support Groups**

**Diabetes Education**
Time: Every Wednesday from 1:00 pm- 4:30pm
Requirements: Consult from your PACT teamlet
Location: Check in at Silver Team

**MOVE! Level I Educational Program**
Time: 2nd Monday of the month from 10:00am-12:00pm
Requirements: Consult from your PACT teamlet
Location: Participant will be notified of appointment date, time and location

**MOVE! Level II 10 week Class Series**
Time: Monday from 1-2:30pm or Thursday from 9-10:30am
Requirements: Complete MOVE! Level I Educational Program
Location: Participant will be notified of appointment date, time and location

**Transplant Support Group for Veterans and Caregivers**
Time: Monthly meeting, date/time to be determined
Contact: Veronica Ramnarine, LSCSW, Chief, Social Work (573) 814-5668 for details

**Tobacco Cessation Educational Program**
Time: 1st and 3rd Monday from 9:00am-10:00am
Requirements: Consult from your PACT teamlet
Location: Participant will be notified of appointment date, time and location
Tobacco Cessation 7 week Quit Class
Time: Mondays from 5:30pm -7:00pm or Tuesdays from 9:00am-10:30am
Requirements: Complete Smoking Cessation Educational Program
Location: Participant will be notified of appointment date, time and location

OTHER RESOURCES:
The Behavioral Health Service Line (Green Team) offers classes, groups and individual therapy to help Veterans learn to manage emotions and stress. For more information about any of the Behavioral Health programs or classes or to set up an initial appointment, please contact the Green Team at (573) 814-6486. Veterans can also take advantage of our Behavioral Health walk-in clinic located on the 2nd floor between 8:00 am-3:00 pm, Monday thru Friday.

Stress Management
- Behavioral Health: (573) 814-6488
- Chaplain: (573) 814-6000 ext. 2201
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Clinic: (573) 814-6488
- Social Work Services: (573) 814-6000
- Vet Center: (573) 814-6206

Spinal Cord Injury & Dysfunction (SCI/D)
Contact: Spinal Cord Social Worker, Virginia Law, LCSW (573) 814-6000 ext. 3809 or pager 5446

Traumatic Brain Injury/Polytrauma
Contact: VA PACT teamlet for a screening/consult (573) 814-6000

Traumatic Brain Injury Support Group
Contact: Behavioral Health (Green Team) (573) 814-6486
My HealtheVet

Website Features
My HealtheVet is a website created especially for Veterans. You can use it to:

- Get accurate health information from sources you can trust;
- Refill your VA prescriptions and get information about your medicines;
- Create your own personal health journal;
- Read VA news and feature stories;
- Link to VA benefits and services.

Personal Health Journal
You can control the features of the personal health journal. You can:

- Keep track of all your providers;
- Keep track of your military health information;
- Record your personal health history;
- Keep track of your own vital readings such as blood pressure or blood sugar and monitor them over time;
- Keep a list of your medicines;
- Record your physical activity or food intake in daily logs;
- Record your emergency contacts.

Registration and Authentication
To take advantage of all the features of My HealtheVet, you need to register on the website and be authenticated in person at VA. The authentication process protects your privacy and your personal health information. Here’s what to do:

1. Go to the website: http://www.myhealth.va.gov;
2. Click on the “Register today” button and follow the instructions;
3. Go back to the My HealtheVet home page;
4. Click on the “In-Person Authentication” link;
5. Watch the brief orientation video;
6. Print out, complete and sign the My HealtheVet release of information form (Form 10-5345a-MHV);
7. Bring the form and a photo ID (Veterans ID card or driver’s license) to the Release of Information Office, Room E002, or to your Primary Care Check-in desk;
8. The staff will verify who you are and complete the process.

**Coming Soon**

New features will soon be added to My HealtheVet to give you more options to take an active role in your health care. You will be able to:

- Communicate via Secure Messaging with your VA provider for non-urgent health care questions and issues;
- View your VA appointments;
- View your lab reports and selected parts of your VA medical record;
- Check on possible drug interactions for your medicines;
- Decide who to give access to your personal health information—for example, family members, doctors, etc.

**More Information**

For more information on My HealtheVet, call:

**My HealtheVet Coordinator**
800 Hospital Drive
Columbia, MO 65201
573-814-6233
Healthy Living

We are committed to providing you the highest quality health care. We also want to help you take care of yourself. There has been a lot of research in recent years on the best ways to maintain health and well-being. The behaviors listed below are the ones that have the most impact on your health. We encourage you to incorporate these behaviors into your daily life.

For more information about these healthy living behaviors, check out the recommended websites, talk to your VA provider and/or team and review the directory of VA health education programs and services in the next section.

Eat Wisely

Eat wisely to maximize your health. Eat a variety of food including fruit, vegetable, whole grain, and fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products. Limit total fats, sugars and alcohol. The 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend these amounts each day:

- Up to 4 servings of fruits.
- Up to 5 servings of vegetables.
- Up to 3 cups of low-fat dairy products.
- Limit protein to 2 servings of lean protein daily (2-3 ounces per serving). Include 8 ounces of fish a week (not fried).
- Eat at least 3 servings of whole grains per day (Make sure that grains such as wheat, rice, oats or corn are referred to as “whole wheat” in the list of ingredients).
- Limit added fats and oils to 5-6 teaspoons per day.

For more information about healthy eating, contact your PACT teamlet dietitian or go to:

Weight Management – Strive for a Healthy Weight

If you need to lose weight, losing even a little will help. If you are of normal weight, maintain it! Staying in control of your weight helps you be healthy now and in the future.

To find the weight range that is right for you, check your Body Mass Index. It measures body fat based on your height and weight. Go to the BMI calculator from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute at http://www.nhlbisupport.com/bmi/.

To stay at a healthy weight, balance the calories from what you eat and drink with the calories you burn off by your activities. To prevent gradual weight gain over time, make small decreases in food & beverage calories and increase physical activity.

For information about this VA facility’s programs to help you with weight loss, please contact your VA PACT teamlet. Your PACT teamlet can also request a consult for the MOVE! program on your behalf.

The MOVE! (Managing Obesity in Veterans Everywhere) program at this VA medical center consists of a two-part process: an educational program and a closed 10-week class. Both require a consult from your VA PACT teamlet. The MOVE! clinical team consists of a dietitian, physical therapist and a health psychologist.

• The educational program is a 2-hour session in which the MOVE! team reviews body mass index (BMI), how to read a food label, caloric intake, exercise, pedometers, and how to set goals, rewards & consequences.

• The MOVE! 10-week closed class addresses additional lifestyle change in the areas of diet/nutrition, activity and thoughts & behaviors.

For more information about weight management, go to:

• VA MOVE program (http://www.move.va.gov/).
• My HealtheVet (http://www.myhealth.va.gov).

Be Tobacco Free

Be tobacco free! Don’t use tobacco in any form. Avoid second hand smoke and, if you are pregnant, both you and your baby will benefit when you quit using tobacco. If you are using tobacco, VA can help you quit. Talk with your VA PACT teamlet about options.

Truman VA offers a tobacco cessation program consisting of a two-part process: an educational class and a closed 7-week quit class. Both require a consult from your VA PACT teamlet to attend.
The one time educational class is designed for those who are thinking about quitting tobacco. It provides an overview of the quitting process, tips for quitting and discussion about behavior change.

The 7-week quit class helps Veterans learn the skills needed to quit tobacco and to stay quit. Veterans quit as a group during week four. After this class, Veterans have the option to attend a 4-session relapse prevention group for additional support for staying quit.

For additional tips on how to quit, go to:

- http://www.ucanquit2.org or 877-222-8387 for information about tobacco cessation, help with developing an individualized quit plan and assistance from a trained Cessation Coach 24/7. This program is offered free to Veterans through the Department of Defense.
- National Quit line (1-800-QUITNOW).

Limit Alcohol

Adults should drink moderately, if at all. For men, this means no more than 2 drinks a day. For women, this means no more than 1 drink a day. A standard drink is one 12-ounce bottle of beer or wine cooler, one 5-ounce glass of wine or 1.5 ounces of 80-proof distilled spirits. If you are pregnant, avoid alcohol. If you are concerned about your drinking, talk to your VA health care team about getting help.

Get Recommended Preventive Services

Get the right preventive services including vaccines, screening tests and preventive medications. The pros and cons of receiving each service depends on your age, gender and health status. Talk to your VA PACT team let and find out which vaccines, screening tests and preventive medications are right for you.

For a list of the recommended services for men and women, go to this website:

- Men: Stay Healthy at Any Age (http://www.ahrq.gov/ppip/healthymen.html).
- Women: Stay Healthy at Any Age (http://www.ahrq.gov/ppip/healthywom.html).

Learn to Manage Stress

Most people have some stress in their lives. It’s important to learn how to manage the stress in your life, because stress contributes to your risk for health problems. You may not be able to remove stress from your life, but you can learn what stresses you and how to take care of yourself during periods of stress.
The Behavioral Health Service Line (Green Team) offers both classes and individual therapy to help Veterans learn to manage emotions and stress. The Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Clinic also provides comprehensive care for Veterans struggling with Post-traumatic Stress Disorder. The Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Clinic offers consultation and evaluation, group and individual therapy and medication management.

For more information about any of our programs or classes or to set up an initial appointment, please contact the Green Team at (573) 814-6486. Veterans can also take advantage of our walk-in clinic located on the 2nd floor between 8:00 am-3:00 pm, Monday thru Friday.

**Be Safe: Think Ahead**

There are actions that you can take to protect yourself and those you love from harm. Common safety issues are sexually transmitted infections (STIs), falls and motor vehicle collisions.

Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) are 100% preventable. In order to prevent or reduce the risk of getting an STI, you can abstain from sexual activity, use a latex condom **EVERY** time during sexual activity (vaginal, anal or oral), be in a monogamous relationship with an uninfected partner, and limit the number of sexual partners.

- Screening is the most effective (yet underused) tool to identify and treat STIs. Untreated STIs do not prevent their spread and can lead to infertility in women and sterility in men. Talk with your VA PACT teamlet about any concerns and/or questions you may have related to STIs.

Falls are the leading cause of fatal and nonfatal injuries to older adults and about half of all falls happen at home. Veterans can prevent falls by:

- Regular exercise especially those that increase strength and improve balance (Yoga, Tai Chi).
- Ask to review medications with your VA PACT teamlet or pharmacist.
- Have your eyes checked by an eye doctor at least once per year.
- Improve lighting in your home, especially in hallways and staircases.
- Reduce hazards in your home that can lead to falls (things on the floor, rugs, etc.).

Motor vehicle collisions are the leading cause of death in Veterans in the early years after returning from deployment. To decrease this risk:

- DON’T drink & drive or drive under the influence of drugs (illegal or certain prescriptions that can cause drowsiness or inattention).
- DON’T ride along with individuals under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs.
- Always wear a seat belt.
- Avoid distractions (eating, cell phone, etc.).
Patient Safety

As a patient at our medical center, you have a right to be well informed about your illness, possible treatments and likely outcome, and to discuss this information with your provider. You also have a right to remain free from restraints unless medically or behaviorally necessary to ensure a safe environment of care for you and others.

**Medications:** Know what medications you take and why you take them. For your safety, we store your medications while you are hospitalized. Medications are scanned and your wristband is scanned in order to ensure you receive the correct medication at the correct time.

**Assistance:** If you need assistance, press the nurse call button. Nurses expect calls to assist you to the bathroom or to use the telephone. Please call.

**Tests or Surgery:** Review all the information on the Consent Form before you sign it. The doctor or other member of the surgical team will make a mark on the part of your body where the surgery will happen. While you are still awake, a doctor or nurse will ask you to say your name, your social security number or birth date and the part of your body that will be operated on. This is how they make sure they have everything right. The doctors and nurses in VA are taking these important steps to make sure that everything goes as planned for your surgery. Before any test, ask if any dyes or medicines will be used. Remind your nurse and doctor if you have allergies.

**Discharge:** When you are being discharged, ask your doctor or nurse to explain the treatment plan you will use at home. If you are discharged with the same medications but they look different, tell the nurse or pharmacist about this change. In preparation for discharge, you will be given a discharge appointment for the convenience of you and your family. Our goal is to get you out of the facility in a timely manner. Please keep your appointment.

**General Safety:** The single most important way you can help to prevent errors is to be an active member of your health care team. Don't be afraid to ask about safety. If you don't understand, ask your doctor or nurse to explain. You may contact the Patient Safety Manager if you have any safety concerns by calling extension 56596. Here is how you can help us:

- Pay attention to warning signs that tell us your loved one is getting worse. For example, they are suddenly short of breath, confused, dizzy or look pale.
• Talk to the nurse or doctor about the changes you see.
• Ask the nurse or doctor to explain to you what is being done and what to expect. If you are still worried, you may call our STAT Team to help. The STAT Team includes a doctor, two nurses and a respiratory therapist who will look at the patient and decide if something needs to be done right away.

TO CALL THE STAT TEAM, DIAL 53333 ON THE ROOM PHONE AND ASK FOR A STAT TEAM VISIT.