

WOMEN VETERANS HEALTH CARE

*You served, you deserve
★ the best care anywhere.*



July's Featured Topic: Chronic Pain

Veterans, particularly of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom, have a significant chance of experiencing pain that interferes with daily activities and negatively affects quality of life, according to data collected by the Veterans Health Administration. Pain is often a combination of physical and mental factors, and managing it can involve a combination of biomedical, psychological, interpersonal, and spiritual therapies.

Many different conditions can result in chronic pain. Some examples of painful conditions that are more common in women are headaches, fibromyalgia, and abdominal and pelvic pain. Muscle and joint pains are common in both male and female Veterans.

Migraine headaches can cause severe pain and are three times more common in women than in men. They may be caused by genetic abnormalities and triggered by stress. Medications and stress management can alleviate symptoms.

Fibromyalgia is defined by widespread musculoskeletal pain and tender points. It is most common in women from ages 20–50. Treatment plans can include exercise, medication, and cognitive-behavioral therapies.

Each VA facility has a Women Veterans Program Manager to help women Veterans find the right treatment and services for pain.

Women are now the fastest growing subgroup of U.S. Veterans. The number of women Veterans is expected to increase dramatically in the next 10 years, and VA health care is in high demand by the women Veterans of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. The Department of Veterans Affairs understands the health care needs of women Veterans and is committed to meeting these needs. Women Veterans served and they deserve the best quality care.

References:

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