### The VA & You A Partnership of Care

2018 CALENDAR

Thank You, Veterans!



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

www.va.gov

### How to Use This Calendar

- Schedule and record your appointments and other events.
- Note when VA clinics are closed for Federal holidays.
- Write down one monthly health goal. (It takes 3 weeks to establish a new habit.)
- Keep a record, as advised by your health care team, of:
  - Minutes you exercise daily
  - Your daily blood pressure
  - Your daily blood sugar
  - Your weekly weight
    - **WEIGHT** (Write your daily weight, if advised.)

- Learn ways you can take care of your health and how to work with your health care team to get the care you need.
  - Read and follow the monthly health tips.
  - Use the VA apps, programs and websites listed.
- Use the section below to write down names and numbers for your health care contacts. You can also find phone numbers and websites for VA programs and resources, as well as mobile apps, on the back cover.

### Access VA Services When You Need Them



MyVA is your one-stop for all your VA benefits and services. At myVA you can:

- Check your eligibility for services and programs.
- Learn about home loans, educational help and other assistance.
- Access health resources.

Learn more at **www.va.gov**.



Sign up for a My Health**e**Vet (MHV) account at **www.myhealth.va.gov**.

- Access your personal health information and keep records of your health services.
- Order VA prescription refills.
- Send nonurgent messages to your VA health care team.



Learn about your health conditions, medications, medical tests, and more at *www.veteranshealthlibrary.org*.

Within the online Veterans Health Library, you'll find:

- Over 1,500 health sheets
- Over 150 videos
- Go-to-Guides
- Flipbooks, and more!



Confidential chat online at *www.VeteransCrisisLine.net* or text to 838255.

- Free, confidential support for Veterans and their loved ones.
- Staff is specially trained to help Veterans.
- Friends and family can learn signs of crisis and find additional resources.

#### November 2017

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3	4
5 Daylight Saving Time Ends (Turn clocks back one hour.)	6	7 Election Day	8	9	10 Veterans Day Observed Outpatient Clinics Closed	11 Veterans Day Outpatient Clinics Closed
12	13	14	15	16 Great American Smokeout	17	18
19	20	21	22	23 Thanksgiving Outpatient Clinics Closed	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

## December 2017

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			5		1	2
3	4	5	6	7 Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day	8	9
10	11	12 Chanukah begins at sunset	13	14	15 Iraq War declared over, 2011	16
17	18	19	20	21 Winter begins	22	23
24 31 <sup>New Year's Eve</sup>	25 <sup>Christmas Day</sup> Outpatient Clinics Closed	26 First day of Kwanzaa	27	28 Operation Enduring Freedom ends, 2014	29	30

#### Health Contacts & Phone Numbers

#### EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE: 911 EMERGENCY CONTACT

Name
Address
City/State/Zip
Phone
Fire / Police
Poison Control Center 1-800-222-1222
HEALTH CARE TEAM MEMBERS & OTHER HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS
Primary Care Doctor
Nurse Care Manager
Clinical Associate
My Care Team Clerk
VA Facility
Name
Phone
Pharmacist
Pharmacy Refill
VA Tele-Nurse
Make an Appointment Phone #
Make an Appointment Phone # Cancel an Appointment Phone #

### Be an empowered patient

Being an empowered patient means staying informed about your health and the care you receive. Here's how to become an active participant:

- Write down questions you have before a doctor's appointment and take them with you.
- Keep a list of all the medications you take, and give a copy to each of your health care providers.
- Don't be afraid to speak up if you don't understand something or if you have concerns about your treatment plan.
- Be open with your health care team about any family history, past illnesses, and how you're feeling now.

Keep track of your health conditions, treatments, medications, activity, and more on MyHealtheVet. It's easy and you can access your information anytime. Go to **myhealth.va.gov** to get started!



### January 2018



**Health Goal:** When I see my health care team, I will show them a list of medicines, herbs and vitamins I take.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	1	TUESDA	Y	WE	DNESDAY		THURSD	AY	F	RIDAY	SA	<b>TURDAY</b>	
	New Year Outp Clinics o	patient			3		4			5		6	WE	IGHT
<b>RECORD</b> minutes exercised, blood pressure & blood sugar and/or log these on My Health <b>e</b> Vet at www.myhealth.va.gov														



### Small health changes add up

A few small, doable changes can have a big impact on your health. Losing just 5 percent of your body weight can reduce your blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar. Try these small steps to start boosting your health:

- Break up your exercise sessions. Try walking for 10 minutes, 3 times a day.
- Switch out one unhealthy food for a healthier version. Instead of chips, crunch on carrot sticks or peppers.
- Replace one sugary drink, such as soda, with water.



Take advantage of the *MOVE*!® tool, which is designed to help you reach a healthy weight. Go to **www.move. va.gov**. Got a smartphone? Check out the free *MOVE*!® Coach App. It has guides,

videos and tracking tools so you can measure your progress and stay motivated.





**Health Goal:** I will purchase fruits and vegetables as snacks, and will avoid the store aisles with candy, chips and cookies.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	<b>7</b> Groundhog Day	
					Wear Red Day	5
<b>RECORD</b> minutes exercised, blood pressure & blood sugar and/or log these on My HealtheVet at www.myhealth.va.gov						



#### Creative ways to get more fruits and veggies

We all know that fresh fruits and vegetables are healthy. Preparing them can be simple – and delicious – if you find ways that work for your taste and schedule:

- Make a fruit smoothie by tossing frozen or fresh fruit and Greek yogurt into a blender.
- Add veggies to your favorite recipes whenever you can.
   Put extra veggies on a sandwich, add spinach to your lasagna, or put sweet peas in your chicken soup.
- Love to grill? Tomatoes, peppers, mushrooms and onions work well on kabobs. Even fresh fruit, such as pineapple and peaches, taste delicious as grilled treats.
- Add fruit to your oatmeal or cereal each morning.
- Serve fruit as dessert. Cut up your favorite type of fruit and top it with a scoop of lowfat yogurt for a satisfying and nutritious treat.

## March 2018



*Health Goal:* At the start of each week, I will prepare ready-to-go fruits or veggies to have on hand when I want a snack.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>RECORD</b> minutes exercised, blood pressure & blood sugar and/or log these on My Health <b>e</b> Vet at www.myhealth.va.gov	For a free monthly poster, the Veterans' Health at Home® Lifetime book, and the Healthy Living Messages book, visit <i>aipm.net/VA2018</i> or download 'HealthyLife Mobile' from your App store. <i>Access code: VA2018</i>	FEBRURY 2015         S       M       T       W       Th       F       S         1       2       3       1       2       3         4       5       6       7       8       9       10         11       12       13       14       15       16       17         18       19       20       21       22       23       24         25       26       27       28       X       X       X       X	Image: Series of the	1	2	3 WEIGHT



#### Push back the drink

Alcohol dependence is a serious health issue that affects many people, including Veterans. You or someone you know may suffer from this if they:

- Have a strong craving for alcohol
- Continue to use alcohol despite harm or personal injury
- Aren't able to limit their drinking
- Feel physically ill when drinking stops
- Need to increase the amount of alcohol they drink to feel the effects

Take confidential screening tests on MyHealth**e**Vet at **www.myhealth.va.gov**. Click on the "Mental Health" button for alcohol use and substance abuse screenings.

Talk to your VA health care team about your results and how you can get help.





**Health Goal:** Instead of ordering alcohol at a restaurant, I'll choose a healthy, low-calorie drink, such as water with lemon or unsweetened tea.

	SUNDAY	Y	Γ	NONDA	Y	Т	UESDA	Y	WE	DNESD	AY	Т	HURSD	F	RIDAY	SA	rurda	Y
1		Easter	2			3			4			5		6		7	W	EIGHT



#### Exercise boosts mind and body

Exercise can lower your chances of being depressed and help you feel better about yourself. Consider these ways you can be more active:

- Do leg lifts or march in place during phone calls.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator.

**May** 2018

- Walk or ride your bicycle to run local errands.
- Use a stretch band, dumbbells, or exercise ball during TV commercials.

Ask your health care team about exercise options through the *MOVE*!<sup>®</sup> program (see February). Ask, too, if you qualify for any special programs that offer help with fitness. Examples are "Wheelchair Games" and the "Diabetes Education Program."





**Health Goal:** I will limit my TV time to 1 to 2 hours a day, and will exercise for 10-30 minutes while watching TV.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
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		1	2	3	4	5 WEIGHT
<b>RECORD</b> minutes exercised, blood pressure & blood sugar and/or log these on My HealtheVet at www.myhealth.va.gov	For a free monthly poster, the Veterans' Health at Home® Lifetime book, and the Healthy Living Messages book, visit <i>aipm.net/VA2018</i> or download 'HealthyLife Mobile' from your App store. <i>Access code: VA2018</i>					Cinco de Mayo



### Take steps toward healing

If you're dealing with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and/or high-stress levels, the VA has resources to help.

#### VA Mobile Apps



*Moving Forward:* For on-the-go tools to help you manage stress, solve problems, and manage conflict



*PTSD Coach:* For help to manage and track PTSD symptoms and learn ways to cope with stress and PTSD



**June** 2018

*Mindfulness Coach App:* For tools, exercises, and instructions for practicing mindfulness in your daily life

Visit *mobile.va.gov* to get started.



*Health Goal:* I will talk openly with my health care team about my stress levels and/or PTSD symptoms.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>RECORD</b> minutes exercised, blood pressure & blood sugar and/or log these on My Health <b>e</b> Vet at <b>www.myhealth.va.gov</b>	For a free monthly poster, the Veterans' Health at Home® Lifetime book, and the Healthy Living Messages book, visit <i>aipm.net/VA2018</i> or download 'HealthyLife Mobile' from your App store. <i>Access code: VA2018</i>		MA T       WA       T       W       TA       S         S       M       T       Q       VA       F       S       S         1       2       3       4       5       6       7       8       9       10       11       12         13       14       15       16       17       18       19         20       21       22       23       24       25       26         27       28       29       30       31       Image: State Stat	Image: Series of the	1	2 WEIGHT



#### *Better sleep = better health*

When you are well rested, you can better manage your weight, stay focused, and keep your immune system healthy. Most people need 7 to 9 hours of sleep each night. To sleep better, try these tips:

- Go to bed and get up at the same time each day.
- Develop a calming bedtime routine.
- Drink less liquids after dinner to avoid nighttime bathroom trips.
- Avoid screens, such as TV, smartphones and computers, 2 hours before bed.

Find out more about healthy sleep. Go to My HealtheVet at **www.myhealth.va.gov**. Click on the "Healthy Living" button, and then click on "Healthy Sleep."







#### Adults need vaccines too

Getting vaccinated is important for your own health, and can also help protect those around you. Even adults need certain vaccines to stay healthy. These include:

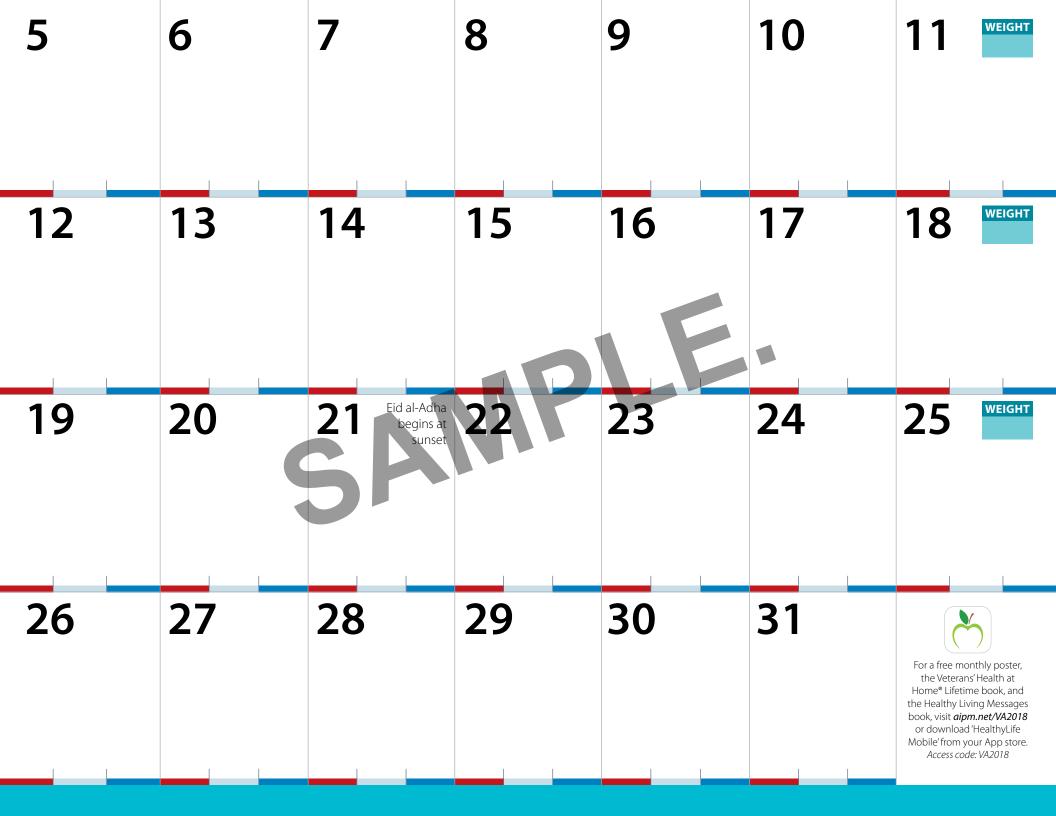
- Influenza (flu): Every year, as soon as it's available.
- *Tdap (Tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis):* One dose if you have not had it in the past, are pregnant, or plan to be around infants. Td (tetanus) booster every 10 years.
- *MMR (Measles, mumps, rubella):* Recommended for some people age 18 and older. Ask your health care team.
- Zoster (shingles): Once at age 60 or older.
- Pneumonia: Age 65 and older one dose of PCV13 and one dose PPSV23. Note: you may need PPSV23 before age 65 if you smoke or have certain chronic diseases.

For a complete vaccine schedule, go to www.prevention.va.gov/Healthy\_Living/index.asp

## August 2018

Health Goal: I will ask my health care team which vaccines may be right for me and when I should get them.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>RECORD</b> minutes exercised, blood pressure & blood sugar and/or log these on My Health <b>e</b> Vet at www.myhealth.va.gov	JULY 2018           S         M         T         W         Th         F         S           1         2         3         4         5         6         7           8         9         10         11         12         13         14           15         16         17         18         19         20         21           22         23         24         25         26         27         28           29         30         31         July         July         July         July         July	SEPTENDER 2018         S       M       T       W       Th       F       S         2       3       4       5       6       7       8         9       10       11       12       13       14       15         16       17       18       19       20       21       22         23       24       25       26       27       28       29         30	1	2 Gulf War-Operation Desert Shield began, 1990		4



#### 10 ways to prevent falls

About one third of adults 65 and older fall each year in the United States. Help prevent falls with these tips:

- Do regular exercise to improve your strength and balance such as yoga, tai chi and walking.
- Use grab bars and non-slip mats in tubs and showers.
- Use handrails next to toilets and stairways.
- Clear paths and stairs of clutter, water, grease, etc.
- Use non-slip rugs or double-sided tape under rugs.
- Wear non-slip shoes at all times.
- Use nightlights throughout the house.
- Clear ice and snow from outdoor walking surfaces.
- Get vision and blood pressure checks as advised.
- Be aware of side effects of your medicines, such as dizziness or drowsiness.

## September 2018



*Health Goal:* I will wear sturdy, non-slip shoes at all times, including in the house.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY					
<b>RECORD</b> minutes exercised, blood pressure & blood sugar and/or log these on My Health <b>e</b> Vet at www.myhealth.va.gov	For a free monthly poster, the Veterans' Health at Home® Lifetime book, and the Healthy Living Messages book, visit <i>aipm.net/VA2018</i> or download 'HealthyLife Mobile' from your App store. <i>Access code: VA2018</i>	IUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUU	I UI         II         II <th <="" colspan="5" ii<="" td=""><td></td><td></td><td>Deration New Dawn (OND) began, 2010</td></th>	<td></td> <td></td> <td>Deration New Dawn (OND) began, 2010</td>							Deration New Dawn (OND) began, 2010



### Keep flu away from you

Influenza, or the flu, is a respiratory disease that is very contagious. People who get the flu can be sick up to a week or more, and it can result in hospitalization or even death. Prevent it by:

- Getting your flu shot every year. This is the single best
  way to prevent the flu.
- Washing your hands frequently. Wash after using the restroom, before eating or preparing food, and after touching shared surfaces, such as doorknobs, light switches, TV remotes, and elevator buttons.
- Covering your coughs and sneezes. Cough or sneeze into your elbow or use a tissue. Don't use your hand, as this allows you to easily spread germs to surfaces you touch. Then, wash your hands.
- Staying home when you're sick and avoiding people who are sick.

# GET YOUR FLU SHOT

## October 2018



**Health Goal:** I will get the flu shot at my VA facility or at Walgreens as soon as it's available. (Veterans enrolled in VA health care are covered at these locations).

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3	4	5	
RECORD minutes exercised, blood pressure & blood sugar and/or log these on My HealtheVet at www.myhealth.va.gov						



#### Quit smoking - you can do it!

Tobacco in any form is unhealthy. This includes cigarettes, e-cigarettes, cigars, pipes, snuff and chew. Although quitting isn't easy, you can set yourself up for success with these tips:

- Recognize that nicotine is addictive. Get help with nicotine patches or gum.
- Avoid those places and people that make you want to use tobacco.
- Take a 5-10 minute walk or do deep breathing exercises when you feel the urge to smoke.
- Get rid of ashtrays and other tobacco-related items.
- Keep sugarless gums or mints on hand to help you battle a craving.

Check the back cover for VA tobacco cessation resources.

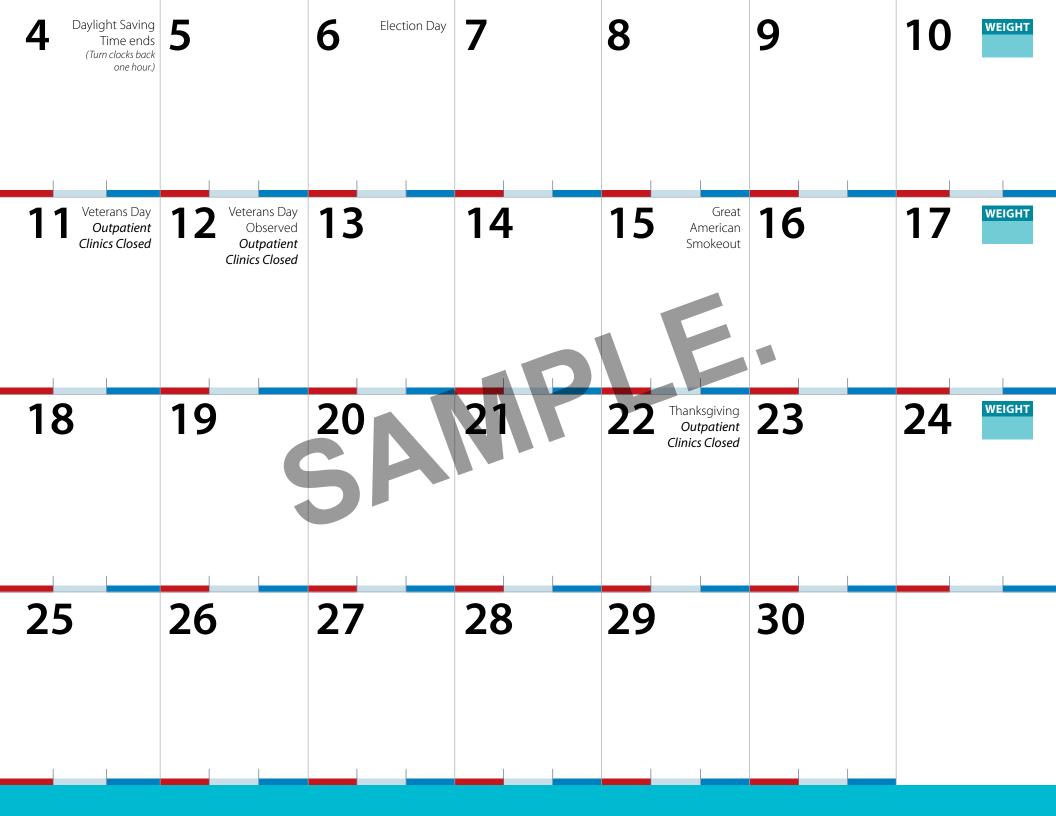


## November 2018



*Health Goal:* I will not allow anyone to smoke cigarettes, e-cigarettes, cigars or pipes in my house or car.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY					
<b>RECORD</b> minutes exercised, blood pressure & blood sugar and/or log these on My Health <b>e</b> Vet at www.myhealth.va.gov	For a free monthly poster, the Veterans' Health at Home® Lifetime book, and the Healthy Living Messages book, visit <i>aipm.net/VA2018</i> or download 'HealthyLife Mobile' from your App store. <i>Access code: VA2018</i>	I UI         I I         VI         VI         I         S <th <="" colspan="5" th=""><th>Image: Series of the series of the</th><th>1</th><th>2</th><th>3 WEIGHT</th></th>	<th>Image: Series of the series of the</th> <th>1</th> <th>2</th> <th>3 WEIGHT</th>					Image: Series of the	1	2	3 WEIGHT



# Positive thoughts can relieve stress

Stress is often associated with negative, self-critical thinking. Start by turning your thoughts around.

If you catch yourself thinking negative thoughts, gently correct yourself. Instead of saying things like, "I can't do this," or "This is more than I can handle," try thinking, "I can take on a new challenge," or, "I'll take it one day at a time."

Find out if you struggle with stress or depression. Take a Veterans Self-Check Quiz and get a personal response at *www.vetselfcheck.org*.

If you are thinking of harming yourself or are in emotional crisis, contact the Veterans Crisis Line at 800-273-TALK (8255) and press 1 for Veterans. You may also send a text message to 838255 or chat online at *www.veteranscrisisline.net*.

## December 2018



**Health Goal:** I will make time for something I enjoy, such as going to a concert by my favorite band or having lunch with a good friend.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>RECORD</b> minutes exercised, blood pressure & blood sugar and/or log these on My HealtheVet at www.myhealth.va.gov	For a free monthly poster, the Veterans' Health at Home® Lifetime book, and the Healthy Living Messages book, visit <i>aipm.net/VA2018</i> or download 'HealthyLife Mobile' from your App store. <i>Access code: VA2018</i>	S M         T         VI         VI           S         M         T         W         Th         F         S           1         2         3         1         2         3           4         5         6         7         8         9         10           11         12         13         14         15         16         17           18         19         20         21         22         23         24           25         26         27         28         29         30         VI	Image         Image <th< td=""><td></td><td></td><td><b>1</b></td></th<>			<b>1</b>



#### **VA Services**

Veteran Benefits 1-800-827-1000 www.va.gov www.ebenefits.va.gov

*Health Care Benefits* 1-877-222-8387 www.va.gov/healthbenefits

Burial & Memorials 1-800-827-1000 www.cem.va.gov

Center for Minority Veterans www.va.gov/centerforminorityveterans

*Devices for the Deaf (TDD)* Dial 711

*Education & Training* 1-888-442-4551 www.benefits.va.gov/gibill

Homeless Veterans 1-877-424-3838 www.va.gov/homeless

Life Insurance 1-800-669-8477 www.insurance.va.gov

*Mental Health* www.mentalhealth.va.gov

Military Exposures (Agent Orange, Gulf War Illnesses, etc.) 1-877-222-8387 www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures National Center for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Call Your VA or 1-802-296-6300 www.ptsd.va.gov

Survivor Benefits 1-800-827-1000 www.va.gov/survivors

*Traveling Veterans Coordinator Program* www.va.gov/healthbenefits/access/ seamless\_care.asp

VA National Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention www.prevention.va.gov

VA National Center for Patient Safety www.patientsafety.va.gov

Veterans Choice Program 1-866-606-8198 www.va.gov/opa/choiceact

Veterans Crisis Line 1-800-273-8255 Press "1" OR text to 838255 www.veteranscrisisline.net



#### VA Resources

VA Facility Locator 1-877-222-8387 www.va.gov/health

*MOVE!*<sup>®</sup> *Program* www.move.va.gov

*MyHealtheVet* 1-877-327-0022 www.myhealth.va.gov

**MyVA** www.va.gov

SmokeFreeVET 1-855-QuitVET (855-784-8838) Text VET to 47848 Smokefree.gov/Vet VA Caregiver Support Line 1-855-260-3274 www.caregiver.va.gov

Veterans Healthy Library www.veteranshealthlibrary.org

Women Veterans Call Center 1-855-829-6636 www.womenshealth.va.gov



#### VA Mobile Health – mobile.va.gov



Ask a Pharmacist





MOVE!® Program



Stay Quit Coach App

Mindfulness Coach App

Appointment Request