

The background of the image is a close-up, slightly blurred photograph of the American flag, showing the stars and stripes in detail. The flag is draped and appears to be waving. The text is overlaid on this background.

“Nearly a whopping
60% of all veterans have
little or no knowledge of
what they are entitled to”

VFW Magazine Aug 2013

***** VERY IMPORTANT: *****

Disability/illness does not have to be **service-connected** to receive VA medical benefits.

I was receiving medical 7mo. before being classified as service-connected from Agent Orange exposure.

MYOSITIS is not service-connected (Yet)

MEDICAL & COMPENSATION

http://www.va.gov/opa/publications/benefits_book.asp

FOR THE MOST PART, medical and compensation are two different departments of the VA

Medical

covers **adaptive equipment**, doctors, testing, lab work, surgeries, etc. **even if you do not have service-connected disabilities.**

Compensation

is where you are classified with service-connected disability. A percentage of service-connected disability may result in a monthly payment from the VA.

Connection between the two departments

The only connection I am familiar with: your service-connected disability % on the compensation side affects your placement in the priority group on the medical side

MEDICAL BENEFITS

<http://www.va.gov/healthbenefits/>

<https://www.1010ez.med.va.gov/>

- IN GENERAL Approval is based on a financial disclosure or certain aspects of your service, like Vietnam service, Purple Heart, and Prisoner of War, etc. (that will exempt you from financial disclosure.)
- Assigned to a priority group from one to eight
- **Co-pays** - \$0 for POW (PG3), \$0 for 50%+ service connected (PG1), \$0 for Catastrophically disabled (PG4)
- **Catastrophically Disabled** (backdoor entry into health benefits?)
 - “severely disabling injury, disorder or disease that permanently compromises their ability to carry out the activities of daily living”
 - “exemption from inpatient, outpatient and prescription copays”, “exempt from copayments.....non-institutional alternative extended care services”

MEDICAL BENEFITS CONTINUED

- **Veterans Directed Care** (available at the medical center level, not all participate, some are closed to new applicants, some have waiting list)
 - “who need skilled services, case management, and assistance with activities of daily living (e.g., bathing and getting dressed) or instrumental activities of daily living (e.g., fixing meals and taking medicines”
- **Home Health Care**
 - Skilled Home Health Care (SHHC) Services
 - Homemaker/Home Health Aide (H/HHA) Services
 - Home Telehealth
- **Camp Lejeune**, NC, 1957 – 1987, Drinking water. Veteran and families, 15 diseases are compensatable
- **Service/Guide Dog & Veterinary Insurance**

COMPENSATION

- Myositis not service connected but **FILE NOW**
- **Agent Orange**
 - **Presumptive diseases (14)**
 - **Locations**
 - **Brown water Navy(HR-969 & S-681 is currently being held in Committee, Reconvene in September)**
 - **C-123's Air Force reserve crews added 2015**
 - **Birth Defects in Children of Vietnam and Korea Veterans**
 - **Children who have spina bifida (except spina bifida occulta)**
 - **Birth Defects in Children of Women Vietnam Veterans**
 - **18 Diseases**

COMPENSATION Cont.

- **Gulf War Veterans' Medically Unexplained Illnesses**
- **Individual Unemployability** (Unemployable due to service-connected conditions (PG1))
- **VA presumes Lou Gehrig's Disease** (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis or ALS) diagnosed in all Veterans who had 90 days or more continuous active military service is related to their service

MISCELLANEOUS

- **Resources:**
 - Online, browsers, VA web page
 - **VSO (Health benefits?)**
 - **Eligibility office at medical centers**
 - **Health Care 877-222-8387**
 - **Benefits 800-827-1000**
- **Veterans Identification Card**, Became a law in 2015, VA estimates implementation in 2017

