

VA



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health  
Administration

Iowa City  
VA Health Care System

# THE BEACON



## A Spotlight On Your VA Health Care

Iowa City VA Health Care System's  
Official Newsletter for Patients

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### JANUARY

- 01 • **New Years Day\*\***
- 21 • **Martin Luther King, Jr's Birthday\*\***
- 20 • **University of Iowa Job Fair** • 11:00am-3:00pm at the Iowa Memorial Union  
» [Link to Job Fair](#)
- 29 • **Kirkwood's Health and Wellness Fair (Iowa City)**

#### FEBRUARY

- 06 • **Go Red - Heart Healthy Booth**  
*Healthy Teaching Kitchen & Whole Health*  
8:00am-10:00am at the front entrance of the Iowa City VA Medical Center
- 13 • **Go Red - Heart Healthy Booth (Iowa City)**  
*Healthy Teaching Kitchen & Ask a Cardiac Nurse*
- 18 • **Washington's Birthday\*\***
- 20 • **Go Red - Heart Healthy Booth (Iowa City)**  
*Healthy Teaching Kitchen & Movement*
- 27 • **Go Red - Heart Healthy Booth (Iowa City)**  
*Healthy Teaching Kitchen & Stress Reduction*

#### MARCH

- 29 • **Vietnam Veteran Commemoration Ceremony** • 10:00am at the flag pole • Rock Island National Cemetery (Rock Island Arsenal, Rock Island, IL 61299)
- 30 • **KWQC Women's Health & Lifestyles Fair** • 8:00am-4:30pm at the Davenport River Center (136 E 3rd St, Davenport, IA 52801)

\*\* During federal holidays, VA does not provide outpatient services



## Director's Message

**Judith Johnson-Mekota,  
FACHE**

For up-to-date news, find us online:

 @VALowaCity

 [www.iowacity.va.gov](http://www.iowacity.va.gov)

» [To submit newsletter feedback, please click here.](#)

## Dear Veterans, Volunteers and Friends of VA,

At the Iowa City VA Health Care System, we want every patient to be directly involved in his or her health care. There are many ways to take an active role, including a new approach to health and wellness in our Whole Health clinic.

Work with your health care team to improve your health and find out what options are available for you as a Veteran patient.

### BEFORE YOUR VISIT

- Write down health questions and concerns. Bring the questions to the appointment.
- Make a list of all the medications, vitamins, and supplements you take. Bring the list to the appointment.
- Visit the **Veterans Health Library** for health information.  
» [Link to Veterans Health Library](#)
- Visit **My HealtheVet** to refill prescriptions, track delivery, track appointments, communicate with VA providers, and access your health records.  
» [Link to MyHealtheVet](#)

For more information on My HealtheVet, please call (319) 338-0581 extension 5101 or 6919.

### DURING YOUR VISIT

Bring a family member to the appointment. They can help you remember what was discussed.

Make sure to tell your health care team about:

- Your health questions, problems, and concerns.
- Your past illnesses/hospitalizations, medications.
- Problems you may be experiencing.
- Your needs and preferences for treatment and your health. Work with your team to create a treatment plan that meets your needs and be involved in making decisions about your care.

Be sure to leave the visit with information about your care.

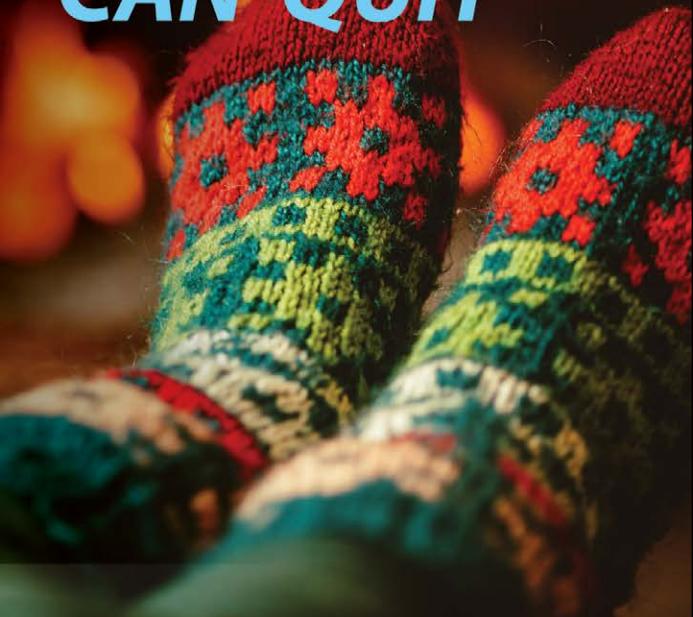
At VA, your health is our business, and we want you to have the best possible experience. Our goal is to be the provider of choice for health care in Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois, and you can help make that a reality.

Thank you for your service to our country, and thank you for choosing the Iowa City VA Health Care System.

**Judith Johnson-Mekota**

Director, Iowa City VA Health Care System

# FA-LA-LA-LA LA-LA-YOU CAN-QUIT



Visit [QUITLINEIOWA.ORG](http://QUITLINEIOWA.ORG) or call **1-800-QUIT-NOW** for help quitting.

'Tis the season for snuggles by the fireplace and finally quitting tobacco. Our gift to you this year (and every year) is a quit plan personalized to meet your needs. You may be eligible for free nicotine replacement therapy.



## ★ Strive for A Healthy Weight

If you need to lose weight, losing even 5-10% of your current body weight can lower your risks for many diseases. Staying in control of weight helps you be healthy now and in the future.

Maintaining a healthy weight can help you feel better, have more energy, help prevent and control many chronic diseases.

Maintaining a healthy weight means balancing the number of calories you eat with the calories your body uses.

- **Maintain weight:** eat about the same number of calories that the body is using
- **Losing weight:** eat fewer calories than the body is using (body is burning fat cells for energy = weight loss).
- **Gaining weight:** eat more calories than the body is using (extra calories stored as fat = weight gain)

### HEALTHY EATING AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Healthy eating and regular physical activity are keys to achieving and maintaining a healthy weight.

- **Eat Wisely:** choose a variety of low-calorie, high-nutrition foods and beverages in the basic food groups.
- **Physical Activity:** each week do at least 2½ of moderate-intensity, or 1¼ hours of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity or an equivalent combination of both.

For more information, contact *MOVE!* at (319) 358-4821, or talk to your VA health care team about making a health living change.

## Smoking Cessation Resources

### VA SMOKING QUITLINE

1-855-QUIT-VET

Tobacco quitlines can double your chance of quitting compared no support at all.

### SMOKEFREE.GOV

» [Link to Smokefree.gov](http://Link to Smokefree.gov)

A free resource for those wishing to quit using tobacco.

### smokefreeVET

A free text messaging program to provide daily support, advice and encouragement when quitting.

### VA TOBACCO CESSATION PROGRAM

Contact your primary care team or call (319) 688-3333.



### VA STAY QUIT COACH APP

For Apple and Android devices



### QUIT GUIDE APP

For Apple and Android devices.

# FLU SHOTS

for

VA Enrolled Patients



**No cost to you** \*

We'll even automatically update your records with the VA

**Nearby locations  
Walk in anytime**



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs  
Veterans Health Administration  
Iowa City VA Health Care System

**Walgreens**  
AT THE CORNER OF **HAPPY & HEALTHY**®

## Influenza Season Is Upon Us

The flu is a contagious virus that spreads through coughing or sneezing. It causes thousands of hospitalizations and deaths every year. Getting immunized is the single best way to protect yourself and loved ones from getting sick.

The VA and Walgreens have teamed up to make it easier for Veterans to stay healthy. Protecting your health is as close as your local VA health care clinic, or neighborhood Walgreens. Veterans may receive their flu shot at:



### WALGREENS STORES

Eligible Veterans, enrolled in the VA health care system, no-cost flu shots now through **March 31, 2019**. *Walgreens vaccination is the seasonal vaccine only. If you need a different type of vaccine (high dose) contact your VA Provider.*

When you visit participating Walgreens for your flu shot:

- Tell staff you are a Veteran enrolled in VA health care
- Show VA ID card and a second form of photo ID

» [Link to Walgreens Website](#)



### IOWA CITY VA HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

The Iowa City VA Medical Center and CBOC's provide no-cost flu shots during:

- Primary Care or Specialty Clinic appointments
- Walk-in clinic
- Home-based care visit

To learn more, contact your nearest Iowa City VA affiliated clinic.

» [Link to ICVAHCS Website](#)



### NON-VA PROVIDERS, PHARMACIES & EMPLOYERS

Immunizations are also offered at health fairs, local clinics or events, but there may be a charge.

If you choose this option, please get a written record of your vaccination to provide to your VA health care provider.

# #BeThere



for Veterans and Service members.



[VeteransCrisisLine.net/BeThere](https://VeteransCrisisLine.net/BeThere)



**Iowa City VA Health Care System**

*Suicide Prevention Coordinator*  
(319) 338-0581 x 5868

*Suicide Prevention Case Managers*  
(319) 688-3388 or (563) 328-5813

## Clinics Moved to Downtown Iowa City

In the fall, several clinics moved from the Iowa City VA Medical Center to the Iowa City Federal Building VA Clinic (400 South Clinton Street, Iowa City, IA 52240). The new facility offers more clinic space, free patient parking, and free shuttle service to and from the Iowa City VA Medical Center. For more information, please contact the specific clinic:

**Chiropractic and Acupuncture** (319) 358-4820

**Compensation and Pension** (319) 358-4824

**Dental Clinic** (319) 358-4825

**MOVE! Program** (319) 358-4821

**Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation Services** (319) 358-4823

**Prosthetics and Prosthetics Laboratory** (319) 358-482



## The Future Is Now Using VA Video Connect



Did you know that you can communicate with your PACT from the comfort of your home, office or school for FREE?

- Speak to your provider by video
- Receive instructions and results from the nurse
- Access your health care team by using your email and smart device (phone, tablet, or computer with webcam)
- Save money on copays, time and travel to the VA

### TRY IT OUT!

Let your PACT know that you are interested in VA Video Connect.

# VA's Million Veteran Program

With more than **600,000** Veteran enrollees as of September 2017, the Million Veteran Program (MVP) is the world's largest genomic database linked to a health care system. Over 5,400 of those Veterans are from the Iowa City VA Health Care System.

Enroll today!

Come visit us at:

**Iowa City VA Medical Center**

(601 Highway 6 West, Iowa City, IA 52246)

**Primary Care Clinic** (1W104 - ask clerk at desk)

**8:30am - 2:30pm**

**Monday through Friday**

## Dry Skin Prevention

Dry skin occurs when your skin loses too much water and oil. It is common and can affect anyone at any age. Restore moisture to the skin by:

- **Drinking water:** especially after a caffeinated or alcoholic beverage.
- **Eating foods:** rich in the essential fatty acids (walnuts, flaxseed, salmon, olive oil) can help skin cells stay hydrated.
- **Applying moisturizer:** that contains essential oils, emollient ceramides, or low water content. Thicker moisturizers are better and usually come in a tub or jar. Some examples are Cerave, Cetaphil, Vani cream and Aquaphor.

### SOAK AND SMEAR METHOD

Dermatologists recommend the **soak and smear method** when applying moisturizer.

After a shower or bath, while skin is still damp, apply your moisturizer of choice.

If you would like more information, call today to schedule an appointment with your Primary Care provider.



## Million Veterans Program



Veteran Program (MVP) is a research program between VA and Veterans. Its goal is to help improve healthcare for Veterans, future generations, and enable doctors to more accurately diagnosis and treat patients.

The MVP has established one of the largest databases of genetic, military exposure, lifestyle, and health information. Researchers will use this information to study how genes (DNA):

- Are affected by environmental exposures, lifestyles, and military experiences
- Influence treatment and medication plans on an individual level

Research findings may lead to new ways of

preventing and treating illnesses in Veterans. The MVP has over 25 different research projects in the areas of mental health, substance abuse, ENT, optometry, diabetes, heart and kidney diseases, a variety of cancers, Gulf War Illness, neurological disorders, and arthritis.

### PARTICIPATE

If you are at the Iowa City VA Medical Center for a regularly scheduled appointment and would like to volunteer, please stop by the **Primary Care Clinic (1W104)**.

» [Link to 'VA Million Veteran Program'](#)

Become a

# MINDFUL WARRIOR

with **ADAPTED TAI CHI**



Tai Chi is a simple mind body exercise integrating slow, intentional movements to help strengthen, relax, and improve health. Tai Chi helps with balance, posture, chronic pain, strength, mood, and sleep.

*Class is for Veterans of all abilities. Seated and standing movements will be taught.*

If interested, ask your provider for a Tai Chi consult. Classes are regularly held at the:

- Iowa City VA Medical Center (Iowa City, IA)
- Sterling VA Outpatient Clinic (Sterling, IL)
- **(COMING SOON)** Coralville VA Mental Health Outpatient Clinic (Coralville, IA)

## QUESTIONS?

Please contact Whole Health Clinic at 1-800-637-0128 x 6179

## Whole Health

*Do you have a chronic health condition or multiple health conditions that aren't seeing resolution? Are you looking for an integrative approach to your health?*

Whole Health is an approach to care that is guided by Veteran needs, putting you at the center of your health decisions and not your symptoms.

» [Link to 'Whole Health For Life'](#)

### WHOLE HEALTH WELLNESS

The Whole Health Wellness specialty clinic uses principles of whole health and intensive lifestyle strategies to address core imbalances and optimize wellness. Therapies include:

- Anti-inflammatory nutrition
- Therapeutic elimination diet trials
- Posture awareness
- Mindful movement
- Cooking classes
- Stress resilience
- Personalized health coaching



### CONTACT INFORMATION

- To learn more or to schedule an appointment please call (319) 338-0581 extension 6178.



### WHOLE HEALTH PATHWAY CLASS

Be a part of this exciting transformation by enrolling in any one of the following Whole Health Pathway Classes:

- **Tuesday, January 8<sup>th</sup>** from 1300-1500
- **Thursday, January 17<sup>th</sup>** from 1300-1500
- **Saturday, January 26<sup>th</sup>** from 1000-1200
- **Tuesday, February 5<sup>th</sup>** from 1300-1500
- **Thursday, February 21<sup>st</sup>** from 1300-1500
- **Saturday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>** from 1000-1200



**Primary Care**  
**Mental Health**  
**Womens Health**  
**Research**

And many more services with the goal of providing world class health care to our Veteran patients.

**Ready to Enroll?**

**877-222-VETS**

**IOWA CITY VA**  
**HEALTH CARE SYSTEM**

## Apply for VA Health Care Benefits Today!

To apply for VA Health Care you must complete VA Form 10-10EZ). This can be completed:

- **By phone:** 1-877-222-VETS (1-877-222-8387)
  - **By mail**
  - **In-person:** at the nearest VA Medical Center or VA Clinic
- » [Online link to 'Apply for VA Health Care Benefits'](#)

You will need the following information:

- Social Security number
- Copy of military discharge papers
- Financial information and your dependents' financial information
- Most recent tax return
- Account numbers for all current health insurance

### NEED HELP?

For help filling out the application, an accredited representative, like a Veterans Service Officer (VSO), can help you fill out your claim.

» [Link to 'Get Help Filing Your Claim or Appeal'](#)

### STEPS TO APPLY FOR VA HEALTH CARE BENEFITS

- 1 Prepare Form**  
*Fill out VA Form 10-10EZ*
- 2 Apply**  
*Complete form and submit*
- 3 VA Review**  
*VA reviews claim within a week*
- 4 Decision**  
*VA will notify applicant of decision*

## Work At VA

Help support our mission; and work with a purpose.

### REGISTERED NURSE POSITIONS

The Iowa City VA Health Care System has several Registered Nurse (RN) positions available. Start immediately and begin enjoying the benefits of a rewarding career in nursing with the VA!

### USAJOBS

Search and apply for federal jobs on USAJOBS.

» [Link to USAJOBS](#)

### VOCATIONAL REHAB & EMPLOYMENT (VR&E) PROGRAM

If you are a Veteran with a service-connected disability that impacts your ability to work, the VR&E program may be able to help.

» [Link to Vocational Rehab Program](#)