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Nine new cancers added to the presumed service-connected list related to particulate matter

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On April 26, VA announced the addition of nine rare respiratory [cancers](#) to the list of presumed service-connected disabilities due to exposure to fine particulate matter for Veterans who served any amount of time in

- Afghanistan, Djibouti, Syria or Uzbekistan during the Persian Gulf War, from September 19, 2001, to the present, or
- The Southwest Asia theater of operations from August 2, 1990, to the present.

VA is taking a new approach to making decisions on presumptives, one that takes all available science into account, with one goal in mind

– getting today’s Veterans, and Vets in the decades ahead – the benefits they deserve, as fast as possible.

VA identified, through a focused review of scientific and medical evidence, a biological plausibility between airborne hazards, specifically particulate matter, and carcinogenesis of the respiratory tract; the unique circumstances of these rare cancers warrant a presumption of service connection.

Veterans and survivors who had claims previously denied for any of the below respiratory cancers are encouraged to file a [supplemental claim](#) for benefits;

- Squamous cell carcinoma of the larynx;
- Squamous cell carcinoma of the trachea;
- Adenocarcinoma of the trachea;
- Salivary gland–type tumors of the trachea;
- Adenosquamous carcinoma of the lung;
- Large cell carcinoma of the lung;
- Salivary gland–type tumors of the lung;
- Sarcomatoid carcinoma of the lung and;
- Typical and atypical carcinoid of the lung.

VA will contact impacted Veterans and survivors to inform them about their eligibility and it will provide information on how to apply.

To apply for benefits, Veterans and survivors may visit [VA.gov](#) or call toll-free at 800-827-1000.

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Keywords: [cancer](#) [Compensation](#) [particulate matter](#)

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67 Comments

Dunleavy May 13, 2022 at 5:54 pm

My husbands throat cancer (not presumptive) spread to his larynx (presumptive). How is throat cancer not on the list but larynx is????!!

Kenneth Dale Carr May 10, 2022 at 1:04 pm

Bottom line the VA is useless. Pllc va disability group. Try these guys especially if you're an older VETERAN. Their also vets not affiliated with the VA and they will put the screws to them, expedite you're claim and will not settle for a life time of pain endured bye any VETERAN. Go over their heads its the best way. DC3 Carr USN.

David Juhasz May 16, 2022 at 4:43 pm

"The VA is useless"

AMEN brother

I filed my claim in 2020/21.)

No words).. PTSD and Agent Orange caused cancer. what so ever about my claim except that it is in the "Determination and decision phase.

For TWO YEARS! What the heck is the problem. I don't buy the current VA line of "we're backed up due to COVID.. B.S.!

I contact the VAQ my state congressman and get no replies nor support. I have a Veterans rep via Veterans Paying It Forward.

It's a local veterans group in Anza California.

gregory browne May 10, 2022 at 12:40 pm

if have been collecting disability/compensation since 2015 and then 2022 it was cut in 1/2 reduce the rating from 120% down to 70%,(and they refuse to remove my port) oncology says it will come back ,remission 2 years.I have been chop up so much and I set off the alarms when I walk by with so much chemo and radiation and nuclear meds. I got use to the money every month to live ,now my home and loans are on the block.I thought it was permanent.



Brian Baumruk Collins May 2, 2022 at 5:53 pm

I have prostate cancer, polycythemia vera (bone marrow cancer), atrial fibrillation, neuropathy, and polyposis (half my large intestine was removed, I'm about to have my 36th colonoscopy and 33rd endoscopy to continue to remove polyps annually). I was on the USS Sabalo, SS-302 from August of 1966 to summer of 1969, and we were in the South China Sea twice for 6 months each (agent Orange?), and in the shipyard at Hunter's Point in San Francisco (asbestos) during that period for six months. Before that I was at the nuclear power prototype (radiation) in upstate New York for six months. I'm already at 30% disability due to knee and shoulder damage, but I feel that my overall health took a huge hit during my service years. Any suggestions as to my next steps would be appreciated.

R. B. Simsuangco April 30, 2022 at 7:18 am

I pity those whose claims had been denied but saying that, I have to pity myself too because I was denied on my claims as well. I was in Vietnam waters from my first Pacific deployment in 1968 on board the USS Tanner (AGS-15) home ported in Pearl Harbor, HI., and on board the USS Bolster (ARS-38) that I have to catch-up in Vietnam where she was deployed then. That/there is where I experienced running so fast from the mortars exploding close by the Mail Box I just had my mail to my mother dropped and diving in to the bunker for safety. Aboard the USS Bolster (ARS-38), we are earning our hazardous pay every month and that's where

we had to have an emergency pull-out, even the ship was anchored out the enemies mortar fire came down as close as 10 feet from the ship. The ship's personnel earned a Combat Action Ribbon from that incident. These are periods that exposure to Agent Orange is not to be doubted but considered. I filed claims for diabetes/high sugar, hypertension but were all denied and a few years ago I was diagnosed with an enlargement of the heart, covering almost half of my left lung on the chest X-ray I had. My tinnitus (ringing of the ear/s) is getting worse and my hearing loss has gotten worse that I hardly understand what I watched and heard from the TV set. So I am appealing to VA, VBS, or whatever office is concerned.....PLEASE be fair and just to those who sacrificed and served and protect democracy. Thank you.....

Larry Burrows April 29, 2022 at 1:33 pm

William,

Try going to this site, (<https://www.va.gov/>) creating an account and applying online. Just a note: It can take as long as a year to get a decision. However, any compensation you might get will be retro to the day you applied for it.

kenneth elliott April 28, 2022 at 1:51 pm

Anyone out there who was involved with "PROJECT SHAD" also referred to as "PROJECT X" while serving aboard ship or land back in the 60's. 40 years after the experiment I was notified that I was a participant in Ionized Radiation?, (Chemical/Biological Warfare). I was exposed to Asbestos while aboard ships built in the 40's and also Agent Orange while serving in Saigon and thruout the Delta Region Da Nang 66 67 and 68.

Russell J Rader May 9, 2022 at 6:32 pm

You may be eligible for disability benefits if you meet both of these requirements.

Both of these must be true:

You were part of Projects 112 or SHAD testing from 1962 to 1974, and

You have an illness believed to be caused by the testing

Who's covered?

Veterans

Qualified survivors

VA.gov

Pat Belbot May 22, 2022 at 2:34 pm

Hello Russell,

Have you ever heard of the Operation Shufly events?? During JFK's administration, there was a Top Secret mission and they used the first Helicopter Squadron of Marines to fly over and into Vietnam. My husband was station on the USS Valley Forge CVS-45 which was the "floating base" for the helicopters and the Marine Squadron took over my husbands bunk area and relocated the sailors' down a deck to make it more efficient for the Marine's to hurry out to the flight deck. My husband was in the Navigation Division, (above the flight deck) in 1962 when they were sitting off the coast of Nam. I've spoken to so many people including some Naval Historians and there is no "official" paperwork in the Naval Archives regarding this event....but you can read about it and there are a few video's regarding the event. Yet the VA says they can't find any proof. My husband was just rated at 10% for his hearing loss and has suffered so many cancer surgeries it's crazy. He is 81 and I have been doing ALL the work for better than 2 years. I don't know what the next step is.

David Timothy Hester Jr. April 28, 2022 at 8:45 am

I am an Air force veteran that served at Tahkli and Nakhon Phanom Thai air bases from April 1972 to Dec. 1974, I was diagnosed category 4 bladder cancer at age 42 and have been dealing with surgeries and BCG treatments now for over 26 years. At time of diagnosis I was told by surgeon that as this is a very slow growing cancer to be a category 4 I would have to have had this cancer over 20 years which puts probable exposer in my time in Thailand. At that time the VA did not recognize bladder cancer as a symptom of exposure to defoliants, Recently it has recognized bladder cancer but since I was not actually in Viet Nam I am not getting help with my case. Why does our government and Veterans Administration disrespect us so and make every request so difficult. I have seen no results on my claim request.

Bill Brassfield April 28, 2022 at 9:03 am

David, I went through a very similar scenario with my renal cancer. According to the doctors, I carried this for 15–20 years before diagnosis. The time frame placed the possible initial development mid-career.

Get a statement from your doctor for a likely as not claim. The probability falls in your favor, but be patient with the response.

Good luck.

Rodd Joseph April 28, 2022 at 12:04 pm

David, like you, I also have bladder cancer. I'm a non smoker and was diagnosed when I was 47 in 2018. I served in Panama in 1990 and VA has denied my claim twice. I've read the latency period can be up to 30 or more. If anyone has any ideas, I'm all ears.

Bruce N Gilbert April 28, 2022 at 7:42 am

What about the Vietnam veterans suffering hypertension from the effects of Agent Orange that are awaiting legislative action on Honoring our PACT Act of 2021 (H.R. 3967)? In my case, being an 80 year old veteran, I believe I would be granted approval under Section 404, Hypertension. Section 404 would include exposure to Agent Orange as a presumptive cause of hypertension and of monoclonal gammopathy of an undetermined significance. We/I have been awaiting for the addition of hypertension to the list of presumptive conditions and believe there's been foot dragging figuring that if the delays are continued, we'll just die off.

Deidre Fox April 27, 2022 at 11:29 pm

What about cancer from exposure to the Chernobyl episode in '86? My husband died from throat cancer!

William Butterfield April 27, 2022 at 11:16 pm

When I first applied for VA health care I was told that my ship the Floyd B Parks DDG884 was not in a region in Vietnam where Agent Orange was released, so I didn't qualify to apply for AO disability benefits. Now five years later they say that the ship was in a region on Agent Orange release. I have had several different ailments since I left the service and I would like to know how I go about applying for AO disability benefits now. The benefits office at the VA hospital in Houston has been closed and moved because they are remodeling the area where it used to be. I tried to find out where it had been moved to and have not received an answer that I could use to locate the new office. How do I go about applying for the benefits or tests that I need for the benefits?

Floyd W Pratt April 27, 2022 at 11:14 pm

I served aboard the USS Sacramento and was a plank owner and served two tours in Vietnam. 1964 – 1970. We did have

asbestos in Weapons divisions magazines. I now have CPOD, emphysema, along with other lung issues.

Albert Desper April 27, 2022 at 10:39 pm

Most people at the bar hospital at the desk are texting or talking on the cell phone If you put i in a appeal u made a big mistake.Do claim on a fast track,but make sure I have all of your DR. Letters etc.also I do not know why on community care,you cannot get a private DR. Dentist to do it for some reason.I have to drive over 100 miles one way.Also when I call the dental dept. They say that the DR. Has to call you to make an examine

.. Makes know since to me. Also if you go to community care,make sure you think and ask all the questions down to ask . Also about how to get meds threw the VA...

Saifeddin April 27, 2022 at 10:37 pm

I was designated 8416 Nuclear Medicine Tech from 1996 to 2000. My duties as ARSO (Radiation Safety Officer) was assigned to NMRC (Naval Medical Research Laboratory) in Bethesda Maryland. I have Asthma sincevl left the service. They do CT for my chest every year at the Baltimore VA hospital for existing nodules. I filed and was denied. What should I do? Thanks.

R. Nankee April 27, 2022 at 10:36 pm

I served as a Engineman/throttle man on a Guppy 2 Able submarine. It is the list for asbestos bearing submarines. I was exposed to asbestos on several occasions. I also acquired Sarcoidosis of the lungs due to serving in a tropical area. I was followed by the VA pulmonary doctors, but it went in remission. I was also was exposed to noise and suffered some hearing loss. I received a severe flash burn and was issued glasses. I was employed as in various capacities by the DOD including Occupational Medicine, Audiology and Industrial Hygiene and retired as a board certified Safety Engineer. I was told by the Naval

What about those Airman that operated the Aircraft Arresting Systems (barriers) BAK-9, BAK-12 with brake dust and nylon fiber particles filling the air after and engagement?

L. Bailey April 27, 2022 at 10:25 pm

My husband a 3 tour Nam Vet spent years battling the VA when he got solitary myeloma they denied 3 times a few much later he had multiple myeloma he finally received his benefits in Jan 2019 and died In March. I'm still angry about how they treated him.

GT Bullington April 27, 2022 at 10:06 pm

What about USCG Viet Nam Vets that went thru Curtis Bay MD Shipyards outfitting cutters for Duty in VN, included removing asbestos insulation on piping and re- insulation of piping, inhalation of dust from removal of Red Lead paint and re priming with red lead paint. No mask we're provided.

Michael Maurizio April 27, 2022 at 9:46 pm

How about idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis for Vietnam vets exposed to AO when the doctors say iIPF is as likely as not caused by exposure to AO based on the Veteran's medical history. Filed a claim a out 2 years ago and looked on line to find there are over 20,000 claims still ahead of me

Betty April 28, 2022 at 3:42 pm

Once again Vietnam Veterans left out in the cold. No animosity towards the younger vets, but this is an atrocity. Many, many cancers from Agent Orange.

Michael ducey April 27, 2022 at 9:18 pm

Asbestos was removed while we were in the shipyard in Pascagoula Ms while we lived on board in the space just

forward of our berthing area .1984

Michael Molamphy April 27, 2022 at 9:07 pm

Always get help from your congressman/woman.

Cynthia J Werth April 27, 2022 at 9:06 pm

Long time?? My now deceased husband, a Vietnam vet, filed a claim in 2017 for presumptive chronic lymphocytic leukemia for to agent orange exposure. He died in 2018. Still waiting adjudication. All the propaganda from the VA about how fast they are resolving backlogs is just that... propaganda.



Katie April 28, 2022 at 8:20 am

Have you followed up with anyone? Not just a phone call to their 800 number. And have you filed for widows benefits? I'm a retired rating specialist from VA and I'm guessing that when he passed away, his claim stopped. Please get a service representative like the DAV or American Legion. Let them help you get back those benefits. I'm sorry this happened to you.

Morris Lawrence April 27, 2022 at 8:44 pm

What about the damage from quinine malaria tablets in Vietnamese nam ? Fatty liver??

Louis Faust April 27, 2022 at 8:40 pm

George,

I believe the onness or responsibility for proving that there was indeed a possible asbestos source on your sub is on you. If only you kept a copy of the cosal disk for listing of equipment on board. There is a big asbestos settlement for those whom have been exposed in shipyards settled by the government, so you will have to research to find more facts.

There is indeed NO asbestos registry created by the Defence Health Administration (DHA) like there is for agent orange and burn pit exposure etc...

Lloyd Ballard April 27, 2022 at 8:36 pm

It amazes me how VA keeps adding more and more service connected presumptive disability qualifiers, yet they cannot act on the ones they have already put into law. I applied for a disability 9 months ago also based on a presumptive disease linked to Agent Orange in Vietnam. The only thing I heard back on was I needed to prove I was in Vietnam!!! That is a slap in the face as I am a 20 year US Army retiree. How much effort would it take for VA to computer query official military records and find it out themselves? I can only deduce they put as many nails in the road as possible hoping you will die or just give up. I find it implausible that VA is unable to automate the process.

BrotherPaul April 27, 2022 at 8:28 pm

To Harold S ... because they are waiting for you to die.

Valerie April 27, 2022 at 8:05 pm

What about full time Reservists working in the same hangar that housed the C123 aircraft which sprayed agent orange, who later developed Hodgkins Disease?

Jeanne Phin April 27, 2022 at 7:57 pm

Military members in government housing with exposure to large toxic loads of mold particulates are experiencing chronic health conditions caused by excessive exposure to WET Buildings.

I was exposed on my job as a Federal Ranger at Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge in Virginia Beach VA in 2017. Due to a faulty AC unit installation. The condensation was pouring behind the interior walls instead of outdoors down the drain.

Black mold formed everywhere in my small confined workspace. The air quality report stated no one should enter the building without OSHA approved respirator and protective gear, I had none. The workspace had to be HAZMAT remediated. I zero protection from the off gassing of toxic mold particulates. According to a senior Industrial Hygienist from OSHA this was an OSHA violation. I arrived at a new job in another state in critical condition. My workman comp case was consistently denied. It's criminal. My workspace air quality was essentially poisoned. By law u am entitled to a safe workspace free from harm. Our military members have had their health damaged and the government lacks a moral compass. Regards Jeanne Phin ps I was left with a quarter of a million dollars in medical bills and legal fees thousands of dollars out of pocket to be diagnosed with chronic inflammatory response syndrome an illness caused by exposure to a WET Building

Daniel Armstrong April 27, 2022 at 7:41 pm

At least 4 of the six ships I was stationed on had asbestos, probably all 6. I tore out lagging in the main spaces, I rebricked a lot of fireboxes on customer ships when I ran the boiler repair shop on the USS Ajax AR-6, as well as #4 boiler after it was melted down. My last ship spent it's time in the Gulf where we supplied the fleet. I'm hoping when I have my next physical in June that I can have my lungs looked at again.

Karen McNeal April 27, 2022 at 7:40 pm

My husband of 38 years died almost 3 years ago from glioblastoma caused by Agent Orange exposure in Vietnam. Even his death certificate states that. The VA has been unresponsive

Edward April 27, 2022 at 7:35 pm

I was exposed to burned human waste on a daily basis!!

our spouses didn't die on a battlefield; they died on American soil as a result of a battlefield and VA has let us down.

RAMON E FIGUEROA April 27, 2022 at 6:16 pm

Are nodules and granuloma in the lungs part of this claim. Related to the gulf war.

Paul Maier April 27, 2022 at 6:14 pm

I claimed problem in lower back neck and shoulder, va response didn't complain about it in service , not that it didnt exist. 40 years of denial of the truth. Funny part after one visit i still hurt bad and only got nothing went to my mothers doctor for some relief. A PA saw me ran her finger down my back and said herniated disc, MRI proved her diagnosis. Her statement says it all Someone been blowing smoke up my – ss. Even with Mri in hand injury didnt exist. Went in with son workers comp report x3 and mri guess what i have degenerate disc disease, doctor who put it in the System got an unpaid vacation, so activated her reserve and went overseas.

David H Morris April 27, 2022 at 6:10 pm

Would my squamish cell carcinoma be covered? It started in my tonsills and spread to my lymph nodes.

Tom April 27, 2022 at 6:10 pm

As a Navy vet , I did two Indian Ocean tours on the USS Davis with Djibouti being home port. Many times the fine dust particulates had to be swept of the decks of the ship, even out in the middle of the ocean

Edward Larabee April 27, 2022 at 5:49 pm

Still nothing but red tape to get approved.

Jerry April 27, 2022 at 5:48 pm

I was stationed in Crete, Greece in the early 90's. We were exposed to open burn pits where medical waste, trash and dead animals. Who knows what else was tossed into that OPEN pit. Clouds from that burn pit would engulf the base which was less than a half mile away. We could not walk outside unless absolutely necessary. I have health problems today.

JOHN LEWIS April 27, 2022 at 4:34 pm

I was diagnosed with rear tumor, called Gastric Instestinal Smoral Tumor. (Gist) for short, I served on board an air carrier, the Uss Bennington for 2 years and was exposed to abostosis,.

Trish April 27, 2022 at 4:31 pm

What about Chemical (54B) soldiers from Fort McClellan, and training with chemicals our whole time in the Army?

Harold S April 27, 2022 at 12:49 pm

Not really sure why it takes the VA long on deciding these types of claims. I filled a claim almost a year ago and the VA has run me through just about every test out there even lost a lung due to cancer and all they can tell me is claim is still pending. Many of us die before ever getting an answer.

Malik Jones April 26, 2022 at 9:48 pm

I contracted TB from a roommate while in the Military, dose it qualify as Sevice Connected, and compensation?

Lindsay Smith April 27, 2022 at 6:23 pm

Yes it does. Find yourself a county veterans service officer in your county to help you file that claim correctly.

Mike Branum April 27, 2022 at 7:25 pm

Any injury or disease that occurred while serving on active duty could result in a service-connected disability. You should consult a VSO or VA-accredited attorney for assistance.

Scott M Hall April 27, 2022 at 7:32 pm

TB is a treatable, curable bacterial infection. Unless you have some disability that was caused by an illness that was likely treated by medication at the time you were ill with said bacterial infection, then this is probably not something for which you would get a rating.

Lynn May 1, 2022 at 6:49 am

My Dad got TB from Korean War. Years later his VA doc said TB has residual heart and lung issues. He was in the process of appealing a VA claim when he died. No doubt the PTSD he lived with all those years also contributed to his health issues. He received 10% from being blown up in a land mine due to hearing loss and tinnitus, had 1-2 days off before sending him back to fight with a concussion. Yep 10% disability and he also suffered remnants from frostbite while fighting in the Chosin Reservoir during blizzards. I still have the paperwork from the VA. He was only 56 when he died & had pulmonary fibrosis so doubt TB is 100% curable. TB can also affect the kidneys, spine & brain.

Eddie Humble April 26, 2022 at 8:26 pm

What about sailers that served time in shipyards and we're exposed to asbestos. Now we have problems breathing, with pulmonary nodules, lung scarring, COPD.

Lindsay Smith April 27, 2022 at 6:25 pm

Always file a claim and attribute it to that exposure if you believe your disability is related to service. Find a county veterans service officer that will help you file a timely and efficient claim for best chances of success.

chaz April 27, 2022 at 7:48 pm

I agree with you 100%,exposure is exposure ,regardless of where that exposure occurred. That is like saying if you build a fire in Viet Nam and build a fire in Germany,they are different.....they are both fires!

jeffrey k hirsch April 27, 2022 at 9:47 pm

When deployed in the field, we used the tent stove heaters that run on diesel fuel. They would backup exhaust constantly due to the stove pipes that constantly needed cleaning. We would wake up, choking from the thick smog, about 3 to 4 times a night. I would spit up black flem for weeks after deployment. 30 years later, my liver, pancreas and kidneys are littered with nodules.

Richard April 27, 2022 at 10:46 pm

I am wondering about the same thing Phil!

alvin press April 27, 2022 at 11:14 pm

My father was on ship uss indra as steamfitter he work with asbestos when it came in powder form and mix it with water well 50 years later e got that on lungs he filed claim and couple years later he won got 40 percent

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