



TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY AND THE COMBAT VETERAN

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) is one of the most common injuries among former combat Veterans. In fact, health officials have noticed an uptick in TBIs in military service members who served in Iraq and Afghanistan. A report produced by the Defense and Veteran Brain Injury Center (DVBIC) found that more than 414,000 Veterans and service members were affected by TBI between 2000 and 2019. The increase is linked to the common use of roadside improvised explosive devices (IEDs). The long-term effects are now being discovered as more and more Veterans suffer from cognitive, behavioral and psychological conditions connected to their injuries.

What is TBI?

A Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) is a disruption of brain function resulting from a blow or jolt to the head or a penetrating head injury. A closed head injury, also called nonpenetrating or blunt injury, occurs when the brain is not exposed. A penetrating head injury, or open head injury, occurs when an object pierces the skull and breaches the outermost membrane surrounding the brain.

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TBI symptoms can be different in every individual. Memory loss is the most common cognitive impairment. Some people seek treatment for a TBI when they find themselves unable to walk a straight line. Others look for help when they have speech issues, depression or personality changes, chronic pain, or substance abuse disorder.

How does the VA review TBI claims?

You may have received a diagnosis of mild, moderate or severe TBI at the time of your injury in service. The VA will not rate your disability based on the classification made at that time. Your disability rating is based on your current level of functioning at the time you file a claim.

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Letter From Jan

Spring has finally sprung, and there's no better time to get outside and get some exercise. May I make a suggestion? How about walking or jogging — it will help to get you in shape for our Freedom 5K Fun Run in July! This is a fun event with enthusiastic crowds, and

all proceeds benefit our wonderful Veterans. You can't beat that.

Soldiers have been suffering from TBI as long as there have been wars. However, despite the rapid advancements in weaponry, innovations in combat, and the growing trend toward unmanned warfare, reducing the number of wounded soldiers has not reduced the percentage of soldiers suffering from TBI. In reality, the prevalence of TBI in modern military operations is still staggering.

If you are the victim of a TBI from your time in service, first get the medical attention you need; then if you need help getting the disability benefits you deserve, call us. We are here to help.

School will be out before you know it, and it won't be long until vacations start and lots of distracted people will hit the road for summer travel. Please put your cell phones away while driving, and *let's be careful out there.*

COMMUNITY CORNER

Announcing the 2023 Freedom 5K Fun Run

Jan Dils, Attorneys at Law, will host the annual Freedom 5K Fun Run on Saturday, July 8, 2023, beginning at 8:00 a.m. Race sign-in begins at 7:00 a.m. This year's race includes an in-person 5K as well as a virtual option.

The Virtual 5K Event will be held Saturday, July 1 from 12:01 a.m. to Friday, July 7, 11:59 p.m. Participants who wish to participate in the Virtual 5K must use a fitness tracker to record their time and submit a photo of proof along with their timed results.

To register for either event, visit our home page at JanDils.com.

One hundred percent of the Freedom Fun Run 5K proceeds will benefit local Veteran organizations such as We Have Your Six — Parkersburg Division, Operation Transportation, and the Jan Dils Foundation Scholarship for Veteran Recipients.

Our previous events have been very successful, and we expect to draw record numbers of attendees who are excited to support the men and women who have served our country. Hope we see you there!



Veterans Rule at Jan Dils, Attorneys at Law

Jan Dils, Attorneys at Law, has a special relationship with the Veterans in our community. Our team is made up of kind, caring individuals, some of whom are Veterans themselves. Many more have an enlisted spouse or a Veteran in the family. And every single person here has a deep respect for those who have served.

Our dedication to Veterans extends beyond our clients, too. Every year, we host a 5K Fun Run event and donate all proceeds to local organizations that provide direct support to Veterans.

This year, we return to West Virginia Motor Speedway as we sponsor the "Veteran of the Race," a special honor that provides Veterans and their families with a memorable VIP speedway experience. In November, we hold an annual Spaghetti Dinner where Veterans eat free as a thank-you for their service.

At Jan Dils, Attorneys at Law, we continue to seek out opportunities to give back, because we believe our Veterans deserve the world.



Recreational Spotlight

West Virginia Veterans Memorial

The West Virginia Veterans Memorial is a two-story oval-shaped monument honoring more than 10,000 West Virginians who gave their lives for the safety and freedom of others. Composed of four limestone monoliths surrounded by a reflecting pool, the interior walls are faced in polished black granite etched with the names

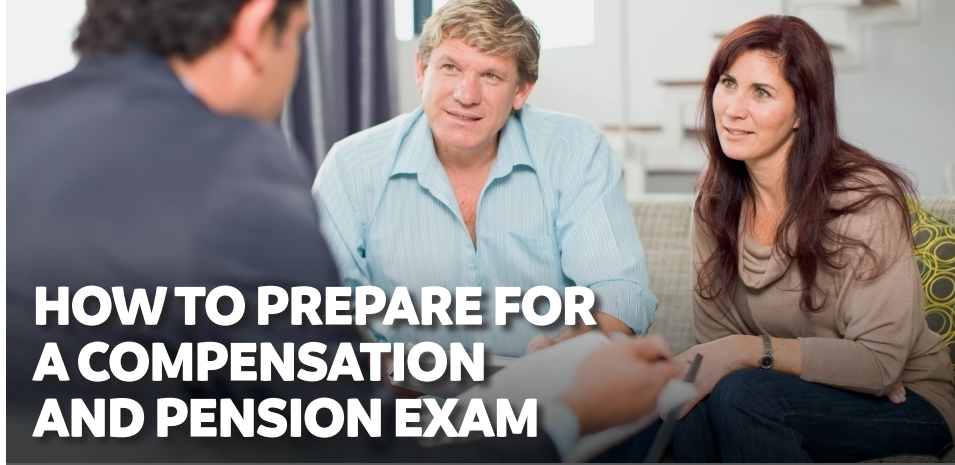
of these men and women.

The Memorial was designed by Charleston native P. Joseph Mullins, who also sculpted the four figures representing the four major 20th century conflicts: World War I, World War II, Vietnam and Korea, and the four major branches of military service. The Memorial is a popular gathering place for events and ceremonies involving Veterans.

The West Virginia Veterans Memorial is part of the State Capitol Complex in Charleston. To visit, take Interstate 64/77 to Charleston, Exit 99 (State

Capitol/Greenbrier Street). Pre-pay parking (bring quarters!) is available in the Capitol Complex.





HOW TO PREPARE FOR A COMPENSATION AND PENSION EXAM

After you apply for VA service-connected disability compensation, you will receive a phone call or a letter from the VA asking you to come in for a Compensation and Pension (C&P) exam. If you have several disabilities, you may be asked to report for several C&P exams. Don't be alarmed — this is a routine request.

A C&P exam is a doctor's appointment where your disabilities are evaluated. Usually, this exam is conducted at a VA hospital or clinic. The doctor writes a report and sends it to the VA Regional Office where you submitted your application for benefits. You won't be prescribed any medicine or given any medical treatment during this office visit.

What can I do to make my case during a C&P exam?

Here are a few rules to keep in mind:

1. *Prepare for your C&P exam ahead of time.* Keep careful records of your condition and have all the appropriate

forms at hand.

2. *Be upfront with your concerns and day-to-day issues.* Be straightforward and honest with your answers to questions. If your conditions are interfering with your work or home life, make sure the doctor is aware of this.
3. *Explain about your "bad days" and how often they occur.* What does your disability prevent you from doing in your normal life? Does it prevent you from working? Interacting with friends and family?
4. *Get a copy of the C&P results.* The VA can provide you with a copy of this report.
5. *Bring a family member or friend to the appointment.* This person may be able to offer valuable insights. Sometimes the examiner may not allow a third party to attend the exam, but this individual can still be helpful in noting how long the exam took or other circumstances; for example, if you were kept waiting for an extended period.
6. *Remember that you may have multiple*

office visits. If you file multiple claims, you might have multiple C&P exams. It can be frustrating, but it happens.

The point of this exam is to help you get the benefits you deserve, which are probably much needed and will improve your quality of life. Therefore, it's important to be forthcoming.

The doctor's review

After the exam, the doctor will evaluate how severe your symptoms are and submit a report to the VA Regional Office processing your claim. Often the report includes the doctor's opinion about whether your medical condition is related to your military service.

It is not the doctor who decides whether your disability qualifies you for benefits, but the VA Regional Office. The C&P report is a significant factor in the VA's decision on granting you benefits, but all the medical evidence in your record will be considered. The processing time for your claim will depend on how complex your claim is.

If you need help in navigating this often-frustrating process, give the experienced VA disability team at the Jan Dils Foundation a call at **833.534.3577** or send us an email at **Contact@JanDilsFoundation.org**. We are here to serve you.

Source: <https://www.va.gov/disability/va-claim-exam/>

It's Game Time

COMMONYMS

What's a commonym, you ask? A commonym is a group of words that have a common trait in the three words/items listed. For example, the words: A car - A tree - An elephant... they all have trunks. These will make you think!

1. A Sprinter - A City - An Icehouse
2. A Beetle - A Fox - A Rabbit
3. A Toe - A Carpenter - A Finger
4. A Basketball - A Turkey - A Christmas Stocking
5. Chicago - Smokey - Yogi
6. Easter - Christmas - Virgin
7. Draw - Fade - Slice
8. Yellow - Scarlet - Cabin
9. Toilets - Eyes - Trash Cans
10. Finger - Oil - Latex

Answers: 1. They all have blocks 2. Cars by Volkswagen 3. They have nails 4. They are stuffed 5. Bears 6. Islands 7. Golf terms 8. Fevers 9. They have lids 10. They are paints

What's Cooking

NON-FRIED ICE CREAM

This tasty treat is from **Carrie Russell** — VA Case Development, Hearing Clerk and Attorney Fees Coordinator.



INGREDIENTS

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| 3 cups crushed cornflakes | 8 oz. container whipped topping |
| ¾ cup sugar | 1 tsp. cinnamon, divided |
| 1 stick unsalted butter | 48 oz. vanilla bean ice cream, softened |
| 1/3 cup honey | Chocolate syrup and cherries for topping (optional) |

DIRECTIONS: Melt butter in large pan; add crushed cornflakes, sugar and ½ tsp. cinnamon. Toast about 5 minutes, stirring constantly to avoid burning; remove from heat and let cool. Blend ice cream, whipped topping and remaining cinnamon. Spread 1/3 of cornflake mixture in a 9x13 glass dish, spread ice cream mixture on top, then top evenly with remaining cornflake mixture. Drizzle with honey. Cover with plastic wrap and freeze for at least 3 hours before serving.

PERSONAL INJURY | VETERANS DISABILITY | SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY

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Service connection for TBI

The best way to establish service connection for TBI is to document any concussive blows to the head when they happen. However, if the documentation was not completed at the time of the incident, you must establish three things:

1. *A current diagnosis of TBI.* This may be established at a VA health-care center or by a civilian provider.
2. *Documentation of an in-service incident that caused the disability.* If you sustained a blow to the head, it is important that you gather all available documentation regarding that incident — including the date and time of the incident, medical attention received, whether your condition improved or deteriorated over time, and how the incident

impacted your ability to focus, think or work.

3. *A medical nexus that connects the current, diagnosed disability to the in-service occurrence.* The medical nexus is vital to your disability claim. This document establishes the ties between your TBI and your service.

Secondary Service Connection

Veterans may qualify for benefits for secondary service connection due to other conditions — such as Parkinson's, dementia, seizures, PTSD and depression, among others — that develop as a secondary result of a TBI. Since these conditions can inhibit your ability to work and perform daily functions, you might decide to seek VA evaluation for the disability.

If you are interested in appealing your rating decision, contact us today at **833.534.3577** or email us at **Contact@JanDilsFoundation.org**. Our team will listen to your story and advise you on how to get the benefits you deserve. Your first consultation is always free.

