

**GET THE VETERANS' HEALTHCARE
SERVICES YOU'VE EARNED**

Millions of Veterans encounter health challenges every day — often as a direct result of their service. According to a study of injured post-9/11 Veterans, 94% experienced physical injuries that are considered severe, 91% live with severe mental health conditions, and nearly a third need aid and attendance with everyday activities because of their injuries.

Veterans' mental health

The prevalence of “invisible wounds” among the Veteran population is growing, and the absence of scarring doesn't make mental health concerns any less critical. One in five Veterans who served in Iraq or Afghanistan experiences post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or major depression, but only half of those who need treatment seek help.

Veterans are 1.5 times more likely to commit suicide than non-Veterans; more than 6,100 Veterans died by suicide in 2017. Nearly two-thirds had not received care recently through the Veterans Health Administration (VHA). These figures are also typically higher, reflecting former National Guard and Reserve members who may not be eligible for Veterans' benefits, depending on their type of service.

**Unique challenges faced by
women Veterans**

Women are the fastest-growing group seeking care through the VA. They make up almost 20% of the active-duty armed forces, Reserve and National Guard, and roughly 10% of all Veterans.

Women Veterans, particularly those with active PTSD, are at higher risk of dangerous pregnancy complications such as pre-term birth and pre-eclampsia and their risk of suicide is more than twice that of non-Veterans. Additionally, one out of every five women Veterans reports having experienced sexual trauma while serving in the military, and some studies estimate that the actual prevalence of sexual assault and harassment in the military is significantly higher.

The importance of VA healthcare

The VA provides comprehensive healthcare services to Veterans, including primary care, specialized treatments, and mental health services. They are equipped to handle the specific needs of Veterans, offering specialized care, access to research and treatment, and a system of care coordination.

Many Veterans develop health conditions directly related to their military service, including conditions resulting from exposure to toxic substances or certain types of cancers.

The VA also provides resources and support for Veterans transitioning to civilian life, including vocational rehabilitation, job training and social support programs.

Benefits of seeking care:

- **Improved health outcomes:** Regular medical checkups and access to specialized care can help Veterans manage their health conditions, prevent complications, and improve their overall well-being.
- **Enhanced quality of life:** Addressing physical and mental health issues can enable Veterans to live more fulfilling and productive lives.
- **Access to benefits:** The VA offers a wide range of benefits, including healthcare, disability compensation, and educational assistance, which can help Veterans navigate the

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Letter From Jan

May and warmer weather are finally here. Time to get outside, smell the flowers and start the grill. Mother's Day is May

11 this year. Time to honor those women in your life who raised you.

May also includes Memorial Day. Some recognize Memorial Day by the seemingly endless commercials for mattress and car sales. Some recognize it as a long weekend to gather with friends and family around the grill. But what is the meaning of Memorial Day and why do we recognize it?

Memorial Day is an American holiday held on the last Monday of May. It honors fallen service members of the U.S. military. While most know Memorial

Day is a day of remembrance, many don't know its history or importance.

Americans began to recognize Memorial Day in 1868, and the country established it as a federal holiday in 1971. Originally known as "Decoration Day," the holiday started with communities coming together to decorate the graves of those who died during service. After the Civil War, Americans across the nation began holding tributes in the spring, decorating graves with flowers, reciting prayers, and honoring the estimated 620,000 fallen soldiers of the war (2% of the population at the time).

While many celebrate the day outdoors alongside family and friends, others mourn the loss of their brothers and sisters in arms, paying tribute to their memory in any way they can.

"It has been said that one of the greatest tragedies is to be forgotten," said David Daly, a U.S. Marine Corps Veteran. "As people take the opportunity

afforded them by the long weekend associated with Memorial Day, it is important to remember why the day exists. For me, the day reminds me of friends lost and the horrors of war. At the same time, it reminds us all that while the day-to-day events of the world often paint a picture of gloom and doom, we still live in a place where heroes are among us. While these brave souls have passed in service, their memory is honored on Memorial Day to remind us that we had the privilege of existing on the same plane as them, even if it was only for a moment."*

Memorial Day is a reminder of the brave men and women who served our country and gave their lives for our freedom. Let's use this day to show how grateful we are for their bravery, and as a promise that we'll always remember their courage and sacrifice.

And let's be careful out there.

*www.newsroom.woundedwarriorproject.org

Community Corner

GOLDEN APPLE AWARD WINNER – ROBIN BROWN

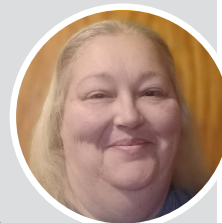
Congratulations to our Jan Dils Golden Apple Award winner, Robin Brown. Robin is a math teacher at Edison Middle School and was nominated by her students. Whether it's going to a football game to support her students, helping them with advice in their personal lives, or helping them study for competitions outside of the classroom, Robin always goes the extra mile in making sure her kids are taken care of.

We are honored to present this award to such a deserving teacher. Your genuine care for each student truly makes a difference. Congrats again, Robin!



Employee Spotlight

MVP of the Month – Susan Brown



Congratulations to our MVP of the Month, Susan Brown.

Susan is a Social Security Work-Up Specialist, and her dedication, hard work, and unwavering support for her team make her truly deserving of this recognition. Here's what some of her coworkers had to say:

"Susan is always willing to jump in and help any way that she can. We all love her sense of humor!"

"Susan is definitely MVP material. She is wonderful with our clients and a great co-worker. She has the best sense of humor and never hesitates to help anyone. We love her!"

"There's not enough time to list all the reasons why I think she deserves MVP of the Month, but I'll try to sum it up. She is beyond hard-working, very detailed, and dedicated in making sure we don't miss anything that will help our clients. She's just a powerhouse — always there to help others before being asked. I know I speak for others when I say we just can't do it without her. She's one of a kind — just a huge asset to the team!"

CAN I GET VA BENEFITS FOR AN ILLNESS THAT BEGAN ONE YEAR AFTER MY DISCHARGE?

Yes. If you were recently discharged from active military service and have since developed a medical condition, you may be eligible for Veterans disability benefits. The VA may determine that the condition is related to your service, thereby making you eligible.

Veterans disability benefits eligibility

If you're a Veteran with an illness that is at least 10% disabling and appeared within one year of your discharge, you may be eligible for Veterans disability benefits. However, to be eligible you must meet the following requirements:

- *You have an illness or condition that's at least 10% disabling that begins within one*

year of discharge, and

- *The illness is listed in Title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, 3.309(a), (found at [https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-38/chapter-I/part-3/subpart-A/subject-group-ECFR39056aee4e9ff13/section-3.309#p-3.309\(a\)](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-38/chapter-I/part-3/subpart-A/subject-group-ECFR39056aee4e9ff13/section-3.309#p-3.309(a))) and*
- *You received an honorable discharge.*

Obtaining Veterans disability benefits

To obtain Veterans disability benefits, the first thing you need to do is file a claim for disability compensation and submit evidence of your medical condition. The evidence you submit must demonstrate that:

- *Your medical condition is at least 10% disabling, and*

- *It appeared within a year after you were discharged from the service.*

If your illness is listed in the above code, you aren't required to show that your problem is a result of your military service. The VA considers these conditions, called "presumptive," automatically related to your service.

Exceptions

If you have any of the following diseases, you may be eligible for Veterans disability benefits even if your symptoms appeared more than one year following your discharge from military service:

- *Hansen's disease (also known as leprosy)*
- *Tuberculosis*
- *Multiple sclerosis*
- *Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (also known as Lou Gehrig's disease)*

At the Jan Dils Foundation, our experienced team of Veterans disability attorneys is here to help you obtain the Veterans benefits you deserve, whether it's assisting you with a denied claim or improving your disability rating. We respect your military service, and we're committed to assisting you with every step of the process. Call us today toll-free at **833.534.3577** or email us at **contact@JanDilsFoundation.org** to schedule your free consultation. You served your country, now let us serve you.

What's Cooking

SLOW COOKER CHICKEN & NOODLES

This hearty comfort food recipe is from **Jolene Reeder** – VA Hearing Clerk.



INGREDIENTS

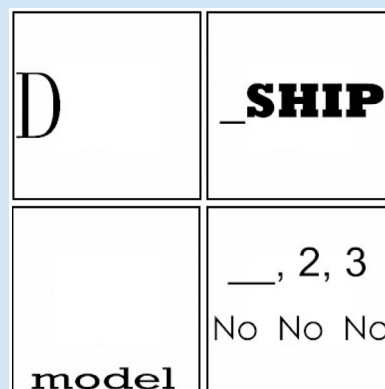
4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
 ¾ tsp. salt
 ½ tsp. black pepper
 1½ tsp. garlic powder
 2 10.5-oz. cans cream of chicken soup
 ½ cup unsalted butter, cut in slices

2 tsp. Better Than Bouillon® Chicken Flavor (reduced sodium)
 4 cups low-sodium chicken broth
 24 oz Reames® Homestyle Egg Noodles (frozen) or 8 oz. dry wide egg noodles
 2 cups frozen mixed vegetables (optional)

DIRECTIONS: Place the chicken breasts in the slow cooker. Sprinkle with salt, pepper and garlic powder. Spread the soup over the chicken. Add the sliced butter on top of the soup. Mix the bouillon and chicken broth to dissolve the bouillon; then pour over chicken and soup layers. Cover and cook on low for 4-6 hours, or until chicken is done and can be easily shredded. Using tongs, remove the chicken to a plate. Cover and set aside. Add the noodles to the soup mixture (and frozen veggies, if using). Stir well. Shred the chicken and return it to the pot. Replace the lid and cook on high for another 1-2 hours, stirring halfway through cooking time.

It's Game Time

What's a Bamboozable? A bamboozable is a saying/phrase that is made up of a display of words, in an interesting way. The object is to try to figure out the well-known saying, person, place, or thing that each bamboozable is meant to represent.



Answers: 1. Decide 2. Spaceship 3. Floor Model
 4. Noone Knows

MAY 2025

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PERSONAL INJURY | VETERANS DISABILITY | SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY

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challenges of life.

Barriers to seeking care:

- **Stigma:** Some Veterans may be hesitant to seek mental health care due to stigma or fear of judgment.
- **Lack of awareness:** Some Veterans may not be aware of the services available to them or how to access them.
- **Geographic barriers:** Some Veterans may live in areas where access to VA facilities is limited. For a directory of VA facilities listed by state, visit <https://www.va.gov/directory/guide/allstate.asp>.
- **Financial barriers:** Some Veterans may struggle to afford healthcare costs, even with VA benefits.

The VHA is the largest healthcare system in the United States, with 170 VA medical centers and 1,193

outpatient sites serving more than 9.1 million enrolled Veterans. Visit VA.gov to get started.

At the Jan Dils Foundation, we want you to get the healthcare you need and deserve. Our VA disability lawyers have helped thousands get the benefits they

have earned. If you have been denied disability or want to improve your rating, call us today at **833.534.3577** or email us at **contact@JanDils-Foundation.org** to schedule your free consultation. You served your country, now let us serve you.

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Source: <https://www.nlc.org/article/2019/11/08/the-ongoing-veteran-healthcare-crisis/>