

Stay **STRONG!**

VETERANS' WELLNESS 2017 CALENDAR

A guide to healthy living for Veterans

www.visn2.va.gov

VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

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ON THE COVER:

Veteran Adam Buchner kayaks during a special
Army Corps of Engineers trip to Cowanesque
Lake, Pennsylvania. Photo by Adam Lyon, Visual
Information Specialist, Bath VA Medical Center

A MESSAGE FROM THE NETWORK DIRECTOR

Greetings,

We hope you enjoy the 2017 Veterans' Wellness calendar. Use it as a reminder to "stay strong" this coming year by taking care of your health using your VA health care benefits.

Last year, the upstate VA health care network merged with the VA health care network downstate as part of the VA Secretary's reorganization to enhance customer service. We are now the NY/NJ VA Health Care Network. Our upstate and downstate clinical and administrative staff are working together to apply best practices from across the Network. Our goal is to improve access and provide a consistent high-quality level of health care.

On behalf of the VA staff, I want to thank you for your service to our country and for your continued confidence in us to provide you the very best in health care services.

Sincerely,

Joan E. McInerney, MD, MBA, MA, FACEP
VISN 2 Network Director



Dr. Joan McInerney,
Network Director

Malaria Pills May Cause Health Problems

Some military personnel have reported serious side effects after taking mefloquine for protection against malaria. These include anxiety, paranoia, depression, mood changes, hallucinations, agitation, and unusual behavior. Some symptoms may mimic PTSD symptoms.

If you are concerned about any long-term side effects from taking mefloquine, talk to your VA health care provider or local VA Environmental Health Coordinator. Learn more at www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/mefloquine-lariam.asp.

Need an Easier Way to Refill VA Prescriptions?



My HealthVet makes it easier to manage your medicines. Members registered in My HealthVet can:

- **Refill VA prescriptions (Rx) online.** You may also view a list of your past VA prescribed medications. To use Rx Refill, you need a prescription written by a VA doctor that has previously been filled at a VA pharmacy.
- **Track delivery of VA prescriptions.** You can track any VA prescription mailed in the last 30 days and check when it should arrive. View details about tracking information for each prescription.
- **Get VA prescription shipment notifications** to your email.
- **Create medication lists.** Keep track of all your medications, including over-the-counter medicines and herbals/supplements.

Need help? Call the Help Desk directly at (877) 327-0022 or (800) 877-8339 (TTY), Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. – 8 p.m. Or, visit Myhealth.va.gov

Keep Away from Convenience Foods

When you're on the go, it can be easy to choose foods that are fast and tasty, but hardly healthy. More than that, these foods may contain ingredients that are actually harmful to your health. Do you know what you're eating?



Burgers

Fast food hamburger often contains sodium nitrite. It's a coloring agent used to make old meat look red and fresh. Studies have found sodium nitrite may increase risks for pancreatic cancer.

The breads used in fast food often contain an amino acid called L-cysteine that makes the dough more pliable. It may be toxic to humans if eaten too much.



French Fries

Although fries really only need three ingredients – potatoes, oil and salt – most fast food restaurants list more than 15 ingredients. One unknown, but relatively common, ingredient is TBHQ. This petroleum-derived chemical increases food's shelf life. It may cause vision problems.



Ketchup

Ketchup has 4 grams of sugar per tablespoon – more than in a typical chocolate-chip cookie! In fact, excess sugar is found in most processed foods, and especially fast food.



Donuts

Like many fried foods, donuts are cooked in oil at very high temperatures. When food is cooked this way, it causes carcinogenic substances, like acrylamide, to form. This common chemical byproduct of frying may cause cancer and have other toxic effects on nerve tissue.



Soda

Dyes and food coloring are among the many dangers in today's fountain drinks. Caramel coloring, found in most colas, has been linked to thyroid, liver and lung cancer as well as leukemia. Common food dyes like red 40, yellow 5 and yellow 6, are linked to issues ranging from hyperactivity in children to brain cancer.



Desserts

Fast food restaurants often include carrageenan in their desserts. This thickening agent is made from red seaweed. Eating too much of this may lead to rheumatoid arthritis, arteriosclerosis and inflammatory bowel disease.



Fast Food Packaging

Much of today's fast food packaging contains phthalates. These chemicals may cause birth defects, childhood behavioral problems and childhood chronic illnesses, such as asthma.

It's Never Too Late to Do Great Things

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Today's technology is helping people of all ages and skill levels achieve their health goals.

- Fitness trackers, social media and mobile apps all make it easy today to plan out your healthy living goals and achieve them.
- Researchers have found that sharing your goals and successes with other people, either in person or online, greatly increases your chances for success.
- A research study, published in *Translational Behavioral Medicine*, found that people who shared their weight loss progress on Twitter lost more weight than those who kept their progress to themselves.



Time for a career change? Visit www.vets.gov/employment/job-seekers/! It's easy to use and puts you in touch with employers committed to hiring Veterans and military spouses. Get where you want to go faster!



January

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Be Strong!
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Learn how to fight it at nccc-online.org



MANAGE YOUR HEALTH WITH My HealtheVet

My HealtheVet, the one-stop-shop for managing your VA health information, appointments, secure messaging, and more, has just gotten better. Updates include:

- Popular features, like Appointments, are more front and center
- Easier to read and use
- Better for using on your phone or tablet



Cherish The Ones Who Make Life Good

Want to let someone know you care? Send a text!

- On average, people send 32 messages a day – that includes people from every generation.
- Research shows that nearly half of mobile phone users in the U.S. have sent “I love you” text messages.
- Those who text positive, affirming messages throughout the day often have greater satisfaction in their relationships. This is truer for those who send the texts than those who receive them.



Attention Women Veterans! You deserve the best health care from a provider trained in women's health. Visit www.visn2.va.gov/visn2/vet/women/index.asp to learn about primary, reproductive, mental health and other health care services available to you.



February

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MEET FITNESS KING HERMAN HOLLSTEIN

90-year-old **Army Veteran Herman Hollstein** is fit and sharp. He added jogging and bicycling to his exercise routine 12 years ago after a heart issue. Thanks to the support he receives from his health care team at the cardiopulmonary rehabilitation center at the Buffalo VA Medical Center, he's going strong today!



Find Joy in Life's Little Pleasures

It's often the little things in life that cost us nothing that end up bringing us the most pleasure. Here are simple things that bring joy to life:

- Giving a hug to a close friend or family member.
- Your first cup of coffee of the day.
- Finding a moment of peace and quiet after a hectic day.
- A good laugh over something funny.
- Getting a good night's sleep.
- Waking up to a beautiful sunrise.



Take care! Go to www.caregiver.va.gov to find self-care tips and support on a variety of topics for caregivers.

March

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Daylight Saving Time Begins	First day of spring	28	29	30	31	Protect Yourself. Adults over 50 need to get screened for colorectal cancer. Visit preventcancer.org .

HELP A FELLOW VET!

Make a difference in the life of another Veteran! Consider volunteering or making a monetary or gift in kind donation to your local VA medical center. For more ideas visit www.visn2.va.gov/VISN2/giving/index.asp to find your local VA medical center's voluntary services web page.



Look Forward to that Next Candle on Your Birthday Cake

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Just because you're getting older doesn't mean it's all downhill from here.

- People in their 40s and 50s often have better vocabulary, spatial orientation, verbal memory, and problem-solving skills than they did in their 20s.
- People over 60 report greater sexual satisfaction than when they were in their 40s.
- Having an "experienced" immune system means people over 50 usually get fewer colds than those in their 20s.
- A 2016 study found that some people in their 60s and 70s, considered "super-agers," could remember as well as people in their 20s. Studying people like this might help doctors find future treatments for memory loss.



Root for Your Fellow Vets! Plan to attend the next Golden Age Games, May 7-11, in Biloxi, Mississippi. Visit www.va.gov/opa/speceven/gag to learn more!

April

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Save Today to Enjoy Tomorrow

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Here are some easy tips for stashing away extra cash:

- Sign up for free customer rewards programs – many stores offer free mobile apps that tell you about additional discounts while you shop!
- Master the 30-day rule, and wait 30 days before making any big purchases.
- Sell gently used clothes to a resale shop, or have a yard sale and sell unwanted items.
- Cut back on costly habits, like buying expensive coffees or using tobacco products.
- Toss out credit cards and move to paying only with cash for most of your expenses.

When dividing up your paycheck, aim for this breakdown:

- 50% for “needs”
- 30% for “wants”
- 20% for “savings”



Get help through the tough times. Veterans and their families can apply for supplemental income through the Veterans Pension benefit program. This tax-free monetary benefit helps eligible low-income wartime Veterans. Visit www.benefits.va.gov/pension/index.asp.



May

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GET HELP PAYING FOR SCHOOL

The Post-9/11 GI Bill provides some financial aid to qualifying Veterans who want to attend school. It provides up to 36 months of education benefits for up to 15 years after being released from active duty. Use the GI Bill Comparison Tool at www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/school_decision.asp to find a school and determine your GI Bill benefits.



Improve Your Moves in the Bedroom

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Having a good sex life starts with having a healthy body. Being in good physical shape can help you. Here are some easy exercises that both men and women can do:

- *Push-ups*: Start out doing 5 at a time. If you struggle to do these at first, try wall presses where you push into the wall while standing up.
- *Abdominal crunches*: Try doing some old-fashioned crunches. Or try pelvic tilts: Standing up or lying down, straighten your lower back and pull your belly button in until your lower back touches the wall or floor.
- *Deadlifts*: These will help you have a strong back and legs. Start in a neutral bent-over position and raise a weighted barbell or dumbbells from the ground. Talk to an expert to make sure you have the right technique to avoid injury!



Health Topics from A to Z! Want to learn more about a certain health topic and how the VA can help? Visit www.va.gov/health/topics.

June

SUNDAY							MONDAY							TUESDAY							WEDNESDAY							THURSDAY							FRIDAY							SATURDAY																				
MAY 2017														JULY 2017														It's LGBT Pride Month! Support LGBT Veterans. Visit www.diversity.va.gov/programs/lgbt.aspx .														1							2							3						
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Father's Day							Juneteenth (the end of slavery in the U.S.)														Army Birthday Flag Day																																									
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MEET FITNESS KING MAURICE WALKER

Veteran Maurice Walker had long suffered from Type 2 Diabetes after being exposed to Agent Orange while serving. Afterward, he was severely injured while working on-the-job. But thanks to VA health care, Maurice is battling back! He attends diabetes education classes and attributes his health success to Buffalo VA's integrated health care.



Your Next Adventure Is Waiting

.....

You can make tomorrow great – it starts with positive thinking.

- Think about what you wish you could do, then start believing you will succeed.
- Note the steps you'll need to take to get to where you want to go.
- Let go of past failures and develop a positive view of the future. You can do it!



Get in control of your health. Get the VA Health app. Access your official VA medical record, enter health information, set appointment reminders and more! Go to mobile.va.gov/app/my-va-health.



July

SUNDAY							MONDAY							TUESDAY							WEDNESDAY							THURSDAY							FRIDAY							SATURDAY						
JUNE 2017														AUGUST 2017														<div>Defend Your Eyes.</div> <div>Learn more about Eye Injury Prevention Month: www.aao.org.</div>														1						
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Parents' Day																																																
Father-in-law Day																												Korean War ended																				

Defend Your Eyes.
Learn more
about Eye Injury
Prevention Month:
www.aao.org.

REPAIR AND PROTECT YOUR SKIN AND EYES

- Eat "healing" foods, like tomatoes, to repair damaged skin.
- Wear sunglasses with 100% UV and UVB protection to prevent glaucoma and cataracts later in life.
- Apply olive oil to your skin. It has anti-aging antioxidants and is great for moisturizing and protecting skin.



Work Out the Kinks

Some light exercises can increase your flexibility and relieve your aches and pains without hurting your joints. (Always warm up with some gentle movements, like slowly walking in place for 5 minutes, before starting exercise.)

- *Range-of-motion exercises:* Raise your arms over your head or roll your shoulders forward and backward. Repeat 5 to 10 times.
- *Strengthening exercises:* These include training with light weights, walking at a casual pace, climbing stairs and dancing. Aim for 15 to 30 minutes a day.
- *Low-impact aerobic exercises:* These include stationary or recumbent bicycles, elliptical trainers, or exercising in water. Aim for 15 to 30 minutes a day.
- *Full-body stretch:* This is one of the best and safest stretches you can do. Lay down on the ground and stretch your arms over your head. Stretch out your legs to form a straight line. Do this for 10 to 15 seconds.



Lose weight from the comfort of home. The TeleMOVE! program provides daily reminders to Veterans to keep pursuing their weight management goals. Enroll today! Go to www.move.va.gov or call 877-619-0106, option 1.

August

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
JULY 2017 S M T W Th F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31						
6	7	8	9	10	11 <i>U.S. Coast Guard Birthday</i>	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30 <i>New York State Fair in Syracuse begins</i>	31	SEPTEMBER 2017 S M T W Th F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	



MEET FITNESS QUEEN STEFANIE DiSTEFANO

Veteran Stefanie DiStefano

started out strong in the military. But some setbacks, starting with a back injury, led to depression and weight gain. She needed a cane to walk, which she now uses for daily exercise. Through exercising, and eating the right amount of foods, she's hitting all her goals, including losing 73 pounds, thanks to the TeleMOVE! program.



Discover the Sunny Side of Life

.....

We all need pick-me-ups to get us through our days. Here are some easy ways you can shine a little light into your life!

- Be thankful. Spend a couple of minutes each day counting your blessings.
- Look at old photos of family and friends if you need to lift your spirits.
- Clean up. Spending just a few minutes each day to clear away clutter can reduce anxiety.
- Smile. This will immediately make you feel happier, no matter what is happening.
- Chop veggies or wash the car. Doing mindless work can help relieve stress.



All Veterans deserve the best care!

The Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) program helps homeless Vets find VA medical and community services, develop a treatment plan and find permanent housing. Go to www.visn2.va.gov/bh/homeless.asp.

September

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AUGUST 2017														OCTOBER 2017														Reach Out Today! Learn how you can join the fight to prevent suicide at nami.org/suicideawarenessmonth .														1							2						
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Reach Out Today!
Learn how you can join
the fight to prevent
suicide at nami.org/suicideawarenessmonth.

*Victory Over Japan
(V-J Day)*

**YOU'RE NOT
ALONE! GET
HELP TODAY.**

Get help to overcome depression and suicidal thoughts. Talk to a Veterans Crisis Line counselor at (800) 273-8255, press 1. Or, go to www.veteranscrisisline.net to chat with someone. Also, text 838255 to receive confidential support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

 **Veterans
Crisis Line**
1-800-273-8255 **PRESS 1**



Heal Thyself

.....
Your body is equipped to heal itself from a wide range of illnesses and wounds. Tap into your own powers of recovery.

1. *Eat the right things.* Aim to eat more whole foods, such as fruits and vegetables, lean meats, nuts and beans. These are nature's healing tools.
2. *Move a little more each day.* If it's been a while since you exercised, start with walking for 10 minutes a day. Moving helps you heal.
3. *Allow time for adequate rest.* When your body works the hardest at healing! Aim to get 7-9 hours of sleep a night!



Get the flu shot today! Visit your nearest VA facility, CBOC or VA walk-in clinic to get your flu shot. Make sure you bring a valid ID or current VA ID with you.



October

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22 <i>Mother-in-Law Day</i>	23	24	25	26	27	28																																																																																				
29	30	31 <i>Halloween</i>	<p>Choose Pink! Learn more about Breast Cancer Awareness at cancer.org.</p> <div> <div> SEPTEMBER 2017 <table> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>Th</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td></tr> <tr><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td></tr> <tr><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td></tr> <tr><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td></tr> </table> </div> <div> NOVEMBER 2017 <table> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>Th</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td></tr> <tr><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td></tr> <tr><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td></tr> <tr><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table> </div> </div>				S	M	T	W	Th	F	S						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30		
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TRY NATURAL REMEDIES WHEN SICK

Before reaching for the medicine bottle, try some at-home remedies first.

- Add fresh garlic to your recipes. It will add flavor and is a natural antibiotic.
- Mix together honey, lemon and ginger to fight nausea and to relieve a sore throat.
- Adding some honey to warm milk can help suppress coughs.



Clear the Air

Quitting tobacco improves health in many ways. Check out some benefits you may not even know about yet.

- You lower your chance for blood clots in your legs, which may travel to the lungs.
- Men lower their risks for erectile dysfunction. They also lower their risks for infertility due to damaged sperm.
- Children living in your home may have fewer incidents of asthma, ear infections and colds. They are less likely to grow up to use tobacco.



Quit tobacco for good! Use TeleQuit.
Call (877) 619-0106 and select option 3.
Or, ask your VA health care team about
how to sign up.

November



MEET FITNESS KING DERRICK KADO

Veteran Derrick Kado

was a one pack-per-day smoker for 36 years. But with TeleQuit, the VA smoking-cessation program, he is now smoke-free! TeleQuit's daily health checks and strategies helped him stay on track. And, he had a lot of support from his wife, who was also able to quit smoking!

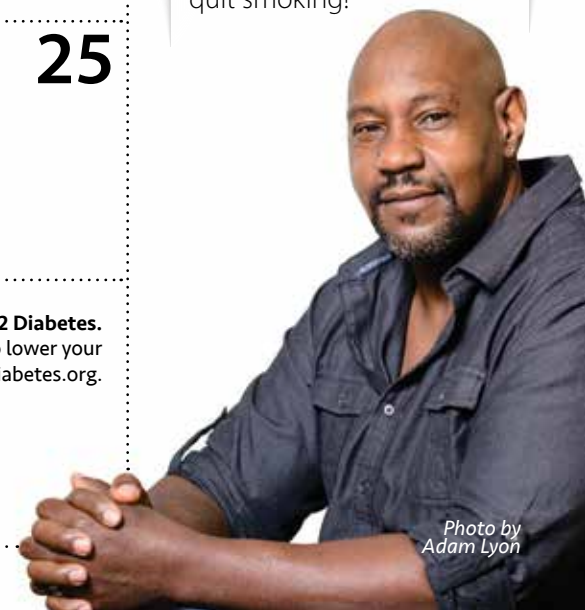


Photo by
Adam Lyon

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Find Your Peace this Season

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This time of year can be joyful, but also stressful. Here are some tips for finding inner peace when you need it.

- Take a moment to reflect on the past year and all you've accomplished.
- Schedule a time to meet an old friend for coffee.
- Spend time watching the snow fall or taking a walk on a quiet, woodland trail.
- Donate your time to visit a shut-in elderly friend, or volunteer with your favorite charity.



Help for returning Vets! VA is ready to assist returning OEF/OIF/OND Service Members find the health care they need. Visit www.oefoif.va.gov to learn more and connect with a team member who can help!

December

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New Year's Eve							Christmas Day							First day of Kwanzaa																																		

Choose safe toys
and gifts this season.
Learn more at
preventblindness.org/safe-toy-checklist.

World AIDS Day

Pearl Harbor
Remembrance Day

Chanukah
begins at sunset

National Guard
Birthday

First day of winter

WATCH OUT FOR WINTER HEALTH DANGERS

The winter months mean snow, ice, and an uptick in some health issues, especially for older people.

- Cold temperatures can narrow blood vessels, raising blood pressure.
- Too little Vitamin D from too little sun increases heart attack and stroke risks. Take a supplement.
- Cold air may aggravate lung conditions. Stay active. Use a rescue inhaler.



The Truth About Sugar



Cut the Sugar, not the Fat

For years, Americans were told that eating too much fat was causing their obesity. So, we shifted to eating low-fat foods made tastier by adding more sugar. But that certainly didn't solve the problem. Today, more than 35% of adults are obese and 32% of children are overweight or obese. The average person eats as much as 150 pounds of sugar a year! When you eat too much sugar, you slowly make your body insulin-resistant – slowing your metabolism. Processed foods are a big part of the problem. They can add as much as 20 teaspoons of sugar to your diet every day. Start eating fewer sugar-laden foods and opt for whole foods, like fresh fruits and vegetables, healthy fats, like olive oil and nuts, and high fiber foods, like beans. This will help get your body and metabolism back on track.

Daily Sugar Limit



No more than 6 teaspoons (24 grams) a day of added sugar for women.



No more than 9 teaspoons (36 grams) a day of added sugar for men.

Swap Out Sugary Foods for Healthier Ones

If you eat this...	Opt for this...
 <p>Salad Dressing = 4 grams of sugar per teaspoon</p>	 <p>Olive oil & lemon juice = 0.2 grams of sugar per tablespoon</p>
 <p>Flavored yogurt = 19 grams of sugar per cup</p>	 <p>Plain Greek yogurt with fresh fruit = 10 grams of sugar per cup</p>
 <p>Granola bars = 9 grams of sugar per bar</p>	 <p>A handful of nuts = 1 gram of sugar per quarter cup</p>
 <p>Dried fruit = 29 grams of sugar per cup</p>	 <p>Fresh blueberries = 15 grams of sugar per cup</p>
 <p>Orange juice = 20 grams of sugar in one glass</p>	 <p>Whole orange = 9 grams of sugar</p>



Other Sugar Names

Check the nutrition label for these often unrecognized names for sugar:

- Cane juice
- Sucrose
- Barley malt
- High-fructose corn syrup
- Maltose
- Malt syrup
- Dextrose
- Sorbitol
- Fruit juice concentrate

Truth about Artificial Sweeteners

It's true that artificial sweeteners, like aspartame and sucralose, provide all the sweetness with few to no calories. But Harvard researchers caution against eating too much of these. Some studies show that artificial sweeteners may cause us to crave more sweet foods and drinks, leading to excess calories. In one study, those that drank artificially sweetened drinks had a 47% increase in Body Mass Index (BMI) over those who did not.



New Potato Salad

Ingredients:

- 16 small new potatoes (5 cups)
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1/4 cup green onions, chopped
- 1/4 tsp. black pepper
- 1 tsp. dill weed, dried

Directions:

1. Thoroughly clean potatoes with vegetable brush and water.
2. Boil potatoes for 20 minutes or until tender.
3. Drain and cool potatoes for 20 minutes.
4. Cut potatoes into quarters and mix with olive oil, onions, and spices.
5. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

Serves 5. Serving Size: 1 cup. Per Serving: Calories: 196; Fat: 6 g; Saturated Fat: 1 g; Cholesterol: 0 mg; Sodium: 17 mg; Protein: 4 g; Carbohydrate: 34 g; Fiber: 4 g



Easy No-Cook Oatmeal

Ingredients:

- 3/4 cup milk
- 1/2 cup old-fashioned rolled oats
- 1/3 cup blueberries (or raisins)
- 1 tsp. packed light brown sugar
- 1/4 tsp. pure vanilla extract
- 1 Tbsp. toasted sliced almonds
- 2 tsp. honey
- Dash of salt

Directions:

1. Put the milk, oats, blueberries, brown sugar, vanilla and a pinch of salt in a jar or air-tight container.
2. Put on a lid and shake.
3. Place in fridge overnight or up to 2 days (if using an air-tight container).
4. Top with the almonds and drizzle with honey. Eat right out of container.

Serves 1. Per Serving: Calories: 291; Fat: 8.6 g; Cholesterol: 15 mg; Sodium: 82 mg; Carbohydrate: 45.7 g, Fiber: 4.2 g; Protein: 10.4 g



Herbed Vegetable Combo

Ingredients:

- 2 Tbsp. water
- 1 cup zucchini squash, thinly sliced
- 1-1/4 cups yellow squash, thinly sliced
- 1/2 cup green pepper, cut into 2 inch strips
- 1/4 cup celery, cut into 2 inch strips
- 1/4 cup onion, chopped
- 1/4 cup sliced mushrooms
- 1/2 tsp. Italian seasoning
- 1/8 tsp. garlic powder
- 1 medium tomato, cut into 8 wedges

Directions:

1. Heat water in large fry pan. Add squash, green pepper, celery and onion.
2. Cover and cook over moderate heat until vegetables are tender-crisp, about 4 minutes. Sprinkle seasonings over vegetables.
3. Top with tomato wedges. Cover and cook over low heat until tomato wedges are just heated, about 2 minutes.

Serves 4, about 3/4 cup each. Per Serving: Calories: 27; Fat: 2 g; Cholesterol: 0 mg; Sodium: 12 mg; Carbohydrate: 7 g; Fiber: 2 g, Protein: 1.7 g

Routine Health Care Monitoring

<i>What It Is</i>	<i>Why You Need It</i>	<i>VA Recommendations</i>	<i>Goal Complete</i>
<i>Blood pressure reading</i>	High blood pressure has no symptoms	Every year after age 18 and at every primary care visit	<input type="checkbox"/> Blood pressure reading
<i>Cholesterol profile</i>	Low HDL (good cholesterol), high triglycerides and LDL (bad cholesterol), and high total cholesterol can increase heart disease risk	Every 5 years or more frequently if recommended by your VA primary care provider	<input type="checkbox"/> Cholesterol check
<i>Influenza (flu) vaccine</i>	To prevent the flu	Every year for all adults	<input type="checkbox"/> Flu vaccine
<i>Pneumonia vaccines</i>	To prevent serious respiratory illness	Discuss with your primary care provider which vaccine is appropriate for you	<input type="checkbox"/> Pneumonia vaccine
<i>Tetanus and pertussis (Tdap) immunization</i>	To protect against tetanus and whooping cough	CDC recommends Tdap immunization in place of tetanus booster once between ages 19 and 65 and during pregnancy	<input type="checkbox"/> Tdap vaccine
<i>Breast and cervical cancer screenings</i>	For early detection of precancerous tissue growth and cancer	Annual women's health visit with your provider to discuss frequency of mammography and Pap test screenings	<input type="checkbox"/> Mammogram <input type="checkbox"/> Pap test
<i>Bone density screening</i>	For early detection of osteoporosis	Bone density test routinely for women after age 65; test at age 60 if increased risk for osteoporotic fracture	<input type="checkbox"/> Bone density test
<i>Colorectal cancer screening</i>	For early detection of precancerous tissue growth and cancer	Begin screening at age 50 until age 75; may need earlier screening based on positive family history or ethnicity	<input type="checkbox"/> Colorectal cancer screening
<i>Abdominal aortic aneurysm (AAA) screening</i>	To detect weakened blood vessels	Test once for men ages 65 to 75 who have ever smoked	<input type="checkbox"/> AAA screening
<i>Hepatitis C screening</i>	Exposure to the hepatitis C virus can harm your liver	For those born between 1945 and 1965; with HIV infection; with military service during the Vietnam era; and those exposed to the virus via sexual contact, tattoos or piercings, blood transfusions prior to 1992 and the sharing of personal items	<input type="checkbox"/> Hepatitis C screening
<i>Tobacco and alcohol use</i>	Smoking and alcohol abuse can lead to serious illness	Every year; your PACT team can help you with controlling alcohol use and quitting smoking	<input type="checkbox"/> Quit smoking <input type="checkbox"/> Use alcohol in moderation or quit
<i>PTSD and depression screening</i>	PTSD and depression can have a negative impact on health and quality of life	Every year and with pregnancy; your PACT team will help identify and treat psychological issues	<input type="checkbox"/> Talked with my doctor about my mental health
<i>Routine eye examinations</i>	To check for glaucoma, cataracts and other eye diseases	As recommended by your VA primary care provider based on your medical conditions, family history or new visual symptoms	<input type="checkbox"/> Eye exam

Outdoor Experiences Do Wonders



Few things feel better than a brisk walk outside in the fresh air. Being outdoors makes many people feel more refreshed and generally healthier. But does it actually provide mental and physical health benefits? Researchers say yes.

Outdoor Activity Good for Mental and Physical Health

Studies have shown that outdoor experiences could possibly replace some traditional mental and physical health treatments. A 2013 University of Michigan and Sierra Club study found that participating in events in nature had a keen impact on Veterans. Following a one-week outdoor experience, such as whitewater rafting and hiking, Veterans reported various health factors had significantly improved, including:

- Mental well-being
- Social interaction with others
- Life outlook

Other benefits from outdoor activity include better weight management, lower blood pressure, better heart health, an increase of "feel good" endorphins in the brain, and improved concentration.

Outdoor Activity Good Option for Veterans

Experts believe that outdoor experiences hold a lot of promise for Veterans. This is especially true for those who might prefer outdoor therapeutic programs over more conventional clinical treatments. When done in a group, outdoor activities may resonate with Veterans who enjoyed the physical challenge, camaraderie, and goal-setting associated with military service.

It's not as much about the activity you choose as it is about being in nature. For that reason, it's important to find something you enjoy doing outside. Then, walk out the door and do it.

Discuss with your health care team about some of the outdoor activities you can do or programs available to you.



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(315) 425-4400

Community-Based Outpatient Clinics

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Auburn Memorial Hospital
17 Lansing Street
Auburn, NY 13021
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Bay Shore, NY 11706
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Mental Health (631) 266-6077

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8th Floor
Brooklyn, NY 11201
(718) 439-4300

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Carmel, NY 10512
(845) 228-5291

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159 Jefferson Heights, Ste. 305
Catskill, NY 12414
(518) 943-7515

Clifton Park

963 Route 146
Clifton Park, NY 12065
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24 Maple View Lane, Suite 2
Coudersport, PA 16915
(607) 664-4670 or
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166 East 4th Street
Dunkirk, NY 14048
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2201 Hempstead Turnpike
East Meadow, NY 11554
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Mental Health (631) 266-6077

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Elizabeth, NJ 07206
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(518) 853-1247

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Glens Falls, NY 12801
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Goshen, NY 10924
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Hackensack, NJ 07601
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Suite 30
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New York, NY 10027
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Jamestown, NY 14701
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Jersey City, NJ 07302
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Kingston, NY 12401
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1234 Abbott Road
Lackawanna, NY 14218
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Springville Satellite Clinic of Lackawanna

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New City, NY 10956
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Olean, NY 14760
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Poughkeepsie, NY 12603
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Saranac Lake, NY 12983
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Staten Island, NY 10314
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Freeville, NY 13068
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Troy, NY 12180
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Wellsboro, PA 16901
(607) 664-4680
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Wellsville

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Wellsville, NY 14895
1-(877) 845-3247 (Bath)

Westport/Elizabethtown

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Westport, NY 12993
(518) 626-5236

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23 South Broadway
White Plains, NY 10601
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Yonkers Community Clinic

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Yonkers, NY 10701
(914) 375-8055