



Hangar Flying Newsletter

A Publication of the JBLM McChord Field Retiree Activities Office for Air Force Retirees, their spouses and survivors. Department of the Air Force, 100 Joe Jackson Blvd, Customer Service Mall Rm 1001, JBLM McChord Field WA 98438-1114; Phone (253) 982-3214 (Voice Mail 24 hours a day). Email – retaffairs@us.af.mil Web Site www.mcchordrao.com Retiree Activities Office: Open 0900-1200 Monday – Friday

TRICARE Preventive Health Services for Men of All Ages

If you're a man, now is a good time to take stock of your overall health. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the [life expectancy for men in the U.S.](#) is nearly six years less than that for women. And that gap is getting wider. However, men can still live long, healthy lives by eating right, exercising, and getting [preventive health care](#). Seeing a health care provider for preventive services can help men of all ages by detecting health problems early, before they become life-threatening.”

Many preventive services are available when you visit your provider for other routine care. Annual [Health Promotion and Disease Prevention \(HP&DP\) exams](#) are also available to any TRICARE enrollee over age 6. This lets you get multiple preventive services during one visit. You'll pay no out-of-pocket costs for [getting preventive care](#) when you follow your plan's rules, as outlined in the [TRICARE Costs and Fees Fact Sheet](#). If you're age 65 or older and you have [TRICARE For Life](#), follow Medicare's rules for getting preventive care.

Which preventive services are right for you? That depends on several factors, including your:

- Age
- Race
- Family history
- Overall life expectancy

These and other risk factors determine which services are medically necessary for you and covered by TRICARE. Below you'll find a list of preventive care services recommended for men. Keep them in mind the next time you talk to your

health care provider.

Colorectal cancer: Colorectal cancer is [more common in men](#) than in women. If you're age 45 or older with average risk for colon cancer, TRICARE covers several types of [screenings for colorectal cancer](#). Some risk factors for colorectal cancer include:

- History of inflammatory bowel disease
- Family history of colorectal cancer
- Lifestyle factors such as diet, alcohol, and tobacco use

Talk to your provider if you think you may be at increased or high risk.

Prostate cancer: TRICARE covers annual [prostate cancer exams](#) for men age 50 or older with at least a 10-year life expectancy. However, you may be eligible for prostate cancer exams starting at age 40 or age 45 if you have certain risk factors. Talk to your provider if you have a family history of prostate cancer; you may be eligible for early testing. African American men are eligible for prostate exams at age 45 regardless of family history.

Testicular cancer: Not all cancer screenings are for older men. According to the CDC, testicular cancer is [most common in men ages 20 to 39](#). TRICARE covers [testicular cancer exams](#) annually for males ages 13 to 39 who have a history of cryptorchidism, orchiopexy, or testicular atrophy.

Lung cancer: Men [use tobacco products](#) more often than women. They also have higher rates of getting and dying from lung cancer than women. TRICARE covers [lung cancer screening](#) if you:

- Are 50 to 80 years old

- Have a [20 pack per year](#) or more history of smoking
- Currently smoke or have quit smoking within the past 15 years

Heart disease: Heart disease is the leading cause of death for men in the U.S. As noted by the CDC, half of the men who die suddenly of [coronary heart disease](#) had no previous symptoms. It's important to get preventive checkups even if you don't display any symptoms. Cardiovascular disease screenings are a covered benefit. This includes [cholesterol](#) and [blood pressure](#) checks.

Of course, there's more to preventive health than checkups and screenings. Keeping a healthy lifestyle is an everyday job. Talk to your provider about things like healthy eating, getting more exercise, mental health, and more. And be sure to check out [Men's Health](#) for more tips on staying healthy throughout the year. (*Source: TRICARE Communications*)

Tips To Avoid Bug Bites This Summer

Summer is a time for having fun outdoors. Unfortunately, you and your family aren't the only ones having fun outside. Bugs—and bug bites— increase dramatically in the summer months. Although most bug bites are harmless, some bugs can spread dangerous [diseases](#), so, it's important to learn how to protect yourself. To help [prevent bug bites](#), stay safe with these tips.

1. Use insect repellent

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, using [insect repellent](#) can prevent mosquitoes, ticks, and other bugs from landing on you and biting you. Make sure to follow the product instructions, especially when applying to children. If you're also using sunscreen, apply your sunscreen first, let it dry, and then apply insect repellent.

2. Wear appropriate clothes

If you know you're going to be out at night or hiking in woody areas, dress appropriately to prevent bug bites. Cover exposed skin as much as possible by wearing long-sleeved shirts, long pants, and hats.

3. Take steps to control insects inside and outside your home

Sleep in places that are air conditioned or screened against bugs. If you'll be sleeping outdoors, [use a mosquito net](#) to protect against insects. "Choose a mosquito net that is compact, white, rectangular, with 156 holes per square inch, and long enough to tuck under the mattress," says the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

4. If traveling, pay attention to local risks and outbreaks

Different regions and countries pose different risks. For example, it's good to know which bugs are common in areas you're visiting and what diseases they spread.

Before you travel overseas, go to [CDC.gov/travel](#) to find travel notices and other health information for your destination. The CDC recommends visiting your health care provider at least a month before your trip to discuss vaccines or medicines you may need. TRICARE covers [age-appropriate vaccines](#) recommended by the CDC, so make sure you're up to date on all routine vaccines before every trip. Depending on your travel plans, you may need other vaccines that TRICARE may not cover.

Sometimes, despite best efforts, bug bites still happen. Fortunately, you can safely treat most bug bites and stings at home. However, if you experience any serious symptoms after a bug bite, such as a rash, fever, or body aches, you can contact the [Military Health System Nurse Advice Line](#) for advice.

Remember that some activities, such as hiking, camping, and working with animals, can increase your encounter with bugs and risk for bug bites. Throughout [Bug Week](#), learn facts about common creepy crawlers and flying pests, as well as how to prevent and treat bug-borne illnesses. Prevention is key to keep you safe and healthy. (*Source: TRICARE Communications*)

How COVID-19 Public Health Emergency's End Affects TRICARE

The [Public Health Emergency \(PHE\) for COVID-19](#) expired at the end of May 11. You might be wondering what this means about the state of COVID-19 or if there are changes to your TRICARE coverage.

Most Department of Defense COVID-19 activities won't be directly affected by the end of the PHE. For example, you'll still have access to COVID-19 vaccines, testing, and treatments through TRICARE. And many [telehealth services](#) are now a permanent TRICARE benefit. But keep these changes in mind:

- **COVID-19 Testing:** You may have a cost-share for COVID-19 testing. TRICARE only covers COVID-19 tests that are medically necessary and ordered by a [TRICARE-authorized provider](#). If you have TRICARE For Life, learn how [Medicare coverage of COVID-19 testing](#) is changing.
- **Telehealth:** To help protect your privacy, all providers must now use HIPAA-compliant telehealth platforms.
- **Clinical Trials:** Temporary coverage of National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases-sponsored COVID-19 clinical trials ended April 10. If you were enrolled in a covered trial on or before April 10, your care will be covered through the end of the trial.
- **Skilled Nursing Facilities:** A temporary waiver of the requirement for a three-day prior hospital stay before admission to a skilled nursing facility ended for new admissions after April 10.

It's still important to take steps to help [protect yourself and others](#). Vaccines are still the most effective tool to prevent serious illness, [long-term effects](#), and death from COVID-19—even if you've had COVID-19 in the past.

To learn more about your options for COVID-19 vaccines, check out [COVID guidance for TRICARE beneficiaries](#). If you have coverage questions, you can call your [TRICARE contractor](#). (Source TRICARE Communications)

VA Aid and Attendance benefits and Housebound allowance: VA Aid and Attendance or Housebound benefits provide monthly payments added to the amount of a monthly VA pension for qualified Veterans and survivors. If you need help with daily activities, or you're housebound, find out if you qualify.

VA Aid and Attendance eligibility, you may be eligible for this benefit if you get a VA pension, and you meet at least one of these requirements:

- You need another person to help you perform daily activities, like bathing, feeding, and dressing, or
- You have to stay in bed—or spend a large portion of the day in bed—because of illness, or
- You are a patient in a nursing home due to the loss of mental or physical abilities related to a disability, or
- Your eyesight is limited (even with glasses or contact lenses you have only 5/200 or less in both eyes; or concentric contraction of the visual field to 5 degrees or less)

Housebound benefits eligibility, you may be eligible for this benefit if you get a VA pension and you spend most of your time in your home because of a permanent disability (a disability that doesn't go away). **Note:** You can't get Aid and Attendance and Housebound benefits at the same time.

How do I get this benefit? Fill out VA Form 21-2680 (Examination for Housebound Status or Permanent Need for Regular Aid and Attendance) and mail it to the PMC for your state. You can have your doctor fill out the examination information section. [Get VA Form 21-2680 to download](#)
[Find your PMC](#)

You can also include with your VA form:

- Other evidence, like a doctor's report, that shows you need Aid and Attendance or Housebound care
- Details about what you normally do during the day and how you get to places
- Details that help show what kind of illness, injury, or mental or physical disability

affects your ability to do things, like take a bath, on your own.

[Learn about the evidence you'll need to support your claim](#)

If you're in a nursing home, you'll also need to fill out a Request for Nursing Home Information in Connection with Claim for Aid and Attendance (VA Form 21-0779).

[Get VA Form 21-0779 to download](#)

Apply in person, You can bring your information to a VA regional office near you.

[Find your nearest VA regional office](#) (Source: VA Benefits Newsletter)

Hero's Bridge: Veterans account for 25% of the senior U.S. population. Plus, of the 16.5 million Veterans in the country, 50% are seniors. Among those senior Veterans, the vast majority served in Vietnam and Korea. Our World War II Veteran numbers are dwindling but still represented. Those who served in the Gulf War are now part of the silver tsunami as their numbers are growing.

Many senior Veterans transitioned to civilian life without problems. But there are those whose scars ran much deeper and found life as a civilian challenging. These challenges affected marriages and families, employment and personal wellness.

Hero's Bridge <https://herosbridge.org/> is a non-profit organization serving Veterans 65 and older. The organization's mission is to help veterans obtain a better quality of life through age-specific programs. These services are available at no expense to them or their families. The Hero's Bridge mission is fulfilled through four core programs.

1. The "Battle Buddy" program pairs elderly Veterans with a dedicated younger Veteran trained to use the rapidly growing community health worker philosophy to provide direct in-home services. A thorough quality-of-life assessment is performed and a personalized frequency of visits is established. Referrals will be made to the other programs of Hero's Bridge, VA benefits and community partners to meet

needs and "bridge" the elderly Veteran to a healthier, more supported existence.

2. The "Home Front" team assists with maintenance issues, cleaning, safety assessments and yard work so our heroes maintain a safe and comfortable home.
3. The "Honor Guard" team provides many services, such as replacing lost medals, finding lost comrades, recording life stories, holding portrait sessions and hosting Veteran socials.
4. The "Paw Patrol" team arranges home and nursing facility pet visits. They also help the Veteran care for aging pets and help find loving new homes when our Veterans makes that difficult decision.

For additional information on Hero's Bridge, go to <https://herosbridge.org/> or contact CEO and founder Molly Brooks at mbrooks@herosbridge.org. If you are, or you know an aging Veteran who needs help, call 540-341-5378 or go to this [page](#) <https://herosbridge.org/contact-us/> (Source: [#VetResources](#), [Vets Experience](#))

The McChord Retiree Activities Office is in need of Volunteers, if you are interested in an enjoyable and rewarding way to stay involved in the JBLM McChord Military Retiree community, then volunteering at the RAO could be you're answer. It's easy and hands on training will be provided. We are military retirees and spouses, who volunteer our knowledge of retiree benefits towards helping both the active military and retiree community. For more information and a hands on look at what we do, stop by the office, we are located in Building 100, the Customer Service Mall Monday-Thursday from 9 to 12, or contact us at (253)-982-3214.

HELPFUL LINKS

To find your state representative:

<http://www.house.gov/representatives/>

To find your state senators:

<http://www.senate.gov>

To find the VA: <http://www.va.gov>

To find DFAS: <http://www.dfas.mil>

To find Tricare: <http://www.tricare.mil>

To schedule appointment to renew ID Card
<https://rapids-appointments.dmdc.osd.mil>

Link to Retiree Publications

Air Force Afterburner:

www.retirees.af.mil/afterburner

Army Echoes:

<http://soldierforlife.army.mil/retirement>

Navy Shift Colors: www.shiftcolors.navy.mil

Marine Corps Semper Fidelis:

www.manpower.usmc.mil/portal/page/portal/M_RA_HOME/MM/SR/RET_ACT/SemperFidelis

Coast Guard Evening Colors:

<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cg1/psc/ras>

Businesses who give military

discounts <https://militarybenefits.info/military-discounts/>

VA benefits book available The Federal Benefits for Veterans, Dependents & Survivors handbook is available – with 18 pages of new information. The book can be found at:
https://www.va.gov/opa/publications/benefits_book/2020_Federal_Benefits_for_Veterans_Dependents_and_survivors.pdf

Need to call the VA, have questions, but don't know who you need to talk to, call the VA at phone number 1-800-MyVA411 (1-800-698-2411) their new one-stop call line.

Veterans Crisis Hotline new number—**988** then **Press 1** or **Text 838255**

US Department of Veterans Affairs Link

https://www.va.gov/?utm_source=header&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=VetResources

On facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/VeteransAffairs/>

On twitter <https://twitter.com/deptvetaffairs>

On instagram

<https://www.instagram.com/deptvetaffairs>

On youtube

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBvOzPLmbjtpX-Htstp2vw>

Rally Point

<https://www.rallypoint.com/join/orgs/veterans->

[affairs-va-department-of-veterans-affairs-va-washington-dc?utm_source=dept_of_va&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=email_header_icon](https://www.va.gov/affairs-va-department-of-veterans-affairs-va-washington-dc?utm_source=dept_of_va&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=email_header_icon)
VA Podcast https://news.va.gov/va-podcast-network/?utm_source=header&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=VetResources
VA blog
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