You can play an active role when you visit with your health care team. To get the most out of your visit, plan the questions you want to ask and the things you want to discuss, and be sure to leave the visit with information about your care. Here are some specific ways to be more involved in your health care and get the most out of your next visit.

**BE INVOLVED IN YOUR HEALTH CARE**

**Before your visit:**
- Write down your health questions and concerns
- Make a list of all the medications you take, including vitamins and supplements to bring to the visit

**During your visit:**
- Bring a family member to help you remember what you and your team discuss
- Share your health questions, problems, and concerns with your team at the beginning of your visit
- Tell your team about your past illnesses/hospitalizations, medications, and any problems you may be experiencing
- Tell your team about your needs and preferences for treatment and your health
- Work with your team to create a treatment plan that meets your needs and be involved in making decisions about your care
- Know your medications and why you take them, and ask for written instructions and information to take home with you
- Ask your team to clarify anything that’s confusing, and speak up if you have concerns or think something is wrong
- Ask when and how you will get test results and additional treatments

**After your visit:**
- Get additional information from the Veterans Health Library and My HealtheVet
- Tell your team if you have problems following your care plan, or if there is a change in your conditions or health

**WHAT’S IMPORTANT TO KNOW?**

You can play an active role when you visit with your health care team. To get the most out of your visit, plan the questions you want to ask and the things you want to discuss, and be sure to leave the visit with information about your care. Here are some specific ways to be more involved in your health care and get the most out of your next visit.

**INSIDE THIS ISSUE**
- Be Involved in Your Healthcare
- How to Manage Diabetes
- Safe Summer Grilling
- End Harassment Campaign
- Healthy Cooking
- Voice of the Veteran
HOW TO MANAGE DIABETES

Monitoring the level of sugar (glucose) in your blood is the key to controlling your diabetes. To be sure your glucose and insulin are in balance, check your blood sugar regularly. You can check your blood sugar level by using a blood glucose meter. Your healthcare team will show you how and tell you how often you should check your blood sugar. Using a blood glucose meter you can check your blood sugar at home, at work, and anywhere else. Your diabetes team will help you select a blood glucose meter. A meter measures the amount of glucose in a tiny drop of blood. You’ll use a device called a lancet to draw a drop of blood. The drop is placed on a small strip that goes into the meter. The meter then supplies a number (reading) that tells you the level of your blood sugar.

It is important for Veterans who have diabetes to talk with their health care provider about selecting a safe and effective blood glucose target range that is based on their own goals, priorities and lifestyles. Being an active member of the health care team can help Veterans manage their diabetes and prevent episodes of low blood sugar (hypoglycemia).

HOW TO CHECK YOUR BLOOD SUGAR

01
Get Ready: Wash your hands with soap and warm water. Follow directions for placing a test strip in your meter.

02
Draw a Drop of Blood: Prick the side of your finger with the lancet. Squeeze gently until you get a drop of blood. Dispose of the lancet in a special sharps container.

03
Place the Drop on a Strip: Wait for the meter to display a message or symbol that it is time to place blood on the strip. Apply the drop of blood to the strip according to package directions.

04
Read and Record your Results: Record the results in your log book with the date and time you tested. Bring the log book with you to medical appointments.
If you've ever used a grill, you know that it needs to be cleaned. Many people reach for a metal wire grill brush to remove stuck-on food and debris. But this could be a dangerous mistake.

The American Medical Association says that wire grill brushes were responsible for more than 1,600 emergency room visits in just one year. These brushes have metal bristles that can break off and stick to the grill. They may be too small to see, so you don’t know they’re there. When you cook food on your grill, the tiny bristles can stick to the food.

If someone accidentally swallows one of these metal bristles, they can be seriously injured. The bristles can cut the inside of the mouth, throat or tonsils. This could require emergency surgery.

If you use a wire brush to clean the grill, be sure to wipe the grill off with a cloth afterward. Check the underside of the grill and lid for any bristles too.

You can also avoid using wire brushes altogether. Instead, soak the grill parts in soapy water and clean with a sponge or a paint scraper. Some people use a ball of aluminum foil to scrape the grill.

Source: National Fire Protection Association

BE SAFE ON YOUR GRILL

Did you know metal grill brushes pose dangers to your health?

GET GRILLED ON SAFETY TIPS

- Propane (gas) and charcoal grills should only be used outside. Never use them inside a garage, barn or other building.
- Keep the grill well away from your deck railings, tree branches and house.
- Don’t let children or pets near the grill.
- Open the gas grill lid before lighting it.
- Keep charcoal fluid out of reach of children and pets.
- Do not add charcoal fluid or other flammable liquids to a fire. Use it only to get the grill started.
- Let charcoal cool completely before throwing it away.
There are currently 2 million women Veterans in the United States, and this number is rising. More women Veterans are now receiving care from VA, and we are committed to providing them a safe and welcoming environment.

As part of continuing efforts to improve the environment for women Veterans, VA is promoting respect for women Veterans and raising awareness of harassment. The End Harassment Campaign is directly aligned with efforts of a national, multidisciplinary workgroup established by Women’s Health Services (WHS), and endorsed by the Under Secretary for Health.

What is harassing behavior? VHA patient harassment is unwelcome comments or conduct in public spaces that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment. This includes sexual harassment such as catcalling by strangers, and verbal slurs.1 Harassing behaviors are not tolerated at VHA sites of care. If you experience these behaviors or witness these behaviors, it is harassment.

- Cat calls, whistles, stares
- Leering or ogling
- Telling women to smile
- Women Veterans being told they are too pretty to be a Veteran
- Sexual innuendoes, suggestive remarks, following or cornering someone

Veterans who may have experienced harassment are encouraged to contact the Women Veterans Call Center, 1-855-VA-WOMEN (1-855-829-6636), and speak with trained professionals.
HEALTHY RECIPE:
EASY BAKED ITALIAN CHICKEN AND VEGGIE FOIL PACKETS

Ingredients:
- 2 small chicken breasts cut into 1-inch cubes
- 1 cup broccoli florets
- 1 cup bell peppers, sliced or chopped
- 1 small zucchini sliced or chopped
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 tablespoon Italian Seasoning
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder or fresh minced garlic
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:
1. Pre-heat grill to medium – high heat
2. In a large bowl or ziplock bag, combine all ingredients and mix until fully combined.
3. Cut out and lay 12x12 inch squares of aluminum foil on a sheet pan. Place half the mixture on each foil and gently fold the foil around ingredients to form a tight seal.
4. Grill for 20 to 25 minutes or until chicken reaches temperature of 165.

Nutrition information:
Serving size: 1 foil packet  Calories: 223  Fat: 9.9 grams  Sodium: 63.6 mg  Carbohydrates: 12.5 grams  Fiber: 4 grams  Protein: 22.4 grams

Tip:
If you need to make your own Italian seasoning follow measurements below.
1 teaspoon dried oregano, 1 teaspoon dried marjoram, 1 teaspoon dried thyme, ½ teaspoon dried basil, ½ teaspoon dried rosemary, ½ teaspoon dried sage

For grilling tips and new recipe tricks join us every Thursday in August for Healthy Teaching Kitchen’s Grilling Series. Call 603-624-4366 Ext. 6404 to sign up

August 1st, 2019: Garden Safety- Intro to Gardening
- Grilled portabellas
- Whole grain salad w/ cherries and walnuts

August 8th, 2019: Herb Gardening
- Strawberry/Apple walnut crumble on the grill
- Grilled pineapple w/ cilantro dressing

August 15th, 2019: Vegetable Gardening
- Southwest loaded sweet potatoes on the grill

August 22nd, 2019: Different Types of Gardening
- Grilled Thin & Trim chicken sausage pepper and onions

August 29th, 2019: Benefits of Gardening
- Bruschetta w/ grilled bread
- Chicken Foil Pack
Over the past couple of years, Bill, Navy Veteran, has had numerous significant health issues including a coronary artery bypass surgery along with an unhealthy lifestyle, including drinking alcohol and smoking. “Even after the bypass, I wasn’t as committed to change my habits as I should have been. I was in a cycle of depression from my health issues, but I wasn’t ready to do anything about it,” stated Bill.

During this time, Bill met with his VA Care Team and determined that Whole Health Coaching might help him take control of his life by setting goals to improve his overall health and well-being. Bill worked one to one with a Whole Health Coach to empower and equip him with the skills and resources necessary to reach his personal goals in the areas of physical, emotional, spiritual, environmental, social, and nutritional self-care. The focus of coaching was to determine what matters to Bill as the Veteran and what inspires him to be healthy. “Health coaching has helped me turn this cycle around. I now have a better perspective and healthier outlook on my life currently and for the future. I’m noticing too that the more positive changes I see in myself, the more it pushes me to continue to do better,” said Bill.

Bill is not the only one who has noticed the improvement he has made over the past couple of months; he reports that his family and friends have also recognized his efforts to live a healthier lifestyle. Returning to work and becoming more physically active were measures of Bill’s improvement. “My mental outlook is better, although I still have challenges, I continue to improve with the help from my family, friends, and VA. With the VA staff and resources, I’ve had nothing but great experiences.”

To get started on your Whole Health journey, call Ext. 2680 to sign up for health coaching or for more information about the opportunities available to you.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY
U.S. COAST GUARD!
August 4, 1790
The Coast Guard’s official history began on 4 August 1790 when President George Washington signed the Tariff Act that authorized the construction of ten vessels, referred to as “cutters,” to enforce federal tariff and trade laws and to prevent smuggling.

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Newsletter created by:
Marisa Heinlein, MSPH
Whole Health Coach