



WRIISC

War Related Illness and Injury Study Center
Post-Deployment Health Services
Department of Veterans Affairs

WAR RELATED ILLNESS AND INJURY STUDY CENTER (WRIISC) - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

A RESOURCE FOR VETERANS, SERVICE MEMBERS, AND THEIR FAMILIES

To help WRIISC best respond to the concerns of Veterans and health care providers, we've compiled a list of frequently asked questions.

WHAT IS THE WRIISC?

- The War Related Illness and Injury Study Center (WRIISC) is a post-deployment, tertiary, care center who partners with VA referring providers and their health care teams to support the care of Veterans. The WRIISC is part of VA's Post Deployment Health Services, a VA Delivered Core Service.
- WRIISC provides clinical consultations for combat zone deployed Veterans who have medically unexplained symptoms lasting greater than six months requiring second opinions to evaluate if symptoms are possibly related to deployment (s). WRIISC also provides education, risk communication, and conducts research. Learn more at www.warrelatedillness.va.gov
- WRIISC clinical services include comprehensive multi-disciplinary evaluations, e-consults, and environmental exposure assessments. WRIISC evaluations are conducted through a variety of ways including virtual telehealth and/or on-site evaluations.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR THE WRIISC?

- Deployed Veterans with chronic, medically unexplained symptoms that last more than 6 months requiring second opinion consultations. All relevant work-ups (including non-VA evaluations) must be available in VA record for review.
- Veterans must be medically and psychiatrically stable.
- Veterans who do not have a combat zone deployment, are not medically or psychiatrically stable, and/or have not completed an initial evaluation of their health symptoms by their primary care physicians may be ineligible for WRIISC services.

WHAT COMBAT DEPLOYMENTS ARE ELIGIBLE FOR WRIISC SERVICES?

- Vietnam War (1962-1975)
- Gulf War I (Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm) (1990-1991)
- Somalia (1992-1994)
- Bosnia-Herzegovina (1995-1996)
- Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) – Afghanistan (2001 to present)
- Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) /Operation New Dawn–Iraq (2003 to present) OIF/OND
- For deployments not listed, please provide specifics on deployment location and dates.

This document was developed by the War Related Illness & Injury Study Center (WRIISC)

Post-Deployment Health Services (PDHS)
Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)

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For more information, see www.WarRelatedIllness.va.gov



VA



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WHAT INFORMATION IS NEEDED TO COMPLETE A WRIISC CONSULT?

- Veterans without an initial evaluation for their symptoms may need to complete this step first.
- Local Environmental Health Registry exams are the first step in evaluating deployment environmental exposure concerns. VA registry exams are important surveillance tools and can be scheduled by contacting your local VA Environmental Health Coordinator at <https://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/coordinators.asp>.
- If military environmental exposure concerns persist after Registry evaluation or are complex in nature, please list environmental exposure concerns on the WRIISC consult.
- If a Veteran has abused alcohol, illicit, or prescription drugs in past six months, please address this first as WRIISC is unable to evaluate Veterans if active substance abuse is present.

WHO CAN REFER A VETERAN TO WRIISC?

- Like many specialty consultations, WRIISC asks that Veterans' VA Primary Care Providers (PCP) make the WRIISC referral - details available at <https://www.warrelatedillness.va.gov/WARRELATEDILLNESS/referral/index.asp>
- WRIISC referrals from a Veteran's VA primary care provider optimize likelihood that Veterans will benefit from the WRIISC referral and that recommendations are communicated to the Veteran's VA PCP.
- If a VA Environmental Registry Coordinator or Environmental Health Clinician believes a Veteran may be an appropriate referral for WRIISC, please discuss a WRIISC referral with Veteran's VA primary care provider.

HOW ARE WRIISC CONSULTS TRIAGED?

- Once a WRIISC Inter-Facility Consult (IFC) is placed in VA's Computerized Patient Record System (CPRS), the consult is triaged to one of 3 WRIISC sites based on location of the referring VA facility. The 3 WRIISC sites are East Orange NJ VAMC, the Washington DC VAMC, and Palo Alto VAMC - see <https://www.warrelatedillness.va.gov/WARRELATEDILLNESS/contact.asp>
- Once an IFC consult is received, WRIISC staff conduct medical record reviews to evaluate deployment status, workups for symptoms, and eligibility for WRIISC services.
- Each WRIISC consult receives a medical record review, and WRIISC consults are completed initially as e-consults with clinical recommendations provided to the referring provider.
- Additional WRIISC services like WRIISC comprehensive, multi-disciplinary evaluations, environmental exposure assessments, and integrative health and wellness services may be offered to Veterans as appropriate.

WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE TO VETERANS WHO WERE NOT DEPLOYED?

- Information about military exposure topics is available at VA Post-Deployment Health - <https://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/index.asp>
- Learn about Camp Lejeune past water contamination - <https://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/camp-lejeune/index.asp>
- Find helpful exposure resources from the Army Public Health Center - <https://phc.amedd.army.mil/Pages/default.aspx>
- Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry has helpful resources about a wide variety of exposure topics - <https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/>

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