

10 ways to get the care and support you need from VA during COVID-19



VA | U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

A coronavirus disease (COVID-19) resource for Veterans who are pregnant

We don't yet know a lot about how the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) affects pregnant women. But based on what we do know, pregnant women may be at greater risk of severe illness. We're here to help you get the care and support you need to keep yourself and your baby healthy.



Follow these 10 steps to get care and support from VA during this time:

- 1. If you're not enrolled in VA health care, find out if you're eligible and how to apply.** VA health care covers your maternity care before, during, and after birth. It also includes care for your newborn baby for 7 days after birth. If you weren't eligible for VA health care in the past but you've had a decrease in income, you may be eligible now. Find out at www.va.gov/health-care/eligibility/.
- 2. Stay informed about how COVID-19 may impact your VA health care and other benefits.** Get the latest updates at www.va.gov/coronavirus-veteran-frequently-asked-questions/.
- 3. Connect with your VA maternity care coordinator. Your coordinator can help you get maternity care from VA and community care providers.** They can also help you get care for other needs and connect to community resources. To talk with your coordinator, call or text the Women Veterans Call Center at **855-829-6636** (TTY: **711**). We're here Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. ET, and Saturday, 8:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. ET.
- 4. Go to all your health appointments.** Ask your provider if you can have some appointments by phone or video. If you have concerns about safety at in-person visits, call your provider or VA maternity care coordinator. Find your provider's phone number at www.va.gov/find-locations/.
- 5. Make sure you have enough of your prescription medicines.** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends having at least a 30-day supply at all times. Order your new prescription as soon as possible, but no later than 10 days before you need more. Learn more about refilling VA prescriptions online at www.va.gov/health-care/refill-track-prescriptions/.
- 6. Get your flu shot.** Both the flu and COVID-19 can lead to serious illness and even death. They may be even more dangerous if you get them at the same time. And being pregnant raises your risk of severe illness even more. The flu may also harm your developing baby.

So get your flu shot as early as you can this year. It's the best way to protect yourself and your baby. If you're enrolled in VA health care, you can get a no-cost flu shot safely at your nearest VA health care facility or many community locations.

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Learn more at www.publichealth.va.gov/flu/index.asp and www.va.gov/COMMUNITYCARE/flushot.asp. Learn more about the flu vaccine and pregnancy at www.cdc.gov/flu/highrisk/qa_vacpregnant.htm.

- 7. If you feel sick, call your provider within 24 hours.** Sign up for our Annie coronavirus precautions messages at www.mobile.va.gov/app/annie-app-veterans. You'll get text messages to help you monitor your COVID-19 symptoms and know when to contact your provider. You'll also get tips to help you stay healthy and prevent COVID-19.
- 8. Find out how to request a COVID-19 test.** We offer no-cost diagnostic testing for Veterans who are enrolled in VA health care and meet the CDC testing criteria. To get a test, you must have an appointment.

You can request an appointment in any of these 3 ways:

- Send a secure message your VA health care provider: www.va.gov/health-care/secure-messaging/
- Call your provider: www.va.gov/find-locations
- Or schedule an appointment online: www.va.gov/health-care/schedule-view-va-appointments/

For your safety, please don't go in person to a VA health care facility without an appointment.

Everyone who enters our facilities must wear a mask that covers their mouth and nose. They must also complete our COVID-19 screening.

- 9. Get support for stress and mental health.** Ask your provider or VA maternity coordinator or care team for help. Or learn how to get started with VA mental health care services at www.va.gov/health-care/health-needs-conditions/mental-health. You can use some services even if you're not enrolled in VA health care

You can also get helpful tools at www.mentalhealth.va.gov/coronavirus. These include our COVID-19 Coach app: www.mobile.va.gov/app/covid-coach.

If you need to talk to someone now, call our Veterans Crisis Line. You can call for confidential (private) help anytime, day or night. Many of our caring, qualified responders are Veterans themselves.

Call **800-273-8255** and **select 1**, or text **838255**. If you have hearing loss, call TTY: **800-799-4889**.

- 10. Plan ahead for labor and delivery.** Talk with your provider about your options for pain management and other needs. You may want to write down your wishes to share with. Also ask how many support people and visitors you can have and how the facility will protect you and your baby. If the facility isn't giving maternity tours in person, ask for a video tour.

Get more advice about COVID-19 and pregnancy:

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/pregnancy-breastfeeding.html

www.acog.org/patient-resources/faqs/pregnancy/coronavirus-pregnancy-and-breastfeeding