



Diabetes Resources for Veteran Families

IMPACT OF TYPE 2 DIABETES

Type 2 diabetes affects 25% of veterans due to service-related chronic pain, joint damage, and exposure to herbicides such as Agent Orange.

Signs of Type 2 diabetes include blurry vision, excessive thirst, fatigue, hunger, frequent urination, and weight loss.

Having diabetes increases your risk of other health conditions including heart attacks, strokes, nerve damage, kidney disease, vision loss, and foot damage.

Factors increasing risk include age (55 and over), genetics or family history, obesity, physical inactivity, high blood pressure, smoking, and unhealthy eating habits.

Check out the MSU Extension article "**What Veterans Should Know About Diabetes**" at https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/veterans_and_diabetes



SUPPORT FOR VETERANS

Michigan State University (MSU) Extension offers a variety of health and nutrition programs that can help veterans and their family members prevent or manage diabetes:

- **Dining With Diabetes:** In this five-session self-management series, participants explore and taste foods prepared from diabetes-friendly recipes. Topics include eating healthily, being active, self-care monitoring, taking medications, and reducing risks.
- **Diabetes Personal Action Toward Health (PATH):** In this six-week self-management workshop, people living with diabetes learn how to deal with the symptoms of diabetes, increase physical activity, plan meals, and eat healthily.
- **National Diabetes Prevention Program:** This yearlong evidence-based program for individuals at risk of diabetes provides support, encouragement, and information to participants.

Sign up for a class on MSU Extension's Diabetes Events page at <https://www.canr.msu.edu/diabetes/events>

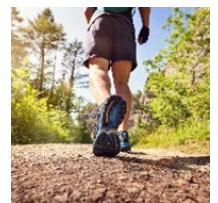
VETERAN AFFAIRS RESOURCES

According to the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs (VA):

"Veterans who develop type 2 diabetes mellitus and were exposed to Agent Orange or other herbicides during military service do not have to prove a connection between their diabetes and service to be eligible to receive VA health care and disability compensation" (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, n.d.).

For more information:

- Call the Agent Orange helpline at 1-800-749-8387.
- Explore the "Agent Orange Exposure and VA Disability Compensation" page: <https://www.va.gov/disability/eligibility/hazardous-materials-exposure/agent-orange/>
- Connect with your local VA environmental health coordinator about getting an Agent Orange Registry health exam: <https://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/coordinators.asp#Michigan>



Note: Benefits may extend to surviving family members of veterans who died due to herbicide-related type 2 diabetes.

FOUR KEY HEALTHY BEHAVIORS AND MEASURES

To improve health and wellness, and reduce the risk of developing chronic diseases such as diabetes, the Michigan Department of Community Health recommends practicing **four healthy behaviors**:

1. Eat five or more servings of fruits and vegetables daily and follow a healthy diet.
2. Engage in 150 minutes of moderate aerobic and muscle-strengthening exercises each week.
3. Avoid all tobacco use and exposure.
4. Get an annual medical check-up.

To reduce the risk of diabetes and other chronic health conditions, the Michigan Department of Community Health recommends **four health measures***:

1. Body Mass Index (BMI) within a range of 18.5 – 24.9
2. Blood pressure of 120/80 or less
3. Cholesterol level below 200
4. Blood glucose level below 100mg/dl (after fasting)

Explore: <https://www.michigan.gov/healthmichigan>

**Individual self-management goals may vary. Always consult a healthcare provider to learn more.*

VETERAN OUTREACH

MSU Extension provides veterans with programs and services supporting personal and financial wellness:

Heroes to Hives: This unique program offers professional training and community development centered around beekeeping.

SNAP Outreach for Veterans: This program explains the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefit and offers enrollment assistance to veterans (Helpline: 1-888-544-8773).



<https://www.canr.msu.edu/veterans>

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EXPLORE MICHIGAN FRESH!

Find tips on growing, handling, and preserving Michigan-grown foods as well as delicious healthy recipes at www.canr.msu.edu/mi_fresh



REFERENCES

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