VA Allergy User Guide

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Definitions

Introduction to VA Allergies and Adverse Reactions

VA Allergies and Adverse Reactions is a My Health***e***Vet feature that helps you focus on what is important to you, your health. If you are a My Health***e***Vet registered user, you can self-enter your allergies and reactions. If you are a VA patient you can also view **VA Allergies and Adverse Reactions** information from your VA health record. You can see a blended view of both your self-entered allergy information and VA information. This gives you all your allergy information in one place. To access VA allergy information, VA patients need to be registered on My Health***e***Vet with an upgraded account.

> To get an upgraded account you must complete a one-time process called In-Person Authentication or "IPA." You can upgrade your account at your VA medical center or community-based outpatient clinic.

When you log into My Health***e***Vet, you will be able to find **VA Allergies** in the **TRACK HEALTH** section, under **HEALTH HISTORY.**

VA Allergies and Adverse Reactions

- Lets you see your self-entered and VA allergy information
- Allows you to view, print and download your information
- Provides important information about what you are allergic to or have had an adverse reaction to
- May reduce your risk of coming into contact with something to which you are allergic

My Health***e***Vet is simple, easy to use, private and secure. Anytime, anywhere you are, as long as you have Internet access, you can view your **VA Allergies and Adverse Reactions**.

You may want to print out your **VA Allergies and Adverse Reactions** information to share with family members or caregivers. You may use the **VA Blue Button** as another way to download or print your **VA Allergies and Adverse Reactions.** You can also use **Secure Messaging** to send a message to your participating health care team. You can alert them to new allergies and how you reacted.

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What Is Needed to Use VA Allergies and Adverse Reactions

If you are a My Health***e***Vet registered user, you can self-enter your allergies and reactions.

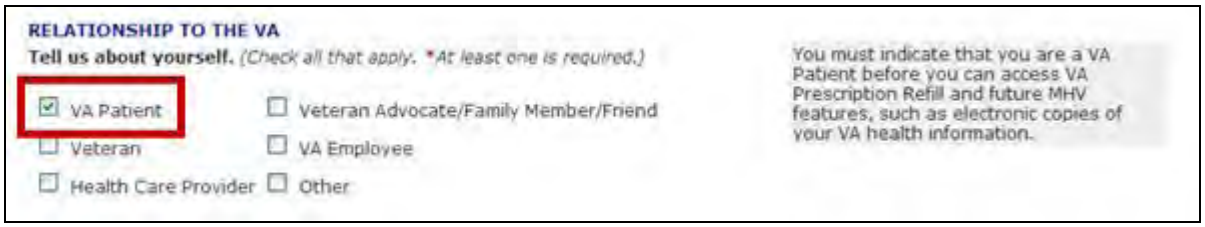
To use ***VA Allergies and Adverse Reactions*** you must:

1. be a Veteran enrolled at a VA health care facility
2. be a registered My Health***e***Vet user
3. have an upgraded account

Be a Registered My HealtheVet User - Registration is quick and easy.

- When you register, enter your First Name, Last Name, Date of Birth, Gender and Social Security Number. If you use the VA health care system, it is important that this information match your VA electronic health record information. **TIP:** Use your Veterans Identification Card (VIC) information to match your VA electronic health record information.

- If you use the VA health care system, make sure you select the **"VA Patient"** checkbox when you register.



To check your account:

- Login to My Health***e***Vet
- Select the **PERSONAL INFORMATION** tab
- Select the **Profiles** sub-tab
- Under **Relationship to the VA,** if you use the VA health care system, make sure you select the **"VA Patient"** checkbox (see red box above)
  - If **"VA Patient"** is not checked and you use the VA health care system, select this box
  - This will put a checkmark in the box
- Select the **Save** button at the bottom of the screen

Upgraded Account (In-Person Authenticated) Users

My Health*e*Vet created a way to confirm a Veteran user's identity. The process is called In-Person Authentication. You must complete this process to have an upgraded account. My Health*e*Vet users who are VA patients and have an upgraded account may be able to view, print and download parts of their official VA electronic health record.

With an upgraded account you will:

- view **Wellness Reminders**
- see your **VA Appointments**
- view **VA Allergies and Adverse Reactions**
- use **Secure Messaging** when it is available in your area
- receive copies of key parts of your VA electronic medical record as they become available

There are things you must do before In-Person Authentication can occur:

- Be registered as a "VA Patient" in your My Health*e*Vet account
- View the My Health*e*Vet Orientation Video (available online or at your local VA facility)
- Read and sign VA Form, 10-5345a-MHV (available online or at your local VA facility)

To have your identity verified:

- Present a government issued photo identification (a Veterans Identification Card (VIC) or driver's license is acceptable) to a qualified VA staff member at your VA health care facility.

For questions about using My HealtheVet, use the Contact MHV link at the top of every My HealtheVet page.

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General Information

NOTES:

- If you use the VA health care system and want to see parts of your official VA electronic health record, you must complete In-Person Authentication.

  To use **VA Allergies and Adverse Reactions**, you need a computer with a browser and Internet access. Some people have Internet access in their home. Public libraries and Internet cafés also provide Internet access.

- You can use the **Secure Messaging** feature in My Health***e***Vet to send a message to your participating health care team to tell them about something you had a reaction to.

- You can use the **VA Blue Button** to print or download your **VA Allergies and Adverse Reactions** information. When you use the **VA Blue Button**, you can view and print your selected My Health***e***Vet personal health information (data). You can also download your My Health***e***Vet data to a computer or other device (such as a CD or thumb drive). This lets you take your data with you. You can choose to share this with your health care team, caregivers or any other person.

- You can get your **VA Blue Button** information in two file formats. You can download it in a format that is easy to read and print (PDF file) or as a simple text format (.txt file). You may wish to review the information in your account first to be sure it is up to date before you download it.

  Anytime you download information from the Internet it is possible to create a temporary file on the computer you are using. Please be aware of this when opening a file on a computer you do not control.

  You are responsible for protecting the personal health information you print out or download. *It is important to protect your information.* Protect this information the same way you would protect your banking or credit card information. Do not leave your printed information in a printer. Do not save your downloaded information to a public computer. When using a public computer, save your health information to a CD or a thumb drive. Remember to take the CD or thumb drive with you when you finish.

  You are the only one who sees your health information in My Health***e***Vet. You choose with whom to share your information. If you want someone else to see your health information, you must give it to that person.

IMPORTANT: Please note that any information entered in your My HealtheVet account is for you only and is not shared with your VA facility. If you need to update the information in your official VA record, including the mailing address for your VA prescriptions, please contact the appropriate office at your local VA facility.

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How to Find VA Allergies and Adverse Reactions

Remember, to use **VA Allergies and Adverse Reactions** you have to be a Veteran enrolled at a VA health care facility, have registered on My Health***e***Vet and have an upgraded account (completed the In-Person Authentication process).

1. You can **Login** to your personal account from any page in My Health***e***Vet. Enter your **User ID** and **Password** in the **Member Login** area and then select the Login button.

2. To access **VA Allergies and Adverse Reactions**, select the **TRACK HEALTH** tab at the top of the page. This will take you to the **TRACK HEALTH** page.

When you select the **TRACK HEALTH** tab, you will see this page

3. There are three ways on the **TRACK HEALTH** page to access **VA Allergies and Adverse Reactions:**

You can:

- Select the **HEALTH HISTORY** tab at the top of the page
- Select the **Health History** image in middle of the page
- Or, select the word **More>>** under the **Health History** image.

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Viewing VA Allergies and Adverse Reactions

On the **Health History** page are several logs. These logs include **VA Allergies & Adverse Reactions**, as well as your **Self-Entered Allergies**. Each log will give you a quick glance of information and display the five most recent entries you have.

VA Allergies & Adverse Reactions information comes from your VA health record. You cannot add a new allergy to your **VA Allergies & Adverse Reactions** log. If you have an allergy that is not listed, tell your VA health care team.

Self-Entered Allergies are what you enter in My Health**e**Vet. This information is not sent to your VA health record. If you have an allergy that is not listed in your **VA Allergies & Adverse Reactions** log, tell your VA health care team.

1. In the **VA Allergies & Adverse Reactions** log:

- To view a single entry, select the date link next to the name of the allergy
- To view all your **VA Allergies & Adverse Reactions** entries, select View More >

2. In the **Self-Entered Allergies** log:

- To view a single entry from your **Self-Entered Allergies** log, select the date link next to the name of the allergy
- To view all your **Self-Entered Allergies**, select View More >
- To add a new allergy in your log select Add New

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VA Allergies and Adverse Reactions Summary

When you select the **View More** button on the **Track Health** page, it takes you to the **VA Allergies and Adverse Reactions Summary** page.

When you open **VA Allergies & Adverse Reactions** you may see at the top of the page a yellow message box with a blue triangle.

My Health***e***Vet gives you a message when your **VA Allergies & Adverse Reactions** are being updated in My Health***e***Vet.

Select the **Refresh** button to view current information.

Under your name, you will see the date and time your **VA Allergies & Adverse Reactions information** was last updated.

The **VA Allergies and Adverse Reactions Summary** page opens to a list of allergy information that comes from your VA health record. However, once you are on the page you can choose how you want to view your allergy information.

Under **Filter Results** are sources that let you choose how you want to view your allergy information.

1. There are three ways you can list your allergy information. If you select the radio button in front of:
   - **VA** –it gives you a view of allergy information from your VA health record
   - **Non-VA** –gives you a list of your self-entered allergy information
   - **Both** –provides a combined view of your self-entered allergy information and allergy information from your VA health record

After you choose a source, select the "**Go**" button to view the results.

The **VA Allergies and Adverse Reactions Summary** page gives you a table that can display your **VA Allergies and Adverse Reactions,** your **Self-Entered Allergies** or **Both.**

Date Entered	Allergen/Reactant	Reaction/Side Effect	Location	Source

The table shows the date your allergy information was entered, the name of the allergen (or what you are allergic to), the reaction you had, the facility name or location where the information was entered, and the source (VA or self). You can use the up and down arrows to sort your allergy information. For example under **Date Entered,** you can display your most recent information first, followed by those in the past. Or you can display your past allergy information first, followed by your more recent information.

2. The table shows the names of each item you are allergic to. You may see detailed information you self-entered or your VA health care team entered. To view the details, select the name of the allergy under the column

Allergen/Reactant

3. The top and bottom of the table shows the number of items displayed. If you have more than 10 items, it puts the information on a second page. For example, if you have 12 items you will see the following:

12 items found, displaying 1 to 10
First/Prev **1**, 2 Next/Last
Number of rows to display per page: 10 25 50 100

There are two ways to go to the second page:

- Select the number **2** or
- Select Next

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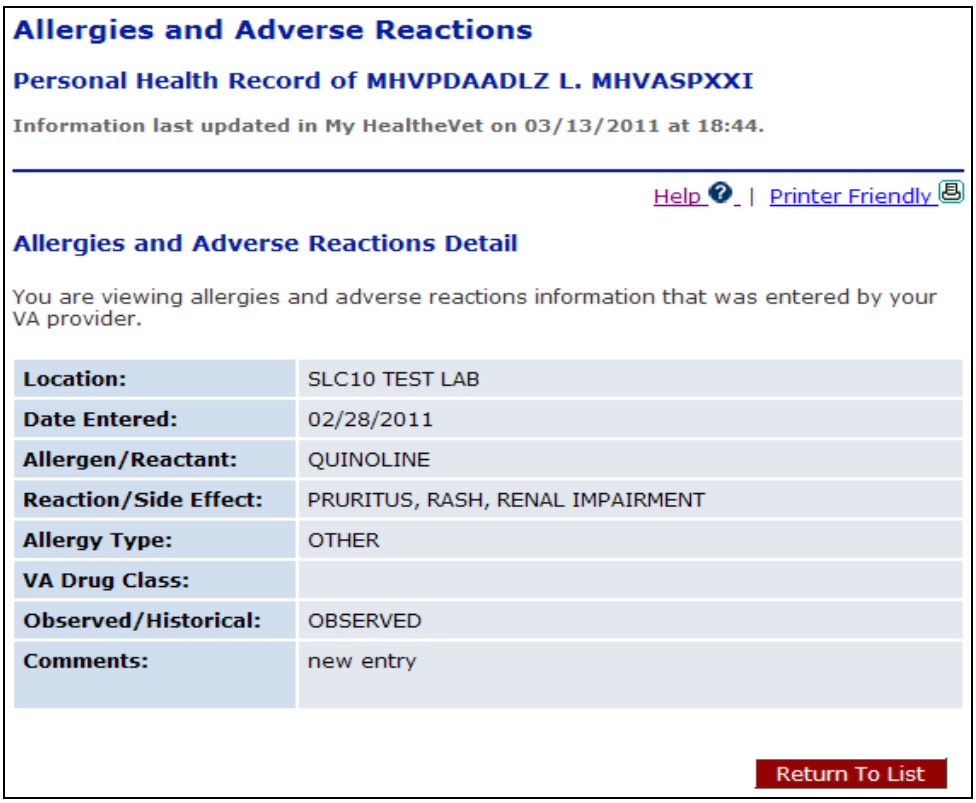
Allergies and Adverse Reactions Detail

This page provides details about your allergies that were entered into your VA health record by a member of your health care team. This is a read-only page and cannot be changed.



The **Detail** page provides specific information about an allergy

- **Location –** gives the name of the VA facility that entered the allergy
- **Date Entered –** shows the date and time your information was entered into your VA health record
- **Allergen/Reactant –** shows what you are allergic to
- **Reaction/Side Effect –** tells how you reacted to the allergen
- **Allergy Type –** tells if the allergen was due to a food, drug or other
- **VA Drug Class** -if it is a medication allergy it gives the drug class
- **Observed/Historical –** shows if your allergy reaction was observed by members of the health care team or if it was provided by you as historical information
- **Comments –** general information entered by your VA health care team relating to your allergy

To go back to the **VA Allergies and Adverse Reactions Summary** page select the button

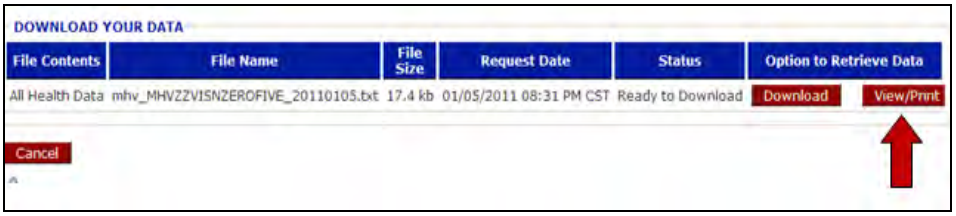
Printing VA Allergies and Adverse Reactions

A list of **VA Allergies and Adverse Reactions** can be printed two ways:

- **VA Allergies and Adverse Reaction**
- **Blue Button** custom download of your **VA Allergies and Adverse Reactions**

You can print your list from the VA Allergies and Adverse Reactions Summary and Allergies and Adverse Reactions Detail pages:

Select the **Printer Friendly** link at the top right hand corner of the page



To print your list from the Blue Button

Select the View/Print button at the lower right hand corner of the page

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Blue Button and VA Allergies and Adverse Reactions

To download your data using the **Blue Button Download My Data** feature**:**

- Log into your My Health***e***Vet account
- Select **Download My Data**
- Select **Download Only My Selected Data from My HealtheVet**
- Select **Continue**
- Select **VA Allergies and Adverse Reactions**
- **Selec**t **Submit**
- Select **Download** if you want an electronic copy
- Click on **View/Print** if you want a printed list,
- Select **Print**

You can get your **VA Blue Button** information in two file formats. You can download it in a format that is easy to read and print (PDF file) or as a simple text format (.txt file). You may wish to review the information in your account first to be sure it is up to date before you download it.

Sample of a PDF format

PDF stands for Portable Document Format. It is a file that keeps your data in the original form. Your information looks the same on the screen and in print regardless of what kind of computer you have. It is a simple and an easy way to download your files. Each PDF files has:

- A header at the top of your report
- Shows page numbers

Txt stands for text file. It is a file that presents your data in a line-by-line format. As a result, your print out or download may look different from what you see on the computer screen.

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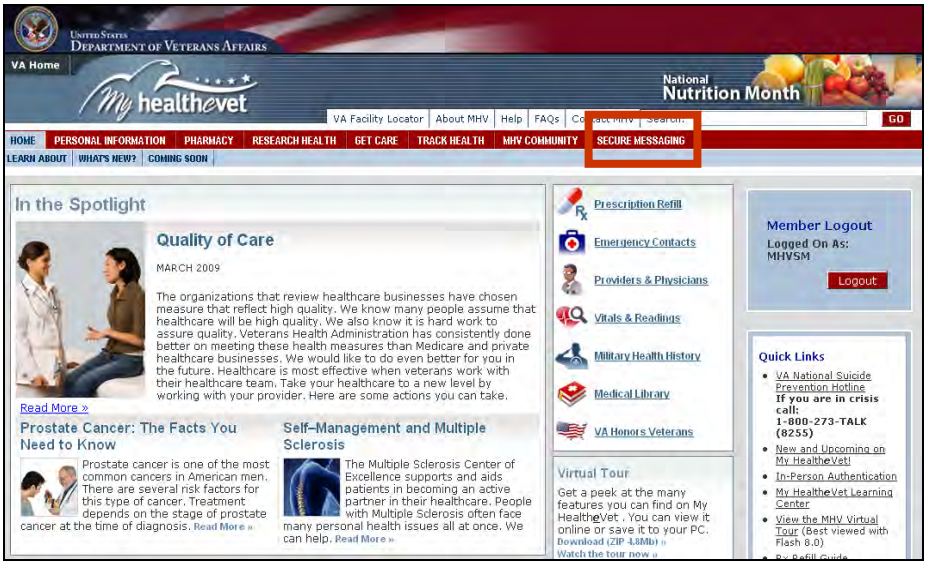
Secure Messaging and VA Allergies and Adverse Reactions

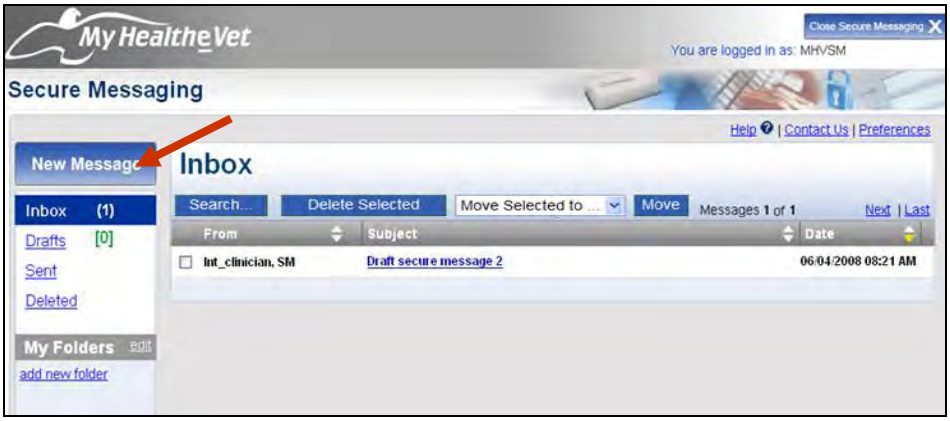
You can use **Secure Messaging** to send a message to your participating health care team. Tell them about a new allergy. Let them know if you have an allergy that is not listed in your VA Allergies and Adverse Reactions log. **Secure Messaging** allows you to communicate in a secure environment within My Health***e***Vet. You have the ability to send and receive messages from your health care team, as well as manage and maintain your messages within your **Secure Messaging** account.



To access My Health***e***Vet Secure Messaging, go to www.myhealth.va.gov, login to your personal account (Member Login box on right side of the screen), and select the **SECURE MESSAGING** tab.

Select the orange **Open Secure Messaging** button to use **Secure Messaging**.

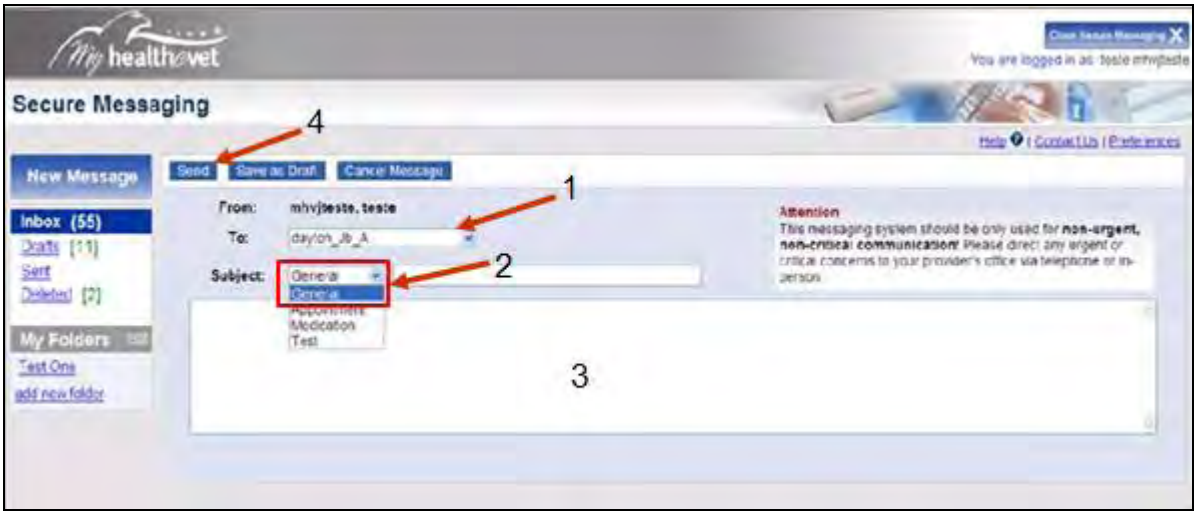
Note: If you do not see the orange button, you will see information about what you need to do in order to use **Secure Messaging**.



If your facility is using Secure Messaging and you are associated with a triage team, you can create a new message by clicking on the **New Message** button in your Inbox.

To create a new message, fill in the appropriate information:

1. Select the health care team for whom the message is for by clicking the drop-down arrow for **To**. Note: only your participating VA health care team will appear in the list.
2. Select the **Subject** of your message by selecting the drop-down arrow for **Subject**: select **General**
3. Type your message.
4. When you have completed the message, select the **Send** button.



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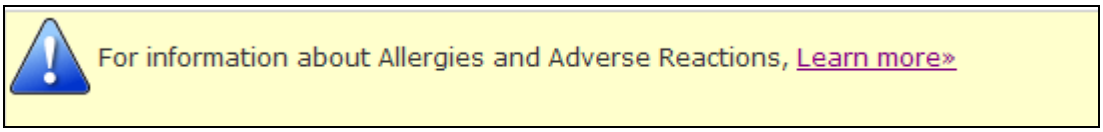
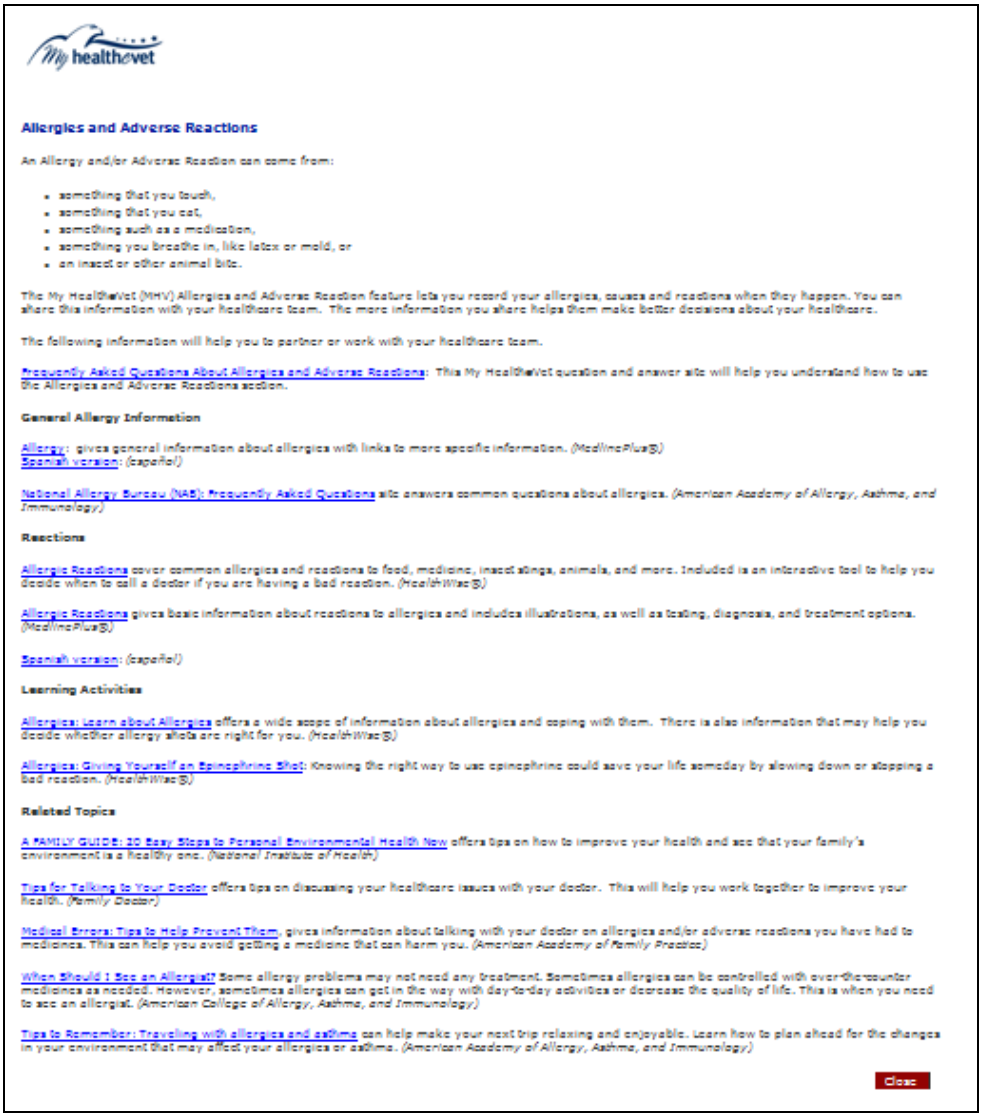
Learn More

At the bottom of the **VA Allergies and Adverse Reactions Summary** and **Details** page is a yellow information box. To get more information on VA Allergies and Adverse Reactions select the link to **Learn More**.





Allergies and Adverse Reactions

An Allergy and/or Adverse Reaction can come from:

- something that you touch,
- something that you eat,
- something such as a medication,
- something you breathe in, like latex or mold, or
- an insect or other animal bite.

The My HealtheVet (MHV) Allergies and Adverse Reaction feature lets you record your allergies, causes and reactions when they happen. You can share this information with your healthcare team. The more information you share helps them make better decisions about your healthcare.

The following information will help you to partner or work with your healthcare team.

Frequently Asked Questions About Allergies and Adverse Reactions: This My HealtheVet question and answer site will help you understand how to use the Allergies and Adverse Reactions section.

General Allergy Information

Allergy: gives general information about allergies with links to more specific information. *(MedlinePlus®)*
Spanish version: *(español)*

National Allergy Bureau (NAB) Frequently Asked Questions site answers common questions about allergies. *(American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology)*

Reactions

Allergic Reactions cover common allergies and reactions to food, medicine, insect stings, animals, and more. Included is an interactive tool to help you decide when to call a doctor if you are having a bad reaction. *(HealthWise®)*

Allergic Reactions gives basic information about reactions to allergies and includes illustrations, as well as testing, diagnosis, and treatment options. *(MedlinePlus®)*

Spanish version: *(español)*

Learning Activities

Allergies: Learn about Allergies offers a wide scope of information about allergies and coping with them. There is also information that may help you decide whether allergy shots are right for you. *(HealthWise®)*

Allergies: Giving Yourself an Epinephrine Shot: Knowing the right way to use epinephrine could save your life someday by slowing down or stopping a bad reaction. *(HealthWise®)*

Related Topics

A FAMILY GUIDE: 20 Easy Steps to Personal Environmental Health Now offers tips on how to improve your health and see that your family's environment is a healthy one. *(National Institute of Health)*

Tips for Talking to Your Doctor offers tips on discussing your healthcare issues with your doctor. This will help you work together to improve your health. *(Family Doctor)*

Medical Errors: Tips to Help Prevent Them: gives information about talking with your doctor on allergies and/or adverse reactions you have had to medicines. This can help you avoid getting a medicine that can harm you. *(American Academy of Family Practice)*

When Should I See an Allergist? Some allergy problems may not need any treatment. Sometimes allergies can be controlled with over-the-counter medicines as needed. However, sometimes allergies can get in the way with day-to-day activities or decrease the quality of life. This is when you need to see an allergist. *(American College of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology)*

Tips to Remember: Traveling with allergies and asthma can help make your next trip relaxing and enjoyable. Learn how to plan ahead for the changes in your environment that may affect your allergies or asthma. *(American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology)*

Close

The **Learn More** page gives you a brief summary of what **VA Allergies and Adverse Reactions** is and the benefits of using **VA Allergies and Adverse Reactions.**

If you select **Learn More**, this is what you will see.

To leave the **Learn More** page, select the **Close** Close button at the bottom of the page.

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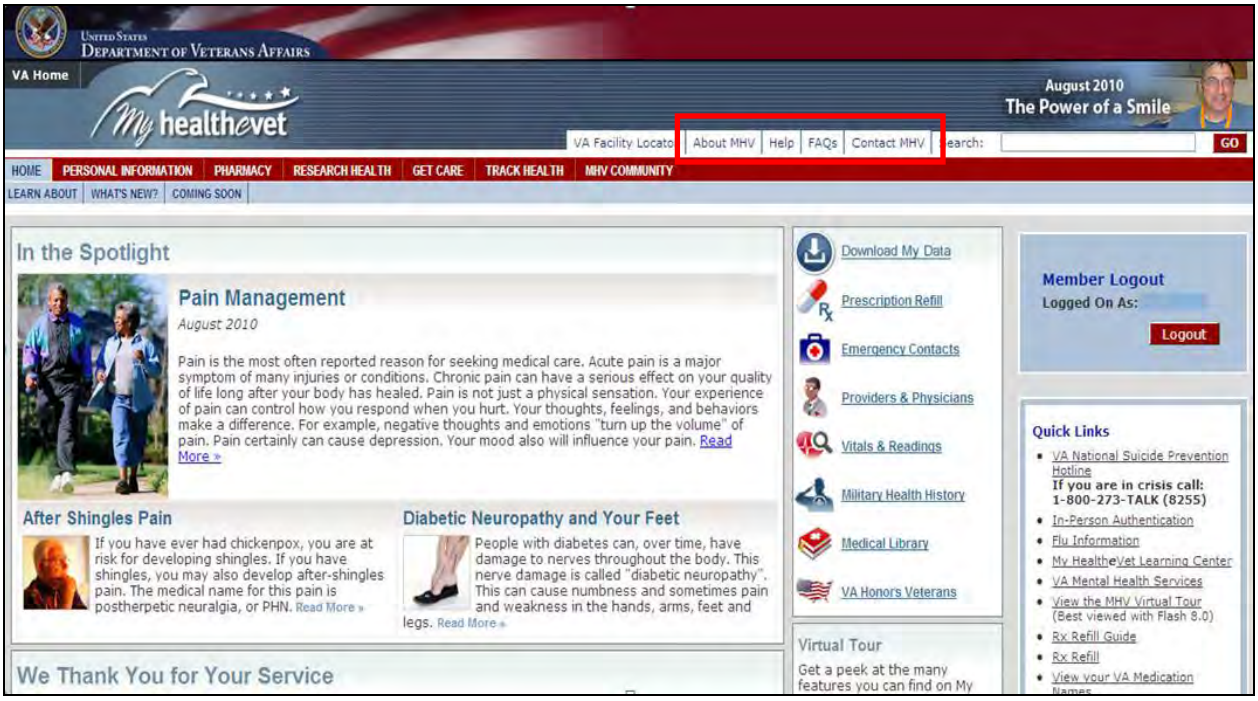
Frequently Asked Questions, Help and Contact MHV

At the top of every page is a white bar where you can get support.

Select **FAQs** to take you to **Frequently Asked Questions** and get answers to common questions about **VA Allergies and Adverse Reactions**.

Select **Help** to find more information about the page you are viewing.

Select **Contact MHV** to send a message to the My Health***e***Vet Help Desk.



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Definitions

Data

Data is your health information in words and numbers. **VA Allergies and Adverse Reactions** refers to copies of your **VA Allergies and Adverse Reactions** information from your official VA electronic health record as your data.

Compact Disc (CD)

A Compact Disc (also known as a CD) is a round disc used to store information from your computer. A CD is portable and requires special handling to prevent damage to the recording. A CD is one of the most common ways to store information.

PDF

PDF File stands for Portable Document Format. It is a file that keeps your data in the original form. Your information looks the same on the screen and in print regardless of what kind of computer you have. It is a simple, easy way to download your files.

Txt File

Txt stands for text file. It is a file that presents your data in a line-by-line format. As a result, your print out or download may look different from what you see on the computer screen.

Thumb drive

A thumb drive is a small electronic device used to store information from your computer. It is also known as a flash drive or pen drive. A thumb drive is lightweight, portable and easy to use for moving information. It fits into the USB slot on a computer. Then the computer can read your transferred information.

In-Person Authentication

In-Person Authentication is a process used to verify a My Health***e***Vet user's identity and upgrade a basic account. Registered My Health***e***Vet users who are VA patients and have completed the In-Person Authentication process are able to get VA Wellness Reminders, view their VA Appointments and see a list of their VA Allergies and Adverse Reactions. They can participate in Secure Messaging as it becomes available. They will access additional information from their VA Electronic Medical Record when offered.

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Before In-Person Authentication can occur, several requirements must be met:

- The user must be registered as a VA patient in their My Health*e*Vet account
- The user must view the My Health*e*Vet Orientation Video
- The user must download, read and sign the VA Form, 10-5345a-MHV (PDF)
- The user must present a form of government issued photo identification to a qualified VA staff member at their VA health care facility to have their identity verified

To learn more, go to My Health*e*Vet at www.myhealth.va.gov

Quick Links

Quick Links is located on the right side of the My Health*e*Vet Homepage. **Quick Links** provides easy access to important information in My Health*e*Vet. There are links that take you to information about In-Person Authentication, My Health*e*Vet Learning Centers, VA Mental Health Services, Rx Refill Guide, and much more.

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