

VA Eastern Kansas Health Care System
 Leavenworth VAMC (1-800-952-8387)
 www.leavenworth.va.gov
 Topeka VAMC (1-800-574-8387)
 www.topeka.va.gov
 2200 SW Gage Boulevard (T-EDUC)
 Topeka, Kansas 66622-0001

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VA Eastern Kansas Health Care System

The Veteran Connection Patient Education Newsletter

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 Fall 2009

Free Flu Shots for Veterans Enrolled in the VA Eastern KS Health Care System

Free walk-in flu shot clinics will be held at the VA Medical Centers and Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCS) for Veterans enrolled in the VA Eastern Kansas Health Care System. Please bring your VA ID card (Veteran Identification Card) and stop in during any of the following times:

Topeka VA Medical Center Walk-In Clinic

- Monday through Friday, October 12th to November 13th (including holidays) from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
- Saturday, November 7th from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., North Outpatient Lobby in Building 1 only

Topeka VA Medical Center Mental Health Clinic, Building 2 Walk-In Flu Shot Clinic:

- Monday through Fridays (except holidays) starting October 13th through November 13th from 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Leavenworth VA Medical Center Walk-In Flu Shot Clinics:

- Monday through Friday (except holidays) starting October 13th through November 13th in the Main Hospital Building (5th floor, Room C-511) from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
- Saturday, November 7th from 8:30 am to 3:30 p.m. in the Schwarzkopf Conference Room B222 on second floor of the Main Hospital Building.

Community Based Outreach Clinics (CBOCs) Walk-In Flu Shot Clinics:

- Emporia**– October 12 (holiday), October 26 and November 2 & 9 from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
- Fort Scott**– October 15, 22 & 29, and November 5 & 12 from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
- Garnett**– October 14, 21 & 28, and November 4 & 11 (holiday) from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
- Chanute**– October 23 & 30 and November 6 & 13 from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
- Lawrence**– October 16, 23 & 30, and November 6 & 13 from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
- Junction City** – October 16, 23 & 30, and November 6 & 13 from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- Wyandotte**– October 16, 23 & 30, and November 6 & 13 from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- St. Joseph** – October 16, 23 & 30, and November 6 & 13 from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- Holton**– October 19th from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
- Seneca**– October 20th from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.



Also you can call your primary care team to schedule an appointment. Vaccinations will continue to be given with regularly scheduled clinic appointments through the end of March 2010.

If you receive your flu shot at **any other location**, please call 1-800-574-8387, Ext. 53348. Leave a message with your name, date of birth, last 4 digits of Social Security number, date vaccine was received, and facility name where received. This helps keep your medical record up-to-date.

Your cooperation in receiving this yearly vaccination to protect yourself, as well as your loved ones, is greatly appreciated.

Help Us Keep Your Records Up To Date!

When you receive your **flu vaccine** or **pneumonia vaccine** at any location other than the VA, please notify us by leaving a message at 1-800-574-8387, Ext. 53348. We need to update your immunization record.

Please leave a message which includes your name, last four digits of your Social Security number, date of birth, type of vaccine (flu or pneumonia), and date (or estimated month and year) you received the vaccine(s). We also need to know where you received the vaccine, i.e., Doctor's office, Health Department (Dept.), etc. with city and state. If you prefer, fill out and mail the form below to:

VA EKHCS
 Attn: Telephone Care (T-118)
 2200 SW Gage Blvd
 Topeka, KS 66622



Free flu vaccines will be available to Veterans enrolled at all Eastern Kansas locations on a walk-in basis.
 See front page of this newsletter for listing of free flu shot locations and times.

We thank you for taking this yearly vaccination to protect yourself and your loved ones!

Name _____ Last four of Social Security# _____ Date of Birth _____

Flu Vaccine (Month/Day/Year) _____ Where _____

Pneumonia Vaccine:(Month/Day/Year) _____ Where: _____

H1N1 Flu Vaccine—A vaccine is being developed for the H1N1 (swine) flu. More information will be available later this fall. Listen to your local television and radio stations and check your newspaper for announcements regarding what the VA will be doing for the H1N1 virus. For information about the H1N1 virus, check reliable internet websites such as www.myhealth.va.gov, www.cdc.gov or www.publichealth.va.gov/flu.

Refills Without the Wait— Why wait in line or on the phone when you can go online from your home computer to refill your VA-issued meds? Veterans can refill their VA prescriptions online by registering with the My Healthvet (MHV) website, www.myhealth.va.gov. When you sign up, enter your name the same way it is printed on your VA appointment letter or as it is listed on your VA meds. Also select the “VA patient” and “Veteran” options.

If you have already registered, you can upgrade your account by completing the In-Person Authentication (IPA) process. To complete the IPA process:

- Watch a brief video on line from the My HealthVet home page in the IPA section
- Print off the MHV release of information form, 10-5354a-MHV (IPA section)
- Take the form to the Release of Information Office at the Leavenworth or Topeka VA or the Lawrence, Fort Scott or St. Joseph Community Based Outpatient Clinic to complete the process.
- Show a valid government issued photo identification (i.e. VA ID card, driver’s license, etc.) After completing the IPA process, you will be able to see the names of your VA meds. Also you can look at personal information such as wellness reminders under the “Get Care” tab.



Future features for MyHealthVet include being able to see your scheduled appointments and your VA lab results online. Contact Betty Hanson, MHV Point of Contact, at 1-800-574-8387, Ext. 52928 or 785-350-3111, Ext. 52928 if you have questions.

One Call to Cancel All Your Appointments— Call one of the following numbers when you need to cancel any appointments for the VA and the Community Based Outpatient Clinics:

Leavenworth VA: 913-682-2000 or 1-800-952-8387, then press 1 to connect

Topeka VA: 785-350-3111 or 1-800-574-8387, then press 1 to connect

Our VA staff in the Centralized Scheduling Unit will cancel your appointments on business days from 7:00 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. After hours, on weekends and holidays, you can leave a message at this number. When you leave a message, you will be asked to give your name, social security number, reason you called, and a phone number where you can be contacted during business hours. We appreciate you calling ahead of time when you need to cancel your appointment. This helps to let another Veteran use the time.

The Clinic Is Closed and I Have a Question!—VA Eastern Kansas Veterans can get advice about health problems during weekends, holidays, evenings and nights by calling 1-800-574-8387, Ext. 54555 or their team clinic phone number. Registered nurses are available to answer many health care questions including the following:

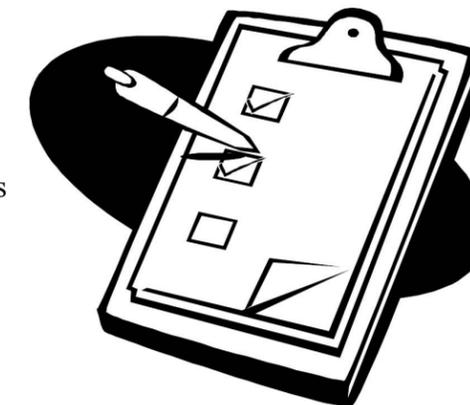
- give advice on what to do before lab tests, x-rays, minor procedures, etc.
- help address health issues that come up after you have been discharged from the hospital
- give you information on how to best manage your health concerns
- decide if you need “same-day” treatment or if it would be better to follow up with your team clinic

During regular business hours, Veterans should continue to contact their teams about scheduling issues, lab test results and medication refill problems. Telephone care nurses are not able to reschedule appointments or order medication refills.

Use the pharmacy number to refill prescriptions: 1-888-613-3977 (except the local Topeka calling area which uses 350-3111, Ext. 54545.)

Please Fill Out the VA Patient Surveys— You are encouraged to give us feedback on the care you receive from the VA. You may have noticed a change in the questions on the patient survey you received in the mail to rate your last visit with us. The survey has changed to be more like ones given by the Department of Defense and community facilities. The following are results from the last report (April 2009) provided to VA Eastern Kansas from our hospitals and clinics:

- 87.6% satisfaction in seeing outpatients within 20 minutes of their scheduled appointment.
- 75.8% satisfaction for Veterans getting their appointment as soon as needed
- 54.9% approval of outpatient care received in the last 12 months



We did not receive enough returned surveys to rate inpatient care or new patients receiving appointments as soon as needed. A special thank you to those of you who completed and returned the survey! VA Eastern Kansas employees are working to increase the scores with improving ways of meeting patient needs. If you have specific suggestions or concerns about the services you received, please contact the Patient Advocate at 1-800-574-8387, Ext. 54455 or 350-3111, Ext. 54455. Detailed results of the survey are posted at the Topeka VA Medical Center in Building 1, first floor, on a bulletin board outside the Director’s Conference Room A145. At the Leavenworth VA Medical Center, results are posted on a bulletin board in the Main Hospital on second floor outside the Schwarzkopf Conference Room, Room B222.

Diabetes Support Group—VA Eastern Kansas has a Diabetes Support Group at the Topeka campus. They meet on the first and third Tuesday of each month from 11:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon in Building 5, Room C-155. (Building 5 is on the southwest part of the Topeka campus.) This group helps Veterans with diabetes share ideas and discuss problems they have. Diabetes can be very difficult and overwhelming for patients, families, and caregivers to cope with and manage. A solid support network is an important part of diabetes care. The VA Diabetes Support Group offers a network of educational and social support for those affected by diabetes. Veterans receive support from others who know what it is like to have diabetes. A registered dietitian, pharmacist and other experts share information with the group. Call Aimee Truetken, M.S., R.D., L.D. at 785-350-3111, Ext. 52449 or 1-800-574-8387, Ext. 52449 if you have questions.

Women’s Issues Group—The Topeka VA Women’s Issues Group is designed to provide women Veterans with an opportunity to network with other women in the VA system, as well as build and enhance their social support systems. Each week a new topic is discussed within the group. These topics include (but are not limited to) stress management, developing proper boundaries, benefits of nutrition and exercise, and women’s health issues. The discussion of these and other relevant topics helps members learn more about coping skills, positive behaviors, and improving overall quality of life. Members spend time addressing their own personal thoughts, feelings, and challenges about these topics within a group setting. This provides them a unique opportunity to get feedback and support from other women within the VA system. Call the Topeka Mental Health clinic at 785-350-3111, Ext. 54335 or 1-800-574-8387, Ext. 54335 for more information.

The Joint Commission Public Notice—The Joint Commission is an independent, not for profit organization dedicated to improving the quality of care in health care settings. They conduct surveys of hospitals to evaluate compliance with national standards of care. Their mission is to improve the safety and quality of care provide to the public. VA Eastern Kansas Health Care System (VAEKHCS) is fully accredited. The Joint Commission invites comments (as does VAEKHCS) from Veterans regarding services provided. If you have a patient safety or quality of care concern that VAEKHCS has not resolved you may call The Joint Commission at 1-800-994-6610 or email them at complaint@jointcommission.org.