**Disabilities that appear within 1 year after discharge**

You may be able to get disability benefits if you have signs of an illness like hypertension (high blood pressure), arthritis, diabetes, or peptic ulcers that started within a year after you were discharged from active military service.

If your symptoms appear within one year after discharge—even if they weren’t there while you were serving—we’ll conclude that they’re related to your service.

**Am I eligible for disability benefits from VA?**

You may be eligible for disability benefits if you have an illness that’s at least 10% disabling that appears within 1 year after discharge, and you meet both of these requirements.

**Both of these must be true:**

* The illness is listed in Title 38, Code of Federal Regulation, 3.309(a), **and**
* You didn’t receive a dishonorable discharge

[Download Title 38, Code of Federal Regulation, 3.309(a) for a complete list of covered illnesses (DOC)](https://www.benefits.va.gov/warms/docs/regs/38CFR/BOOKB/PART3/S3_309.doc)

**Who’s covered?**

Veterans

**What kind of benefits can I get?**

* Health care
* Compensation (payments)

**How do I get these benefits?**

You’ll need to file a claim for disability compensation and submit your evidence (supporting documents).

**Your evidence will need to show that both of these are true of your illness:**

* It’s at least 10% disabling (for example, you may submit a doctor’s report showing that you’re taking medicine for your high blood pressure), **and**
* It appeared within one year after being discharged from active service (for example, you may submit a medical report that shows the date of your diagnosis)

If you have an illness listed in Title 38, Code of Federal Regulation, 3.309(a), you won’t need to show the problem started during—or got worse because of—your military service. This is because we believe that certain diseases that appear within one year of your discharge are related to your service. We refer to these as “presumptive diseases.”  
[Download Title 38, Code of Federal Regulation, 3.309(a) for a complete list of covered illnesses (DOC)](https://www.benefits.va.gov/warms/docs/regs/38CFR/BOOKB/PART3/S3_309.doc)  
[Find out how to file a claim for disability compensation](https://www.va.gov/disability/how-to-file-claim/)

**Exceptions**  
The following diseases are covered, even if they appear more than one year after you separated from service:

* Hansen’s disease (a long-lasting infection that affects your skin, nerves, and mucous membranes) can appear within 3 years after discharge.
* Tuberculosis (an infection that attacks your lungs and sometimes other areas of your body) can appear within 3 years after discharge.
* Multiple sclerosis (a long-lasting illness that can cause numbness, weakness, and many other symptoms) can appear within 7 years after discharge.
* Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), also known as Lou Gehrig’s disease (a long-lasting illness that affects muscle control), can appear any time after discharge.