



Supporting Caregivers of Veterans with Bladder Cancer

Caring for a veteran or military-affiliated loved one with bladder cancer can be physically and emotionally demanding. Caregivers often manage appointments, medications, transportation, daily care, and emotional support. You are not alone, and support is available.

Understanding bladder cancer

Bladder cancer begins in the lining of the bladder and is common among veterans, particularly those exposed to toxic substances during service. Common symptoms include **blood in the urine, frequent urination, pain or burning during urination, pelvic discomfort, and urinary urgency.**

Because bladder cancer has a high recurrence rate, many veterans need ongoing monitoring, repeated treatments, surgeries, or urinary diversion care.

Bladder Cancer & Veterans

Some veterans may face increased bladder cancer risk because of exposures such as Agent Orange, burn pits, Camp Lejeune water contamination, and PFAS (“forever chemicals”). Under the PACT Act, bladder cancer may qualify as a presumptive service-connected condition for eligible Veterans.

Veterans and caregivers may qualify for:

- VA disability compensation
- Specialized VA healthcare
- Caregiver training and peer support
- Respite care
- Monthly caregiver stipends through PCAFC
- Travel reimbursement for VA healthcare appointments

Tips for Navigating the VA System

- Keep medication lists, appointment calendars, and provider contact information organized.
- Track symptoms and side effects between appointments.
- Write down questions before medical visits.
- Ask providers when to call for help and what support services are available.

Helpful VA Contacts:

VA Caregiver Support Line: **1-855-260-3274**
VA Benefits Hotline: **1-800-827-1000**



Scan to learn about programs and tools designed to support caregivers of veterans facing bladder cancer.
www.caregiveraction.org/caregiver-tools/veterans-bladder-cancer



Ways caregivers support a loved one with bladder cancer

- Coordinating frequent appointments, scans, and cystoscopies
- Managing medications, transportation, and follow-up care
- Providing post-surgical or ostomy care at home
- Helping with fatigue, pain, nutrition, hydration, and urinary issues
- Managing anxiety, uncertainty, and fear of recurrence

Taking Care of Yourself

Caregiver burnout is common. Signs may include exhaustion, irritability, sleep problems, anxiety, depression, or social withdrawal. These tactics can help make it easier:



Stay connected with supportive friends or family



Take breaks when possible



Attend your own medical appointments



Ask for help when you need it



Support Resources

- [VA Caregiver Support Program](#)
- [Bladder Cancer Advocacy Network \(BCAN\)](#)
- [CancerCare Bladder Cancer Support](#)
- [American Cancer Society – Bladder Cancer Resources](#)

Caring for someone with bladder cancer can be a lot to carry, especially during long periods of treatment and uncertainty. Taking care of yourself, asking for support, and connecting with others are important parts of caregiving.

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