

MS VETERAN

VA Multiple Sclerosis Centers of Excellence



Veterans Living with MS: Frank Helenberger

I was diagnosed with MS while working as a firefighter and paramedic, 5 years after my discharge from the US Navy Submarine Service. I was at the top of my game. There was nothing I couldn't do. I had a beautiful wife with two lovely children. Who could ask for anything more?

Then it started...



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VA Benefits & Services for Veterans

The VA offers a variety of medical and support services and programs for Veterans, with several of them being of particular interest for Veterans with MS. Some of these benefits are based on level or percent of disability, while others may be based on service-connection.



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Staying Active While Living with MS

When it comes to living with MS, staying active is so important not only physically, but mentally and emotionally as well. However, staying active can be tricky depending on the various symptoms we may experience on a daily basis. There are now recommendations on how to stay active for every level of ability.



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VA MS Podcast Series

MS & Vets is a new VA podcast series that discusses important issues related to the health and quality of life for Veterans with MS. During every episode you'll hear subject matter experts weigh in on MS issues and talk about services the VA provides. The first podcast will be available **June 14, 2021** with a new episode available every 2nd Monday of the month.



[Learn More](#)

COVID Vaccine & MS Disease Modifying Therapies

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines have changed for mask wearing in public. MSCoE would like to recommend caution for Veterans with MS.

You may have read reports suggesting that people with MS taking fingolimod and ocrelizumab are not mounting an antibody response to the COVID vaccine. While antibodies are an important part of the protective response from a vaccine, they represent only one aspect of vaccine related immune response. At present, there is not enough information to reach any conclusion about the extent of vaccine effectiveness in MS people on S1P inhibitors (fingolimod) and B cell therapies (ocrelizumab, rituximab, ofatumumab).

Until we have more conclusive answers, we encourage Veterans with MS to consider the merits of continued safety measures following their vaccination and talk with their health care provider about any concerns they may have. Continuing healthy behaviors, such as social distancing, wearing a mask, good hand hygiene, and avoiding large groups, especially indoors, can help you ensure your safety while we continue to learn more.



National MS Society Highlights

The NMSS works collaboratively with the VA MS Centers of Excellence to ensure Veterans have access to care and resources.

MS Navigators: MS Navigators connect you to the information, resources and support needed to move your life forward. Call 1-800-344-4867 or send an e-mail to contactusnmss@nmss.org.

Ask an MS Expert Webinars: The weekly Ask an MS Expert program provides an opportunity to learn more about MS from top MS experts.

Support Groups: NMSS self-help groups focus on support, advocacy, education, and wellness. Some groups also serve specific populations, such as young adults, parents with MS, carepartners, or Veterans.



National
Multiple Sclerosis
Society

Can Do MS Webinars

Join Can Do MS live from the convenience of your home for free, in-depth discussions that cover a variety of topics.

Date: 2nd Tuesday, Every Month

Time: 8 pm ET, 7 pm CT, 6 pm MT, 5 pm PT

Go to their webinar webpage for information on topics, speakers, and registration. Learn about their free, one-day virtual JUMPSTART programs.



Multiple Sclerosis Centers of Excellence

VA MS Center of Excellence East | Baltimore, MD & Washington, DC

VA MS Center of Excellence West | Seattle, WA & Portland, OR

Contact us at: MSCentersofExcellence@va.gov

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

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