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Toxic Wounds

Veterans for Common Sense educates and advocates regarding military toxic exposures and the Toxic Wounds that result from them.

Toxic exposures may also cause or be associated with [reproductive or generational health effects](#). Some major Toxic Wound cohorts are below.

MUSTARD GAS/LEWISITE EXPERIMENTS:

What: *Chemical warfare agent testing on U.S. military service member “volunteers”*

Who: As many as 60,000 U.S. troops

Where: Alabama, Canal Zone (Panama), Florida, Illinois, Maryland, North Carolina, Utah, Virginia and Australia, England, and New Guinea

When: 1943-45

Presumptives: Yes; [14 types of cancer and eye and respiratory conditions associated with mustard exposure](#)

Registries: None

HERBICIDE TESTS AND STORAGE:

What: *Agent Orange and other herbicides used in Vietnam were part of projects to test, dispose of, or store herbicides*

Who: Unknown number of U.S. troops

Where: 21 U.S. States, Puerto Rico, Cambodia, Canada, India, Korea, Laos, Thailand, and at sea

When: 1944-1970, and 1977 (at sea destruction)

Presumptives: Yes; [14 conditions](#)

Registries: [Agent Orange Registry health exam](#)

ATOMIC VETERANS:

What: *Atomic weapons tests involving U.S. military service member “volunteers”*

Who: Unknown numbers of U.S. troops

Where: South Pacific and western U.S. domestic atomic test sites

When: 1945-62

Presumptives: Yes; [23 types of cancer](#)

Registries: [Ionizing Radiation Registry](#)

FORT McCLELLAN EXPERIMENTS:

What: *Chemical warfare agent and prophylaxes testing on U.S. military “line of duty” service members*

Who: Unknown numbers of U.S. troops

Where: Alabama

When: 19??-1999

Presumptives: [No](#)

Registries: None

CAMP LEJEUNE DRINKING WATER:

What: *Two water-supply systems on the Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune in North Carolina were contaminated with the industrial solvents trichloroethylene (TCE) and perchloroethylene (PCE).*

Who: Unknown number of military service members, dependents, and base civilians

Where: Camp Lejeune, North Carolina

When: August 1, 1953 (VA recognizes January 1, 1957 for family health care) through December 31, 1987

Presumptives: Yes; [8 conditions](#)

Registries: None

EDGEWATER ARSENAL/ABERDEEN PROVING GROUND EXPERIMENTS:

What: *Chemical warfare agent, prophylaxes, and drug testing on U.S. military service member “volunteers”*

Who: At least 6,700 U.S. troops

Where: Maryland, U.S.

When: 1955-75

Presumptives: No (except [14 types of cancer and eye and respiratory conditions associated with mustard exposure](#))

Registries: None

VIETNAM WAR & AGENT ORANGE:

What: *Agent Orange and other herbicides*

Who: At least 3.5 million U.S. troops

Where: Southeast Asia; Korean demilitarized zone (DMZ); worldwide C-123 aircraft personnel

When: Vietnam, January 9, 1962 – May 7, 1975; Thailand, February 28, 1961 – May 7, 1975; Korean DMZ, April 1, 1968 – August 31, 1971; C-123 aircraft, 1972-82

Presumptives: Yes; [14 conditions](#)

Registries: [Agent Orange Registry health exam](#)

PROJECT 112/PROJECT SHAD:

(Shipboard Hazard And Defense)

What: A series of tests of U.S. warship vulnerability to biological and chemical warfare agents
Who: More than 5,800 U.S. military personnel, mostly Navy personnel and Marines; only some of the involved military personnel were aware of these tests at the time.
Where: Numerous locations
When: 1962-73
Presumptives: No
Registries: None

PERSIAN GULF WAR:

(Operations Desert Shield/Desert Storm)

What: A “veritable toxic soup” of numerous war theatre toxic exposures, including combinations of exposures resulting in [Gulf War Illness](#), experimental drugs and vaccines, Iraqi chemical warfare agents including Khamisiyah munitions depot demolitions, burning oil well fires and particulate, depleted uranium (DU), endemic diseases.

Who: Approximately 697,000 U.S. troops, unknown numbers of Coalition troops from partner countries, and local civilians similarly exposed

Where: Persian Gulf War theatre of operations

When: Aug. 2, 1990 – July 31, 1991 (“Gulf War”); Aug. 1, 1991-Present (“Southwest Asia” theatre of operations service)

Presumptives: Limited to [undiagnosed illness](#), [chronic multisymptom illnesses](#), and [nine endemic diseases](#). No specific chemical presumptives.

Registries:

- - - [Gulf War Registry Exam](#)
 - [Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry](#)
 - [Depleted Uranium Follow-Up Program](#)
 - [Toxic Embedded Fragment Surveillance Center](#)

GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM:

(Operations Enduring Freedom/Freedom’s Sentinel, Operations Iraqi Freedom/New Dawn, Operation Inherent Resolve, and successor operations)

What: Numerous war theatre toxic exposures, Iraqi chemical warfare agents, open air burn pits, hexavalent chromium at Qarmat Ali, sulfur fire at Al Mishraq, depleted uranium (DU), endemic diseases.

Who: Approximately 3 million U.S. troops, unknown numbers of Coalition troops from partner countries, and local civilians similarly exposed

Where: OEF/OFS (Afghanistan) and OIF/OND/OIR/successor operations (Iraq) theatres of operation

When: October 7, 2001-Present

Presumptives: Limited to [undiagnosed illness](#) (Persian Gulf theatre only), [chronic multisymptom illnesses](#) (Persian Gulf theatre only), and [nine endemic diseases](#) (Persian Gulf theatre and Afghanistan). No specific

chemical presumptives.

Registries:

- - - [VA Qarmat Ali Medical Surveillance Program](#)
 - [Gulf War Registry Exam](#)
 - [Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry](#)
 - [Depleted Uranium Follow-Up Program](#)
 - [Toxic Embedded Fragment Surveillance Center](#)
 - **Reproductive & Generational Effects**

Toxic exposures may cause or be associated with reproductive or generational health effects.

VA recognizes and offers support for the children of qualifying veterans affected by Agent Orange who have certain birth defects.

The National Academy of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine has opined that, “*there is inadequate or insufficient evidence to determine whether there is an association between parental exposure to the [chemicals of interest such as Agent Orange and other herbicides] and birth defects, childhood cancers, or disease in their children as they mature or in later generations.*” [[Veterans and Agent Orange: Update 2014](#)]

Nevertheless, VA has recognized that certain birth defects among veterans’ children are associated with veterans’ qualifying service that presumes exposures to Agent Orange or other herbicides.

- [Spina bifida \(except spina bifida occulta\)](#), a defect in the developing fetus that results in incomplete closing of the spine, is associated with veterans’ exposure to Agent Orange or other herbicides.
- [Birth defects in children of women Veterans](#) are associated with their wartime military service in Vietnam but are not associated with herbicide exposure.

MORE INFORMATION:

- VA: [Benefits for Veterans’ Children with Birth Defects](#)
- Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA): [Has Your Child or Grandchild’s Health Been Affected by Your Military Service?](#)

VA does not currently recognize or offers support for the children of veterans affected by Gulf War exposures who have birth defects.

A 2018 report of the National Academy of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) evaluated “the scientific and medical literature on reproductive and developmental effects and health outcomes associated with Gulf War and Post-9/11 exposures, and designates research areas requiring further scientific study on potential health effects in the descendants of veterans of any era.”

The NASEM report, entitled “[Gulf War and Health: Volume 11: Generational Health Effects of Serving in the Gulf War](#),” had numerous findings regarding adverse reproductive and generational health outcomes.

Those conclusions are summarized in the concise chart below, produced by Veterans for Common Sense from the NASEM report’s findings. You may also [download the chart in PDF format](#).

VA has not yet recognized any birth defects among Gulf War veterans’ children as associated with veterans’ qualifying Gulf War service.

VA does not currently recognize or offers support for the children of veterans affected by Camp Lejeune exposures who have birth defects.

Successive reports of the National Academy of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) evaluated the scientific and medical literature on health effects related to exposure to contaminants (solvents) in the drinking water at Camp Lejeune

The NASEM reports had numerous findings regarding adverse reproductive health outcomes and the potential for adverse health outcomes in infants and children exposed to the contaminated drinking water. The reports are as follows:

- NASEM 2009 – “[Contaminated Water Supplies at Camp Lejeune: Assessing Potential Health Effects](#)”
- NASEM 2015 – “[Review of VA clinical guidance for the health conditions identified by the Camp Lejeune legislation](#)”

VA has not yet recognized any birth defects among veterans’ children associated with veterans’ qualifying Camp Lejeune service.

VA does provide medical care to qualifying Camp Lejeune-exposed veterans, spouses, and children for 15 conditions:

Additionally, VA also has determined that 8 separate conditions are presumptive for VA service-connected disability claims for veterans.

MORE INFORMATION:

- VA’s Public Health webpage on [Camp Lejeune military exposures](#)
- VA: [Camp Lejeune Family Member Program webpage](#)

- [Category Archives: Burn Pits](#)

[Congress Pushes to Expand, Focus Burn Pits Treatment Research](#)

Posted on [May 3, 2019](#) by [Team VCS](#)

(Washington – May 3, 2019) – A bipartisan group of Congressional representatives has called for the creation of a new treatment research program relevant to veterans with toxic wounds resulting from exposure to massive open-air burn pits in Iraq, Afghanistan, ... [Continue reading →](#)

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[VCS assists with Burn Pits Policy Recommendations in Testimony](#)

Posted on [June 7, 2018](#) by [Team VCS](#)

Veterans for Common Sense has assisted Burn Pits 360 in policy recommendations for the written statement for the record for a Congressional hearing entitled: “An Assessment of the Potential Health Effects of Burn Pit Exposure among Veterans.” Burn Pits 360 ... [Continue reading →](#)

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[VCS fighting to protect Defense medical research](#)

Posted on [February 28, 2018](#) by [Team VCS](#)

(Washington — February 28, 2018) — Veterans for Common Sense this week was among 111 organizations to send a letter to Congressional leadership of the Armed Services committees expressing concern about possible renewed efforts to that would have a detrimental impact ... [Continue reading →](#)

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[VCS Helps Expose Cessation of Funding for Unique Burn Pit Exposure Research Program](#)

Posted on [December 26, 2015](#) by [Team VCS](#)

(Veterans for Common Sense – Dec. 26, 2015) – Veterans for Common Sense helped expose, in a series of news stories by Military.com reporters, that funding has been quietly dropped for a unique federal Burn Pit Exposure medical research program. The ... [Continue reading →](#)

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[**Senate panel approves burn pit registry**](#)

Posted on [September 13, 2012](#) by [Team VCS](#)

From Navytimes.com By Patricia Kime – Staff writer Posted : Wednesday Sep 12, 2012 11:27:38 EDT An effort to create a registry of service members and veterans who may have been exposed to airborne toxins while serving near open-air burn pits ... [Continue reading →](#)

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[**Inconclusive Report Does Little to Cool Down Burn Pit Controversy**](#)

Posted on [December 15, 2011](#) by [Team VCS](#)

December 2011 (US Medicine) – Whether exposure to war zone burn-pits causes long-term health issues has created heated debate among military officials, veterans, Congress members and currently deployed troops. Unfortunately, a long-awaited report does little to provide definitive answers or ... [Continue reading →](#)

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[**Burning Toxic Waste is Making U.S. Soldiers and Iraqis Sick, But the Pentagon Refuses to Admit It**](#)

Posted on [March 22, 2009](#) by [Team VCS](#)

Six years into the war, many U.S. bases in Iraq are still without incinerators, leaving open pits spewing toxic plumes over soldiers and civilians. March 18, 2009 – Acetaldehyde, Acrolien, Arsenic, Benzene, Carbon Monoxide, Ethylbenzene, Formaldehyde, Hydrogen Cyanide, Hydrogen Fluoride, ... [Continue reading →](#)

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[**Balad Burn Pit Update: Effects of Toxic Smoke Worry Troops Returning from Iraq – DoD Admits Problem, Then Denies Problem**](#)

Posted on [December 16, 2008](#) by [Team VCS](#)

December 15, 2008 – The pervasive smoke spewing from the junk heap at Balad Air Force Base in Iraq is causing many returning troops to be concerned about the effects on their long-term health. For four years, the burn pit ... [Continue reading →](#)

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[**Senator Feingold Wants Answers on Dangers to Troops from Toxic Waste from Iraq War Burn Pits**](#)

Posted on [November 18, 2008](#) by [Team VCS](#)

November 9, 2008 – Sen. Russ Feingold, D-Wis., has written to Gen. David Petraeus, the new chief of U.S. Central Command, demanding to be informed about any pending investigations into health problems for troops exposed to burn pit smoke in ... [Continue reading →](#)

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[**Oct 28: Highly Toxic Burn Pit in Balad Raises Specter of Gulf War Illnesses Among Iraq War Veterans**](#)

Posted on [October 28, 2008](#) by [Team VCS](#)

Burn pit at Balad raises health concerns; Troops say chemicals and medical waste burned at base are making them sick, but officials deny risk October 28, 2008 – An open-air “burn pit” at the largest U.S. base in Iraq may ... [Continue reading →](#)

Category Archives: Gulf War Updates

[**97 Members of Congress push for Gulf War Illness treatment research funds**](#)

Posted on [April 4, 2019](#) by [Team VCS](#)

(Washington – April 4, 2019) – With scientific advances now regularly breaking related to Gulf War Illness, 97 members of Congress pushed this week for more treatment research for the debilitating condition that affects as many as one in three veterans of the 1991 Gulf War.

Led by Representatives Gregorio Sablan (D-N. Marianas) and retired Lt. General Jack Bergman (R-Mich.), the bipartisan group of 97 members of the U.S. House sent the letter to the defense appropriators calling for “the necessary resources to continue this vital and effective” Gulf War Illness treatment research funding.

“By congressional design, [it] is a unique medical research program narrowly focused on the vision of improving the health and lives of Veterans with Gulf War Illness,” they wrote, calling it “a model of how to conduct treatment

oriented research to address a challenging illness” that “is succeeding where earlier programs failed.”

They also noted that... READ MORE: [Continue reading →](#)

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[VCS Advocacy for Gulf War Veterans Highlighted in Three News Stories](#)

Posted on [May 16, 2018](#) by [Team VCS](#)

A trio of Texas news articles highlights Gulf War veterans’ ongoing struggles with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the leading advocacy by Veterans for Common Sense on their behalf. A pair of May 12, 2018 news stories reported: ... [Continue reading →](#)

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[VCS fighting to protect Defense medical research](#)

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(Washington — February 28, 2018) — Veterans for Common Sense this week was among 111 organizations to send a letter to Congressional leadership of the Armed Services committees expressing concern about possible renewed efforts to that would have a detrimental impact ... [Continue reading →](#)

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[VCS Calls for Continued Defense Medical Research Funding](#)

Posted on [June 8, 2017](#) by [Team VCS](#)

(Washington, June 8, 2017) – Veterans for Common Sense today joined with more than 100 organizations in calling on Congress to provide continued support for the “critical and highly successful defense health research programs” of the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs (CDMRP) directed ... [Continue reading →](#)

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[VCS Supports Continuation of Gulf War Illness Treatment Research Program, Expresses Thanks](#)

Posted on [March 17, 2017](#) by [Team VCS](#)

(Washington – Mar. 16, 2017) – Veterans for Common Sense (VCS), a national veterans advocacy organization and national leader on military toxic exposures and Toxic Wounds, yesterday sent the following letter of support for the treatment-focused Gulf War Illness Research Program (GWIRP) to the bipartisan House ... [Continue reading →](#)

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[NSU Scientists Study Disease that Impacts Hundreds of Thousands of Gulf War Veterans](#)

Posted on [November 10, 2016](#) by [Team VCS](#)

Nova Southeastern University Researchers Receive More Than \$1.8 Million in Grants from U.S. Army to Examine Causes of Gulf War Illness FORT LAUDERDALE-DAVIE, Fla. – As the nation honors our veterans on November 11, we must pause to remember the ... [Continue reading →](#)

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[VCS Presents on Gulf War Guidelines to Federal VA Advisory Committee, Provides New Public Education Documents](#)

Posted on [August 8, 2016](#) by [Team VCS](#)

(Veterans for Common Sense – August 8, 2016) – Veterans for Common Sense Director Anthony Hardie today presented to a U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) federal advisory committee regarding the impetus behind a new federal relook of clinical guidelines ... [Continue reading →](#)

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[VCS Praises Senate Leadership for Preserving Medical Research](#)

Posted on [June 8, 2016](#) by [Team VCS](#)

(Washington – June 7, 2016) – Veterans for Common Sense praised Senate leaders for passing an amendment today to preserve federal medical research – including the federal, treatment-focused Gulf War Illness Research Program strongly supported by VCS and Gulf War ... [Continue reading →](#)

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[VCS Provides Written Testimony for Congressional Hearing on Gulf War Veterans' Claims Denials](#)

Posted on [March 24, 2016](#) by [Team VCS](#)

Veterans for Common Sense provided the following invited written testimony for a March 15, 2016 Congressional hearing on Gulf War veterans' benefits and disability claims denials. TESTIMONY: <https://archives-veterans.house.gov/submission-record/aanthony-hardie-gulf-war-veteran-and-director-veterans-common-sense> HEARING ARCHIVE: <https://docs.house.gov/Committee/Calendar/ByEvent.aspx?EventID=104497> Testimony archived text: SUBMISSION FOR THE RECORD OF ANTHONY HARDIE, GULF WAR ... [Continue reading →](#)

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[VA gets 'F' for Persian Gulf War claims approvals](#)

Posted on [March 15, 2016](#) by [Team VCS](#)

ARCHIVED TEXT SOURCE: https://www.armytimes.com/veterans/2016/03/15/va-gets-f-for-persian-gulf-war-claims-approvals/?utm_source=clavis ARCHIVED TEXT: Veterans VA gets 'F' for Persian Gulf War claims approvals By: Patricia Kime March 15, 2016 The percent of disability claims approved by the Veterans Affairs Department for Persian Gulf War-related illnesses has ... [Continue reading →](#)

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▪ **Archive**

- [September 2019](#) (1)
- [May 2019](#) (1)
- [April 2019](#) (1)
- [November 2018](#) (1)
- [August 2018](#) (3)
- [June 2018](#) (2)

▪

- [2019](#) (3)
- [2018](#) (16)
- [2017](#) (18)
- [2016](#) (18)
- [2015](#) (13)
- [2014](#) (22)
- [2013](#) (3)
- [2012](#) (316)
- [2011](#) (34)
- [2010](#) (5)
- [2009](#) (288)
- [2008](#) (1421)
- [2007](#) (424)
- [2006](#) (121)
- [2005](#) (618)
- [2004](#) (181)
- [2003](#) (257)
- [2002](#) (115)

▪ **Categories**

- [Burn Pits](#)
- [Gulf War Updates](#)
- [Legislative News](#)
- [Research](#)
- [Toxic Wounds](#)
- [Uncategorized](#)
- [VA Claims Updates](#)
- [VA Healthcare Crisis Updates](#)
- [VCS Congressional Testimony](#)
- [VCS Fact Sheets and Reports](#)
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- [Veteran Education Issues](#)

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 - [WordPress.org](#)