

WOMEN VETERANS HEALTH CARE

*You served, you deserve
★ the best care anywhere.*



Women Veterans: Bisexual Health Care

VA provides high quality, respectful care to Bisexual Veterans. In order to tailor healthcare services to your healthcare needs, it is important to have a conversation with your provider about your sexual identity. Your provider may discuss these healthcare concerns with you:

Sexually Transmitted Infections

Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) occur in sexually active bisexual women at a high rate. Safe sex reduces the risk of STIs. You can have an STI without symptoms. It is important that you get screened for STIs on a regular basis. The more partners you have in a year, the more often you should be screened.

Hepatitis Immunization and Screening

If you have sex with multiple partners (of any gender) you are at an increased risk of a STI with the viruses that cause hepatitis. These infections can be potentially fatal, and can lead to very serious long-term issues such as liver failure and liver cancer. Immunizations are available for Hepatitis A Virus and Hepatitis B Virus, and these are recommended for all sexually active people. Safe sex using protective tools such as condoms is the only means of prevention for the very serious Hepatitis C Virus. If you have Hepatitis C there are new, more effective treatments for that infection.

Fitness

Problems with body image are more common among bisexual women. Being overweight or obesity are problems that also affect many bisexual women. Being overweight/obese can lead to a number of health problems, including diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart disease and breast cancer.

Substance Use/Alcohol

Bisexual women may use substances and alcohol at a higher rate than the general population. This can raise your risk of cancer, liver disease and other health problems.

Depression

Depression and anxiety appear to affect bisexual women as well as Veterans at a higher rate than in the general population. VA has confidential mental health services available to for bisexual Veterans.

Breast and Cervical Cancer Care

Bisexual women may be at higher risk for breast and cervical cancer. Regular screenings can lead to early diagnosis when the disease is most curable.

Tobacco Use

In recent studies, researchers found that bisexual women use tobacco at much higher rates than their heterosexual counterparts. Tobacco-related health problems include lung disease and lung cancer, heart disease, and high blood pressure. VA has programs to help you quit smoking.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Program, Office of Patient Care Services



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Human Papilloma Virus (HPV)

Human papilloma virus (HPV) is the most common STI in the United States. It causes genital warts and cancer. The rate at which the infection can be spread between partners is very high. Safe sex should be practiced to reduce the infection rate. Bisexual women should get routine pap smears to screen for HPV.

Trauma Exposure

Some bisexual women experience violence in their intimate relationships. Other bisexual Veterans experience trauma during their military service or in their lives generally. VA offers access to counseling and other mental health services.

Women Veterans Program Managers: All VA medical centers and many Vet Centers have a designated Women Veterans Program Manager to help women Veterans access VA benefits and health care services. To find the VA medical center or Vet Center nearest you, call 1-877-222-8387 or visit www.va.gov/directory.

Women Veteran Call Center: Women Veterans can call 1-855-VA-WOMEN (1-855-829-6636) to ask questions about available VA services and resources.

LGBT Program Office: The Office of Patient Care Services has an LGBT program designed to assist LGBT Veterans in accessing quality health care. For more information visit our website at http://www.patientcare.va.gov/Lesbian_Gay_Bisexual_and_Transgender_LGBT_Veteran_Care.asp

Additional Resources:

Resource	Link
Gay and Lesbian Medical Association	http://www.glna.org
The Fenway Institute – The National LGBT Health Education Center	http://www.lgbthealtheducation.org
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – LGBT Health	http://www.cdc.gov/lgbthealth
VA's Office of Patient Care Services LGBT Program	http://www.patientcare.va.gov/Lesbian_Gay_Bisexual_and_Transgender_LGBT_Veteran_Care.asp
Women's Health Services	www.womenshealth.va.gov

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Defining
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