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Agent Orange/Dioxin

Agent Orange is a highly toxic herbicide used by the U.S. military during the Vietnam War to defoliate hiding places used by the enemy and to clear the perimeters of military installations. Although colorless, it is known as “Agent Orange” because of an orange-colored band painted on the drums used to store and transport it.

After years of advocacy led by Vietnam Veterans of America, Congress enacted into law the Agent Orange Act of 1991. This legislation empowered the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to declare certain maladies as “presumptive” to exposure to Agent Orange/dioxin and enable Vietnam veterans, as well as some veterans who served along the demilitarized zone in Korea during the late 1960s, to receive treatment and compensation for these health conditions. Service-connected benefits, however, may also be granted for other maladies not yet recognized as presumptive service-connected health conditions.

Presumptive Service Connected Illnesses Recognized by the VA As Connected to Agent Orange Herbicide Exposure

- Acute Peripheral Neuropathy: a temporary dysfunction of the nervous system characterized by involuntary “tingling” or numbness in the extremities
- Adult Onset Type II Diabetes Mellitus (and subsequent complications caused by): non-insulin dependent and characterized by high blood sugars
- AL Amyloidosis: a rare group of diseases that results from the abnormal deposition of a particular protein called amyloid in various tissues of the body
- *Chloracne: an acne-like eruption on the skin due to prolonged exposure to certain chlorinated compounds
- Hodgkins Disease: a tumor found in the lymph nodes characterized by increasing enlargement of the lymph nodes, liver, and spleen and accompanied by progressive anemia
- Ischemic (or ischaemic) heart disease: a heart condition resulting when the arteries that bring blood and oxygen to the heart are blocked. There may be a buildup of cholesterol and other substances, called plaque, in the arteries that bring oxygen to heart muscle tissue. Over time, the heart muscle does not work well, and it is more difficult for the heart to fill and release blood. It is the most common cause of congestive heart failure.
- Non-Hodgkins Lymphoma: a rare type of cancer which causes malignant tumors of the lymph nodes, distinguished from Hodgkins disease by the absence of giant Reed-Sternberg cells
- Parkinson’s disease: a neurological disease which limits a person’s ability to control some of his or her muscles. It’s caused by a slow, gradual loss of certain cells in the brain which manufacture a chemical called dopamine. This chemical is needed for muscles to work normally. In many people, Parkinson’s disease causes movement and muscle problems and may be accompanied by slight, uncontrolled shaking of the arms and legs.
- *Peripheral Neuropathy: a dysfunction of the nervous system involving either the somatic nerves or the autonomic nervous system (see Acute Peripheral Neuropathy); can cause sensory loss, atrophy, and muscle weakness
- *Porphyria Cutanea Tarda: characterized by skin lesions on exposed portions of the body and pigment changes in the skin; liver disease occurs in some patients
- Spina bifida in Children Conceived After Veteran First Arrived in Vietnam: characterized by a defective closure of the spinal chord in which the chord may be exposed and/or protrude.
Sub-acute Peripheral Neuropathy: a nervous system disorder either acute (temporary) or chronic (long-term) – see acute peripheral neuropathy and peripheral neuropathy

Cancers –

- Cancer of the Bronchus: a malignant tumor found in the bronchus, an extension of the windpipe (trachea) connecting to the lungs
- Cancer of the Larynx: a malignant tumor found in the voice box (larynx)
- Cancer of the Lung: a malignant tumor found in the lungs
- Cancer of the Prostate: a malignant tumor found in the prostate gland
- Cancer of the Trachea: a malignant tumor found in the windpipe (trachea)
- Soft Tissue Sarcoma (a group of soft tissue cancers characterized by malignant tumors which develop on muscles and connective tissue, or in body fat)
Adult Fibrosarcoma: a tumor formed from connective tissue
- Alveolar Soft Part Sarcoma: a sarcoma found in the aveoli, the sac-like ducts in the lungs
- Angiosarcoma: a tumor occurring in the breast and skin and believed to originate from blood vessels
- Chronic Lymphocytic Leukemia: characterized by progressive increase in production of white blood cells

- Clear Cell Sarcoma of Aponeuroses: a sarcoma found at the end of a muscle where it becomes a tendon
- Clear Cell Sarcoma of Tendons: a sarcoma found in the tendons
- Congenital Fibrosarcoma: a malignant tumor formed before birth and derived from connective tissue
- Dermatofibrosarcoma: a relatively slow-growing skin tumor consisting of one or more firm nodules
- Ectomesenchymoma: a tumor found in certain parts of the skin
- Epithelioid Malignant Leiomyosarcoma: a malignant tumor derived from smooth muscle found in the layer covering the muscle
- Epithelioid Malignant Schwannoma: a moderately firm, benign tumor found in the layers of membrane covering surfaces inside the body cavity caused by too many Schwann cells growing in a disorderly manner
- Epithelioid Sarcoma: a tumor found in the membrane covering surfaces inside the body cavity
- Extraskkeletal Ewing's Sarcoma: a tumor outside the bone consisting of small rounded cells
- Hairy cell leukemia: a slow-growing form of chronic lymphocytic leukemia (CLL) called such because the leukemic lymphocytes have short, thin projections on their surfaces that look like hairs when examined under a microscope. Hairy cell leukemia is caused by an abnormal change in a B lymphocyte (a type of white cell).
- Hemangiosarcoma: a tumor derived from blood vessels and lining blood-filled spaces
- Infantile Fibrosarcoma: a tumor formed as a child derived from fibrous connective tissue
- Leiomyosarcoma: a tumor derived from smooth muscle
- Liposarcoma: a tumor that may occur anywhere in the body consisting of irregular fat cells
- Lymphangiosarcoma: a tumor derived from blood vessels
- Lymphoma: a malignant tumor of the lymph nodes
- Malignant Fibrous Histiocytoma: a type of tumor found in connective tissue
- Malignant Giant Cell Tumor of the Tendon Sheath: a tumor found in the membrane of tendons
- Malignant Glandular Schwannoma: a moderately firm malignant tumor in the glands caused by too many Schwann cells growing in a disorderly pattern
- Malignant Glomus Tumor: a tumor found in the tiny nodes (glomuli) in the the nailbed, pads of fingers, toes, ears, hands, feet, and other body organs
- Malignant Hemangiopericytoma: a tumor characterized by rapidly growing fat cells formed in blood vessels and lining blood-filled spaces
- Malignant Mesenchymoma: a malignant tumor in the embryonic tissue or fluid
- Malignant Shwannoma with Rhabdomyoblastic: a moderately firm malignant tumor found in skeletal muscles resulting from the rapid disorderly growth pattern of Schwann cells
- Multiple Myeloma: cancer of specific bone marrow cells characterized by bone marrow tumors in the skeletal system
- Proliferating Angiodotheliomatosis: increasing numbers of benign tumors in blood cells, often causing skin discoloration
- Rhabdomysarcoma: tumors derived from skeletal muscle
- Sarcoma: tumors arising in connective tissue, bone, cartilage, or muscle
- Synovial Sarcoma: a tumor found in the lubricating fluid surrounding joints and tendons

*subject to time requirements for purposes of filing claims

NOTE: This list may change over time. For official updates, see Title 38 Code of Federal Regulations Section 3.303(e) "Disease associated with exposure to certain herbicide agents"

**Birth Defects* Recognized by the VA
As Connected to Agent Orange Herbicide Exposure**

- Spina Bifida: children born to either male or female Vietnam veterans; Spina Bifida Occulta not included

Children born to female Vietnam veterans

- Achondroplasia: produces a type of dwarfism
- Cleft Lip and Cleft Palate
- Congenital Heart Disease
- Congenital Talipes Equinovarus: clubfoot
- Esophageal and Intestinal Atresia
- Hallerman-Streiff Syndrome: premature small growth and other related defects
- Hip Dysplasia
- Hirschprung's Disease: congenital megacolon
- Hydrocephalus Due to Aqueductal Stenosis,
- Hypospadias: abnormal opening in the urethra
- Imperforate Anus
- Neural Tube Defects
- Poland Syndrome: webbed fingers
- Pyloric Stenosis
- Syndactyly: fused digits
- Tracheoesophageal Fistula
- Undescended Testicles
- Williams syndrome: thyroid defects

Not covered are conditions that are congenital malignant neoplasms, chromosomal disorders, or developmental disorders. In addition, conditions that do not result in permanent physical or mental disability are not covered birth defects.

NOTE: this list may change over time. Additional information about birth defects and Agent Orange exposure can be found online at [http:// www.birthdefects.org](http://www.birthdefects.org) maintained by the National Birth Defect Registry.

To file a VA claim based on exposure to Agent Orange, contact a service officer at the following link:
<http://www.va.gov/ogc/apps/accreditation/index.html>