Ask a Pharmacist App

User Manual

User Manual

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Overview

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The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Ask a Pharmacist mobile application (app) allows Veterans to access information about VA pharmacies and medications easily – with the comfort of knowing the information is valid and from trusted sources. If Veterans also have a verified My Health*e*Vet account (credentials for VA's personal health record), they can link to VA pharmacy and Secure Messaging services via the app, allowing them to quickly go to their personal medication and health information as well as learn about pharmacy-related topics.

This app is available for iOS, Android and Windows operating systems, and is supported by these Internet browsers:

1. Internet Explorer 11 and higher

2. Safari 7 and higher

3. Google Chrome 40 and higher

4. Mozilla Firefox 36 and higher

This user manual provides an in-depth, step-by-step guide for using the Ask a Pharmacist App.

The Basics

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Prerequisites

Anyone can access the informational resources about medications in the Ask a Pharmacist App. However, to use some of the features the Ask a Pharmacist App helps you learn about, you must be a Veteran receiving VA care and have an ID.me, DS Logon Level 2 (Premium), or My Health*e*Vet Premium Account credentials. If you do not have any of these accounts, or you are not sure, visit ***https://mobile.va.gov/login-information*** for more information.

- ID.me Account users: Access Ask A Pharmacist > You will arrive at an Identity Provider Selection screen, and tap **ID.me** > You will arrive at a Secure Login Redirect screen > Tap **Accept** to proceed (or tap **Cancel** to return to the Identity Provider Selection screen) > You will arrive at an ID.me Sign In screen > Enter your email address and password, and tap **Sign in** > You will see a license agreement screen > Read the End User License Agreement ("EULA") and Notice of Privacy Practices ("Notice") > Tap **Accept**, and you will proceed into the app.

- DS Logon Level 2 (Premium) Account users: Access Ask A Pharmacist > You will arrive at an Identity Provider Selection screen, and tap **DS Logon** > You will arrive at a Secure Login Redirect screen > Tap **Accept** to proceed (or tap **Cancel** to return to the Identity Provider Selection screen) > You will arrive at a DS Logon screen > Enter your DS Logon Level 2 (Premium) Account username and password > Tap **Login** > You will see a license agreement screen > Read the End User License Agreement ("EULA") and Notice of Privacy Practices ("Notice") > Tap **Accept**, and you will proceed into the app.

- My Health*e*Vet Premium Account users: Access Ask A Pharmacist > You will arrive at an Identity Provider Selection screen, and tap **My HealtheVet** > You will arrive at a Login to My Health*e*Vet screen > Enter your My Health*e*Vet Premium Account User ID and password > Tap **Login** > You will see a license agreement screen > Read the End User License Agreement ("EULA") and Notice of Privacy Practices ("Notice") > Tap **Accept**, and you will proceed into the app.

NOTE: If this is your first time using a VA app that requires you to log in using account credentials, you may have to provide your Right of Access as part of the log in process. The Ask A Pharmacist App will prompt you if this is necessary. If it is necessary, you will be taken to a Right of Access screen > Read the Request for Access to Your Health Information > If you would like to continue, tap **Next** > You will go to a Review screen > Read VA Form 10-5345a > If you agree, tap **Verify** to "sign" the form > You will proceed into the app.

Setting up a My Health*e*Vet account for seamless connection with the app

Some Ask a Pharmacist App features conveniently connect you to tracking or messaging features in My Health*e*Vet where you can access your health information. However, you have to be a Veteran receiving VA care and have an Advanced or Premium My Health*e*Vet account to use these features. To take full advantage of VA's health care tools and ensure your app seamlessly connects to My Health*e*Vet, be sure your My Health*e*Vet account type has the level of access you need to use the features in My Health*e*Vet - which is a Premium account. Here is an overview of the process to create and upgrade a My Health*e*Vet account:

1. Create a Basic My Health*e*Vet account by completing the ***registration page***. When you register as a VA Patient, your profile information is linked to VA/DoD records. When this happens, you are given an Advanced Account (an Advanced Account is required to refill prescriptions).

2. Once successfully registered with an Advanced Account, you can choose to upgrade to a Premium account to get access to all the features in My Health*e*Vet (e.g., a Premium My Health*e*Vet account is required to use Secure Messaging). You can upgrade your account either through:

   a. In-Person Authentication* (IPA) at your local VA Medical Center or Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC).

   b. Online Authentication* through www.ebenefits.va.gov. This is for users who have a connected eBenefits DS Logon Premium account & My Health*e*Vet VA Patient account.

   (*Authentication means you are verifying your identity.)

To learn more about the three My Health*e*Vet **account types**, read the complete steps for **upgrading your account** and access the **VA Release of Information** (ROI) form (10-5345a-MHV). Then when you select the link within the Ask a Pharmacist App that takes you to these special features in My Health*e*Vet, you will be asked to log in with your User ID and Password. If you have already logged into My Health*e*Vet in the same session you are using the Ask a Pharmacist App, you will not have to log into My Health*e*Vet again, unless you have been inactive in My Health*e*Vet for 20** minutes. (**As of January 2016, the timeout for inactivity is 20 minutes, and this is subject to change.)

Logging in

When you first access the app, you will see an End User License Agreement (EULA) > Read the EULA, and tap **Accept** > You will go to the Ask a Pharmacist App home screen. The next time you access the app, you will go directly to the home screen.

> **NOTE:** You can access the Ask a Pharmacist App either directly from your mobile device or through the VA Launchpad. The VA Launchpad contains links to all VA Apps that access information from your VA Electronic Health Record (EHR). By signing into the VA Launchpad once with your DS Logon Level 2 (Premium) Account, you can access multiple apps without signing into each app separately. If you are accessing the Ask a Pharmacist App through the VA Launchpad and have already signed into another app, you will not need to re-enter your credentials.

End User Licensing Agreement

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS ("VA")

SOFTWARE END USER LICENSE AGREEMENT

By agreeing to have any of VA's software products installed on to your device and by subsequent use of the Licensed Software, you agree to comply with the terms of this general End User License Agreement ("EULA") where no specific agreement is in place between VA and the user of the software. If you do not agree to the terms of this EULA, do not install or use the Licensed Software but uninstall it from your device. This EULA applies to any upgrades and supplements to the original Licensed Software provided and is referred to on your opening screen.

1. The Licensed Software is owned by VA. The Licensed Software is licensed, not sold, only on the terms of this EULA. Acceptance and installation of the software indicates your acceptance of the terms and conditions of this EULA.
2. Upon installation of the Licensed Software, you will acquire the right to use the Licensed Software, directly from VA. You assume responsibility for the selection of the program to achieve your intended results, and for the installation, use and results obtained from the Licensed Software.
3. VA and you acknowledge that this Agreement is concluded between VA and you only, and not with Apple. VA is solely responsible for the Licensed Software and its content.
4. In consideration of your acceptance of the terms and conditions contained in this EULA, VA grants you a non-exclusive license to use the Licensed Software and the associated documentation for your own needs on one device. You are not licensed to rent, lease, transfer, or distribute the Licensed Software.
5. Title to the Licensed Software, including media and documentation, remain with VA. You may not copy, reproduce or make data transmissions, in whole or in part, except as is necessary for back-up or archival purposes. You may not reverse engineer, translate, disassemble, decompile the Licensed Software or create similar software in whole or in part.
6. The license is effective upon acceptance and installation of the Licensed Software and shall continue until terminated. You may terminate it at any time by uninstalling the Licensed Software. VA has the right to terminate this Agreement if you fail to comply with any term or condition of this EULA. Upon termination you shall stop all use of the Software and uninstall the Licensed Software.
7. Confidentiality obligations pertaining to the Licensed Software will survive any termination of this EULA, to include the application, design, and functionality.
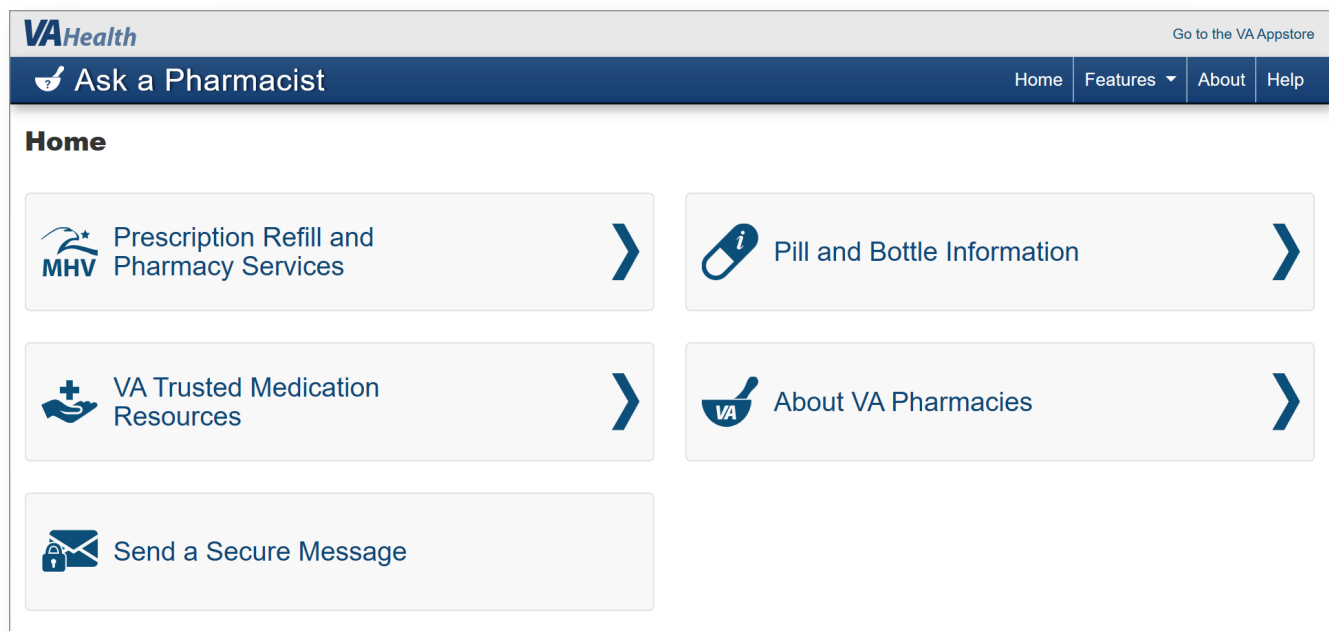
Getting to know the screen

When you log into the Ask a Pharmacist App, the home screen will have two main ways to move through the app: the horizontal navigation bar at the top, and the five buttons on the home screen.

The navigation bar includes:

- Home

- Features – access the same features as the five buttons on the home screen

- About – background information about the app

- Help – access to help hotlines and the user manual on the VA App Store

The five buttons on the Home screen give you access to the app's main features:

- Prescription Refill and Pharmacy Services

- Pill and Bottle Information

- VA Trusted Medication Resources

- About VA Pharmacies

- Send a Secure Message
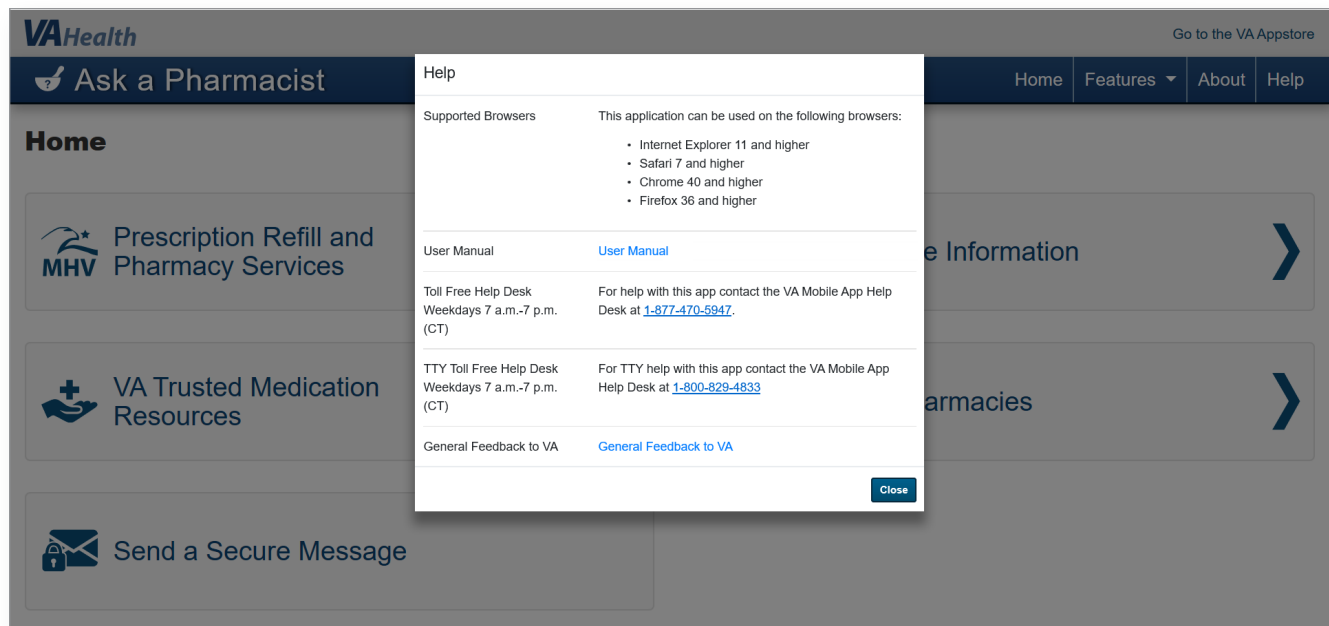

Learning about the app

In the horizontal navigation bar at the top of the Home screen, tap **About** > A pop-up About box will appear, which provides background information about the app > Read the information, and tap **Close**.

Accessing help for the app

In the horizontal navigation bar at the top of the Home screen, tap **Help** > A pop-up Help box will appear, which provides:

- Supported Browsers – The internet options on which the app works best.

- User Manual – To access this User Manual from the app, tap **User Manual** > You will go directly to the app page featuring the User Manual.

- Toll Free Help Desk – The number and operating hours of the VA Mobile App Help Desk.

- TTY Toll Free Help Desk – The number and operating hours for TTY help.

- General Feedback to VA – To let VA know what you think about the app and the VA Mobile Health program, tap **General Feedback to VA** > You will navigate away from the app and to a VA Mobile Health App Feedback website where you can take a survey and submit your comments about the app.

To close the Help box, tap **Close**.

VA*Health*		Go to the VA Appstore
Ask a Pharmacist		Home Features ▾ About Help

Home

Help

Supported Browsers	This application can be used on the following browsers:
	• Internet Explorer 11 and higher
	• Safari 7 and higher
	• Chrome 40 and higher
	• Firefox 36 and higher
User Manual	User Manual
Toll Free Help Desk Weekdays 7 a.m.-7 p.m. (CT)	For help with this app contact the VA Mobile App Help Desk at 1-877-470-5947.
TTY Toll Free Help Desk Weekdays 7 a.m.-7 p.m. (CT)	For TTY help with this app contact the VA Mobile App Help Desk at 1-800-829-4833
General Feedback to VA	General Feedback to VA

MHV   Prescription Refill and Pharmacy Services   e Information ❯

VA Trusted Medication Resources   armacies ❯

Send a Secure Message

Close

Prescription Refill and Pharmacy Services

Learn about prescription refill and pharmacy services, including the ability to refill and track your VA prescriptions.

VA *Health*   Go to the VA Appstore

🥄 Ask a Pharmacist   Home   Features ▾   About   Help

❮ **Prescription Refill and Pharmacy Services**

Prescription History

When you log in to My HealtheVet using your Advanced or Premium account, you can choose Prescription History to view a list of your past VA prescribed medications.

Rx Refill

When you log in to My HealtheVet using your Advanced or Premium account, you can manage your VA prescription refills online and view their status.

Rx Refill Guide

For more information on VA Prescription Refills, also known as Rx Refills, visit the Rx Refill Guide.

Track My Medications

When you log in to My HealtheVet using your Advanced or Premium account, you may Track Delivery of your VA prescriptions filled by a VA Mail Order Pharmacy and mailed within the last 45 days.

FAQs - My HealtheVet

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) provide a group of commonly asked questions and answers about features in My HealtheVet.

Medical Library

My HealtheVet provides two extensive, online medical libraries for you to learn more about your health and stay healthy:
The Veterans Health Library is designed and available to all Veterans, their family members, and the public, no matter where the Veteran receives care and MedLine Plus® is the online resource from the National Library of Medicine located at the National Institutes of Health. MedLine Plus® offers a wealth of information on health promotion, conditions, and treatments to help you take control of your own health.

Medication Articles on My HealtheVet

Read medication and pharmacy-related articles from My HealtheVet.

Send a Secure Message

You can use Secure Messaging on My HealtheVet to communicate online with your health care teams and other medical center departments.

Accessing prescription refill and pharmacy services

Either on the home screen or from the Features drop-down menu, tap **Prescription Refill and Pharmacy Services** > You will go to a Prescription Refill and Pharmacy Services screen > Tap on the names of the kinds of services you would like to access:

- **Prescription History** – You will go to a page on the My Health*e*Vet website that provides you with information about how to log into My Health*e*Vet to view a list of your past VA prescribed medications. If you have already logged into My Health*e*Vet in the same session you are using the Ask a Pharmacist App, you will not have to log into My Health*e*Vet again, unless you have been inactive in My Health*e*Vet for 15 minutes.

- **Rx Refill** – You will go to a page on the My Health*e*Vet website that provides a list of FAQs regarding the VA (Rx) Prescription Tracker.

- **Rx Refill Guide** – You will go to a page on the My Health*e*Vet website where you can learn about refilling your VA prescriptions.

- **Track My Medications** – You will go to a Track My Medications screen > Tap either **Prescription Tracker-FAQ**, **UPS My Choice** or **USPS** > You will go to the service's website where you can track your prescription deliveries.

- **FAQs-My Health*e*Vet** – You will go to a page on the My Health*e*Vet website about commonly asked questions and answers and features in My Health*e*Vet.

- **Medical Library** – You will go to a page on the My Health*e*Vet website where you can access resources in two different online medical libraries to help you learn more about your health and ways to stay healthy.

- **Medication Articles on My Health*e*Vet** – You will go to a screen that lists the articles about medications that are on the My Health*e*Vet website > Tap the name of the article you would like to read > You will go to a page that features the article.

- **Send a Secure Message** – You will go to a page on the My Health*e*Vet website where you may learn about sending Secure Messages to your VA care team.

When you click on a link that takes you to a site that is not part of the Ask a Pharmacist App, a pop-up box will appear, informing you that you will be leaving the app and going to an external website > Tap **Continue** > You will go to the website with the information, which will usually be a page on the My Health*e*Vet website. To return to the Ask a Pharmacist App from the external site, tap the back arrow on your device or browser. **NOTE:** Most of these links will take you to information about these features on the My Health*e*Vet website. However, to use the features themselves within the My Health*e*Vet website, you will have to log in with your My Health*e*Vet credentials.
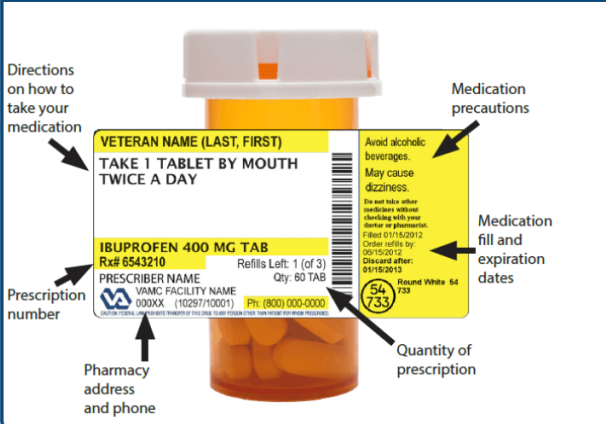
Pill and Bottle Information

Learn how to read a prescription label and identify pills by sight.

Accessing Pill and Bottle Information

Either on the home screen or from the Features drop-down menu, tap **Pill and Bottle Information** > You will go to a Pill and Bottle Information screen > Tap the name of the type of information you would like to view:

- **Pill Bottle Information** – You will go to a screen that provides a diagram of a label to help you interpret the information, as well as some medication safety tips.

- **Pill Identification** – A pop-up box will appear, informing you that you will be leaving the app and going to an external website > Tap **Continue** > A pop-up message box about medication emergencies will appear > Tap **OK** > You will go to a National Library of Medicine pillbox site, which provides images and information to help you identify pills by sight.

VA Trusted Medication Resources

Access reliable, VA-approved resources about types of drugs and administering and disposing of medications.

Ask a Pharmacist   Home | Features ▾ | About | Help

❮ **VA Trusted Medication Resources**

Consumer Drug, Herbal & Supplement Information

View and/or submit a voluntary report of adverse events that you observe or suspect for human medical products, including serious drug side effects, product use errors, product quality problems, and therapeutic failures.

FAQs - VA National Medication Formulary

Ask A Pharmacist provides links to general questions and answers on medications and medication management from trusted resources.

Know Your Medication Label

A standardized patient-centric label was created to increase each Veteran's understanding of how to take his or her medications.

Pill Identification

This resource will aid you in the identification of unknown pills (oral solid dosage form medications). It combines images of pills with appearance and other information to enable you to visually search for and identify oral solid dosage form medications.

Drug Interactions and Adverse Drug Events

Explains the mechanism of each drug interaction, the level of significance of the interaction (major, moderate or minor), and in certain cases, can provide the recommended course of action to manage the interaction. Provides trusted source for adverse drug events, drug interactions, and drug allergy information.

How to Properly Administer a Medication

Your medicine can only work correctly if it is administered properly in the body. This link takes you to helpful illustrations that show the right way to use eye, ear, and nose drops; eye ointments; inhalers; and suppositories.

Medication Disposal

How to stay safe when disposing of unused medicines

Accessing trusted medication resources

Either on the home screen or from the Features drop-down menu, tap **VA Trusted Medication Resources** > You will go to a VA Trusted Medication Resources screen > Tap on the names of the kinds of services:

- **Consumer Drug, Herbal & Supplement Information** – You will have to tap the names of the subcategories of information > When you reach your final selection, a pop-up box will appear, informing you that you will be leaving the app and going to an external website > Tap **Continue** > You will go to the site with information and reviews on consumer drugs, herbal and supplemental information.

- **Drug Interactions and Adverse Drug Events** – You will have to tap the names of the subcategories of information > When you reach your final selection, a pop-up box will appear, informing you that you will be leaving the app and going to an external website > Tap **Continue** > You will go to the site with the information on how drugs interact with each other and side effects.

- **FAQ-VA National Medication Formulary** – You will go to a FAQs screen that provides you with answers to general questions about medications and medication management.

- **How to Properly Administer a Medication** – A pop-up box will appear, informing you that you will be leaving the app and going to an external website > Tap **Continue** > You will go to a Safe Medication site where you can learn more about how to administer medications.

- **Know Your Medication Label** – You will go to a screen that provides a diagram of a label to help you interpret the information, as well as some medication safety tips.

- **Medication Disposal** – A pop-up box will appear, informing you that you will be leaving the app and going to an external website > Tap **Continue** > You will go to the VA Pharmacy Benefits Management Services website for more information on how to stay safe when disposing medication.

- **Pill Identification** – A pop-up box will appear, informing you that you will be leaving the app and going to an external website > Tap **Continue** > A pop-up message box about medication emergencies will appear > Tap **OK** > You will go to a National Library of Medicine pillbox site, which provides images and information to help you identify pills by sight.

About VA Pharmacies

Easily locate your VA pharmacy, and learn how VA pharmacies operate.

VA *Health*   Go to the VA Appstore

🥣 Ask a Pharmacist   Home | Features ▾ | About | Help

❮ **How Do VA Pharmacies Operate?**

Prescription drug services are a major component of outpatient services provided to eligible patients of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). These services include direct and indirect patient medication counseling, drug and supply dispensing services, and clinical pharmacist activities as a component of the interdisciplinary health care team.VA Pharmacies are committed to providing exceptional quality and service and strive to be the healthcare provider of choice. In an effort to provide this level of service for ALL of our Veterans, we ask that you use our service in the following ways:

- At the pharmacist's professional discretion, a short supply (partial prescription) of any new or immediate need medication may be provided for pick-up at our Outpatient Pharmacies. The majority of veterans receive all non-immediate need medications through mail order.
- All applicable prescriptions and refills will be processed through our mail order pharmacy system. We ask that refill requests be at least 10 days prior to running out of medication using the automated telephone refill (ATR) system or MyHealtheVet
- It is VHA policy that all Veterans receiving care at more than one VHA facility must have care coordinated by the "preferred facility", and that non-preferred facilities must expedite care provided to traveling Veterans with unexpected medical needs. These needs include the ability to obtain refills for prescriptions from their preferred VHA facility.
- No prescription can be filled for more than a 3 month (90-day) supply of medication. No prescription may exceed 12 months of therapy (including refills). For some prescriptions, a one- month (30 days) or less limitation may be established.
  See Definition of Controlled Substance Schedules (DEA)
- Prescription refills for recurring and/or continuous need medications and medical supplies must be dispensed in accordance with the authorization of the provider. Local facility policy may further limit the number of refills to the next scheduled clinic visit. *Prescriptions can be refilled only on a request from the patient and must not be automatically dispatched.*
- Prescriptions written by one VA facility for dispensing by another VA facility is discouraged. The facility of the provider prescribing the medication or supply is responsible for all dispensing. This does not apply to prescriptions written at a physically separate location of the same facility.
- All patients, including those discharged from inpatient facilities, are to be educated about their medications prior to, or at the time of, dispensing. Such counseling needs to be tailored to the patient by focusing on their individualized drug regimen.
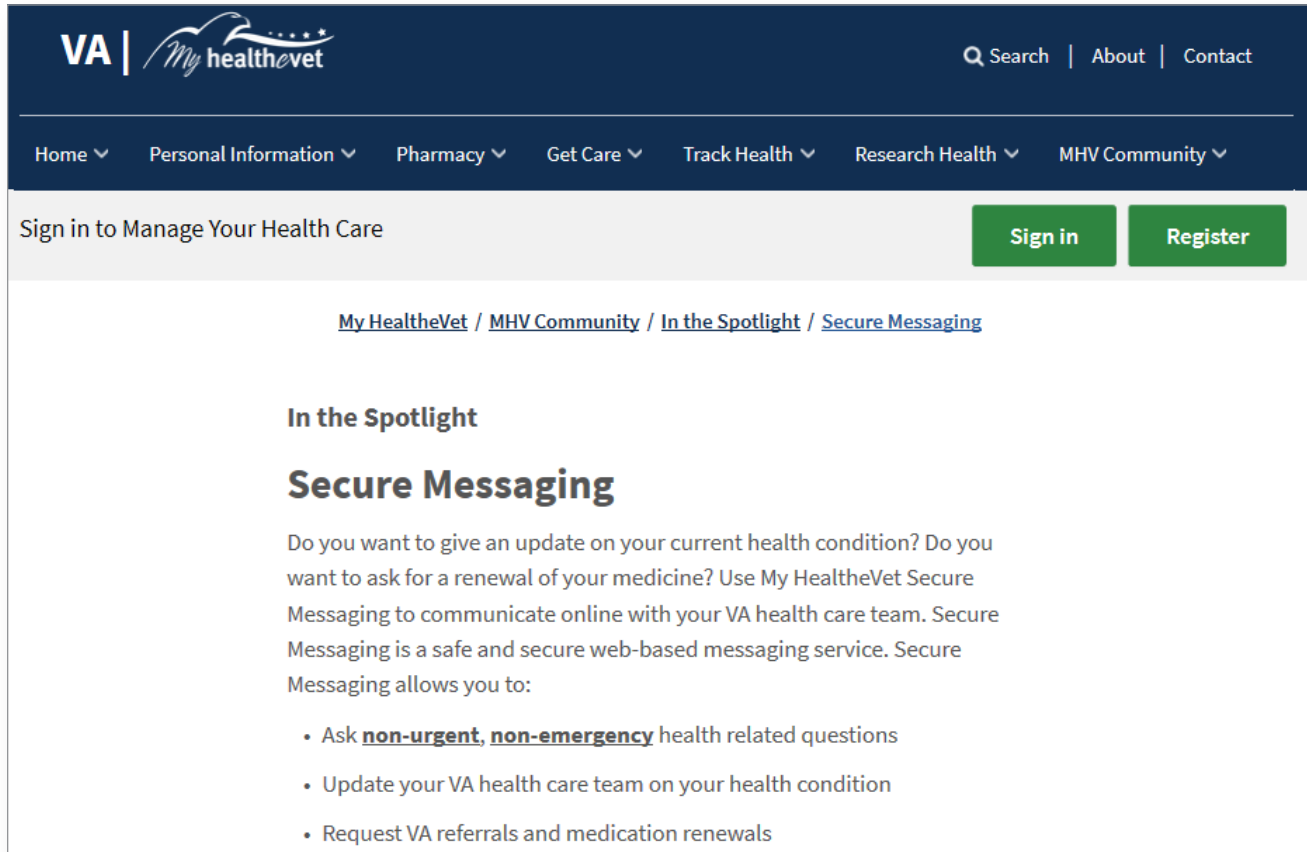

Accessing information about VA pharmacies

Either on the home screen or from the Features drop-down menu, tap **About VA Pharmacies** > You will go to an About VA Pharmacies screen > Tap on the names of the kinds of information:

- **Find My Facility** – A pop-up box will appear, informing you that you will be leaving the app and going to an external website > Tap **Continue** > You will go to the VA Facility Location website where you can select the type of location you're looking for and then go to a map with a search feature.

- **How VA Pharmacies Operate** – You will go to a How Do VA Pharmacies Operate? screen with more information.

- **How VA Pharmacists Help Veterans** – You will go to a How VA Pharmacies Help Veterans screen with more information.

Send a Secure Message

Learn about sending a Secure Message to your VA care team.

Accessing My Health*e*Vet's Secure Messaging feature

Either on the home screen or from the Features drop-down menu, tap **Send a Secure Message** > A pop-up box will appear, informing you that you will be leaving the app and going to an external website > Tap **Continue** > You will go to a webpage on My Health*e*Vet where you learn about sending Secure Messages to your VA care team. **NOTE:** To send a Secure Message, you have to have a My Health*e*Vet Premium account, and then log into My Health*e*Vet with your credentials to use the feature within the site.

Help and Additional Information

Additional Training Materials for the Ask a Pharmacist App

In addition to the information under the Help section, more resources, such as a Slideshow and FAQs, are available at **mobile.va.gov/app/ask-a-pharmacist**.

Help Desk Information

If you need assistance with the Ask a Pharmacist App, dial 1-877-470-5947 to speak with a VA representative. For TTY assistance, dial 711. For clinical questions regarding your personal medical information, please contact your VA care team.

Emergencies

You should never use this app in an emergency. If you encounter an emergency, call your local medical center or dial 911. If you feel your information may have been compromised, contact your local VA facility to obtain the contact information for your Privacy Officer. To locate your local VA facility, visit VA's Facility Locator: **http://www.va.gov/directory/guide/home.asp?isflash=1**.

Appendices

Appendix #1: Project References

This app was developed by Hewlett Packard according to an approved concept paper. The app was tested in a demo environment to ensure optimal functionality. Subject matter experts who served in the Ask a Pharmacist App's creation are: The Hewlett Packard Team.

Appendix #2: Glossary

App – An application, or software program, that can be accessed through a website or mobile device and is designed to fulfill a particular purpose.

DoD – Department of Defense

DS Logon (Department of Defense Self-Service Logon) – A secure logon ID, created by the Department of Defense (DoD), that verifies the identities of individuals affiliated with DoD or the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and allows them to access secure websites and digital resources across DoD and VA using a single username and password.

> **DS Logon Level 1** (Basic) Account: Provides limited access to website features.

> **DS Logon Level 2** (Premium) Account: Offers the highest level of access to website features. (**NOTE:** You must have a DS Logon Level 2 (Premium) Account to use VA's Mobile Apps.)

Electronic Health Record (EHR) – A digital record of a patient's treatment plan and health care interactions with his or her providers.

EULA – End User License Agreement.

My Health*e***Vet** – An online resource created by VA that allows Veterans and Caregivers to create a personal health record and access educational health care information and acts as a portal to VA Electronic Health Records (EHRs) by clicking on the Blue Button.

PDF – A file format that provides an electronic image of text and/or graphics that looks like a printed document and cannot be edited, but can be viewed, printed and electronically transmitted.

VA – Department of Veterans Affairs

VA Mobile Health – An initiative that aims to improve Veterans' health by providing technologies to expand care beyond the traditional office visit and that includes the creation of secure mobile apps to leverage the popularity of wireless technologies to support Veterans, Caregivers and VA care teams. [More at: mobile.va.gov]