



# Ask a Pharmacist App

*Quick Start Guide*



**VA**  
HEALTH  
CARE

Defining  
**EXCELLENCE**  
in the 21st Century



## Overview

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The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Ask a Pharmacist mobile application (app) allows Veterans to access information about pharmacies and medications easily – with the comfort of knowing the information is valid and from trusted sources. Some Ask a Pharmacist App features conveniently connect you to special tracking or messaging features in My HealtheVet where you can access your medication and health information as well as learn about pharmacy-related topics.

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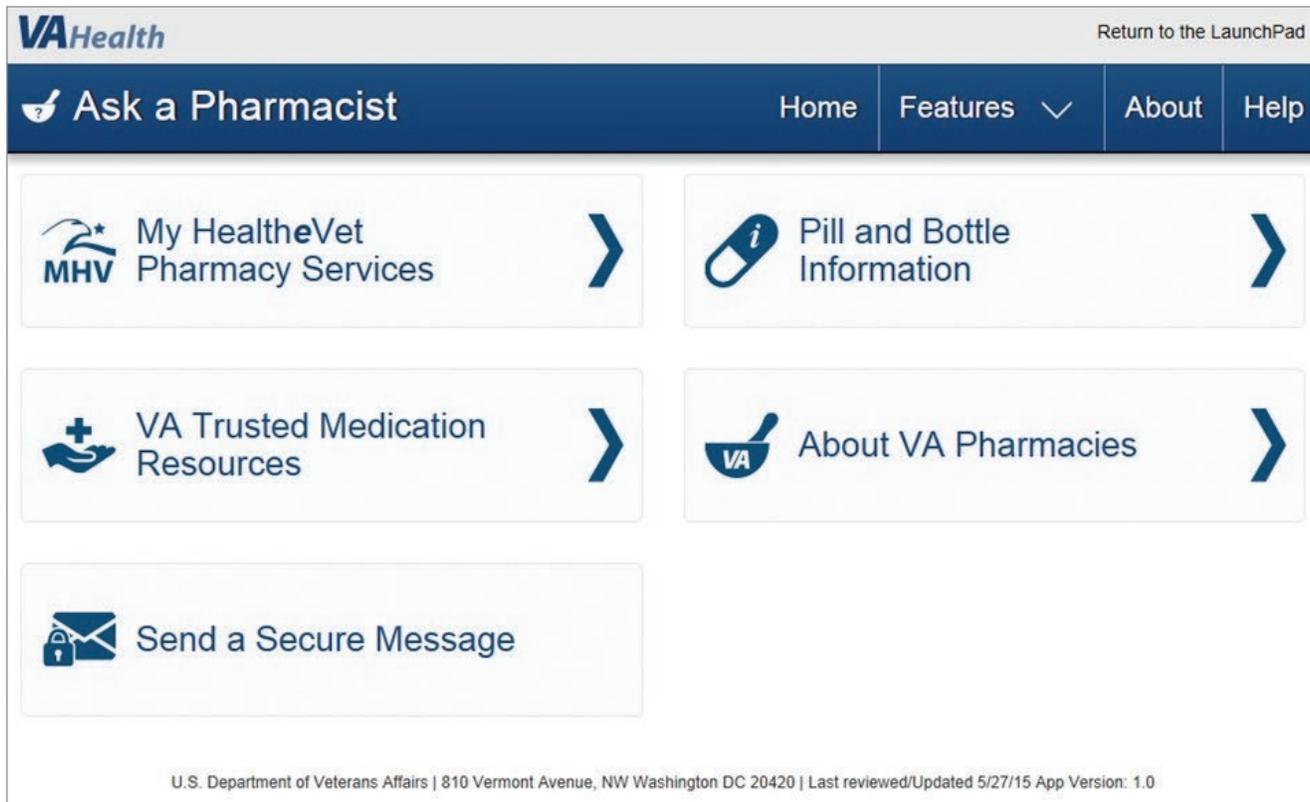
## Prerequisites

Any Veteran 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 – such as the ability to send a Secure Message or refill and track your VA prescriptions – you must have a My Health<sup>e</sup>Vet Premium account (which requires you to have a DS Logon), as well as be a VA patient and register your account as a “VA Patient.” You will then have to log into My Health<sup>e</sup>Vet with your My Health<sup>e</sup>Vet username and password and then use the features within the site. The Ask a Pharmacist App easily allows you to link to these features within My Health<sup>e</sup>Vet, but does not duplicate them or allow them to operate within the app itself.

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## Interacting between My Health<sup>e</sup>Vet and the Ask a Pharmacist App

To take full advantage of VA’s health care tools and ensure your app seamlessly connects to My Health<sup>e</sup>Vet, be sure your My Health<sup>e</sup>Vet account has the necessary settings: a Premium account level registered as a “VA Patient” (and if desired, opted into Secure Messaging). For full details on setting up your My Health<sup>e</sup>Vet account, [click here](#) to read the complete steps and access the **VA Release of Information (ROI)** form (10-5345a-MHV). When you click on a link within the Ask a Pharmacist App that takes you to these special features in My Health<sup>e</sup>Vet, you will be asked to log in with your username and password. If you have already logged into My Health<sup>e</sup>Vet in the same session you are using the Ask a Pharmacist App, you will not have to log into My Health<sup>e</sup>Vet again, unless you have been inactive in My Health<sup>e</sup>Vet for 15 minutes.



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## My HealtheVet Pharmacy Services

Learn about My HealtheVet’s Pharmacy Services, including the ability to refill and track your VA prescriptions. You can access this information either on the Home screen or from the Features drop-down menu, and then tap **My HealtheVet Pharmacy Services**. You will go to a My HealtheVet Pharmacy Services screen, and tap on the names of the kinds of services you would like to access:

- FAQs-My HealtheVet
- Medical Library
- Medication Articles on My HealtheVet
- Prescription History
- Rx Refill
- Rx Refill Guide
- Send a Secure Message
- Track My Medications

Most selections will direct you to an external website, which will usually be My HealtheVet. To return to the Home screen, tap either **Home** or the back arrow in the upper left corner of the screen.

**VAHealth** Return to the LaunchPad

**Ask a Pharmacist** Home Features About Help

**My HealtheVet Pharmacy Services**

**FAQ - MyHealtheVet**  
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. 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.

**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.

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## Pill and Bottle Information

Learn how to read a prescription label and identify pills by sight by accessing **Pill and Bottle Information**. You can access this information either on the Home screen or from the Features drop-down menu by tapping 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
- Pill Identification

Depending on the information you tap, you may go to an external website. To return to the Home screen, tap either **Home** or the back arrow in the upper left corner of the screen.

**Label Example**  
Yours May Look Slightly Different

**Medication Safety Tips**

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** This information is intended to supplement, not substitute for, the expertise and judgment of your physician, pharmacist or other health care professional. This information does not indicate whether use of this drug is safe, appropriate, or effective for you. If you have any questions about your medication or think you may be having a reaction to any medication please contact your doctor or pharmacist.

## VA Trusted Medication Resources

Access reliable, VA-approved resources about various types of drugs as well as information on administering and disposing of medications that you may be taking. You can access this information either on the Home screen or from the Features drop-down menu, and then tap **VA Trusted Medication Resources**. You will go to a VA Trusted Medication Resources screen. Tap the name of a resource you would like to learn more about:

- Consumer Drug, Herbal & Supplement Information
- Drug Interactions and Adverse Drug Events
- FAQ-VA National Medication Formulary
- How to Properly Administer a Medication
- Know Your Medication Label
- Medication Disposal
- Pill Identification

Depending on your selection, you may go to an external website. To return to the Home screen, tap either **Home** or the back arrow in the upper left corner of the screen.

**VAHealth**
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**← VA Trusted Medication Resources**

**Consumer Drug, Herbal & Supplement Information** ➤

Go to MedWatch online and 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.

**Drug Interactions and Adverse Drug Events** ➤

A Drug Interaction Checker 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.

**FAQ - VA National Medication Formulary**

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

**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.

**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.

## About VA Pharmacies

Easily locate your VA pharmacy, and learn how VA pharmacies operate. You can access this information either on the Home screen or from the Features drop-down menu, and then tap **About VA Pharmacies**. You will go to an About VA Pharmacies screen. Tap on the information you would like to view:

- Find My Facility
- How VA Pharmacies Operate
- How VA Pharmacists Help Veterans

Depending on your selection, you may go to an external website. To return to the Home screen, tap either **Home** or the back arrow in the upper left corner of the screen.

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### 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:

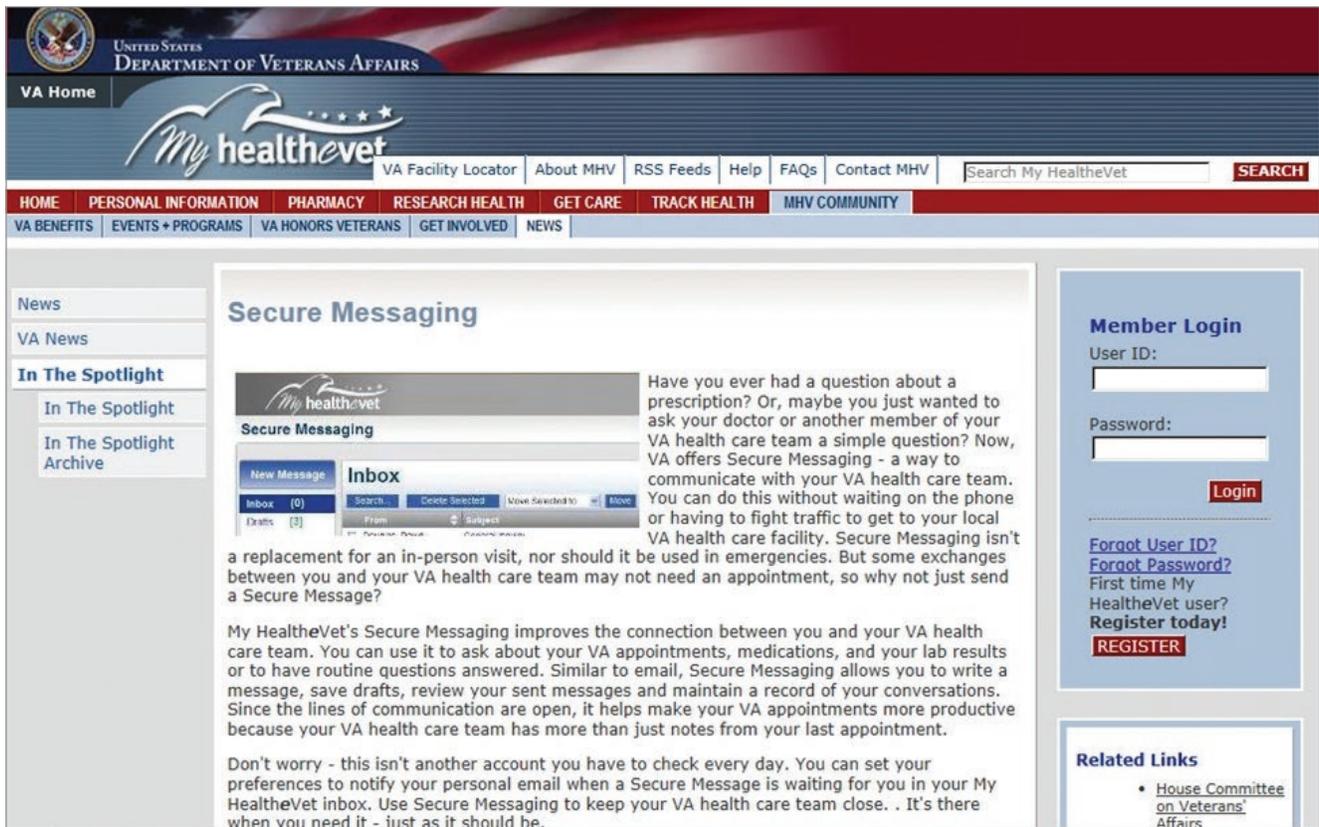
- At the pharmacist's professional discretion, a short supply (partial prescription) of any **new** or **immediate need** medication may be provided for pick-up at our Outpatient Pharmacies. The majority of veterans receive all non-immediate need medications through mail order.
- All applicable prescriptions 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 MyHealthVet
- 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.

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## Send a Secure Message

Secure Messaging is a feature available within My HealthVet that allows you to send a secure, protected question or note to your VA care team. The Ask a Pharmacist App links to information about this feature within My HealthVet. You can access this information either on the Home screen or from the Features drop-down menu, and then tap **Send a Secure Message**. You will go to a page on the My HealthVet website where you can learn more.

In order to send a Secure Message, you will have to log in with your My HealthVet credentials and use the feature within the site.



# Help and Additional Information

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More resources, such as a User Manual, Slideshow and FAQs, are available at [mobile.va.gov/training](https://mobile.va.gov/training).

If you need help with the Ask a Pharmacist App, dial 1-877-470-5947 to speak with a VA representative. The Help Desk is open weekdays from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. CT. For TTY assistance, dial 711. For clinical questions regarding your personal medical information, please contact your VA care team.

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: [va.gov/directory/guide/home.asp?isflash=1](https://va.gov/directory/guide/home.asp?isflash=1).