



Ask a Pharmacist App

User Manual

User Manual

Table of Contents

Overview	1
The Basics	2
Prerequisites.....	2
Setting up a My HealthVet account for seamless connection with the app	2
Logging in	3
Getting to know the screen	3
Learning about the app	4
Accessing help for the app	4
Accessing the VA Launchpad	5
Prescription Refill and Pharmacy Services	6
Accessing Prescription Refill and Pharmacy Services	6
Pill and Bottle Information	7
Accessing Pill and Bottle Information	8
VA Trusted Medication Resources	8
Accessing trusted medication resources	9
About VA Pharmacies	10
Accessing information about VA pharmacies	10
Send a Secure Message	11
Accessing My HealthVet's Secure Messaging feature	11

Help and Additional Information 12

Additional Training Materials for the Ask a Pharmacist App 12

Help Desk Information 12

Emergencies..... 12

Appendices 12

Appendix #1: Project References 12

Appendix #2: Glossary 12





Overview

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 HealthVet 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

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 Advanced or Premium My Health^eVet account. My Health^eVet offers three **account types**:

1. **Basic Account:** Anyone can register for this account type. It allows you to self-enter your personal health information, which can be viewed or downloaded using the VA Blue Button. You may use the journals and other tools to track your health measures. However, you cannot view your personal information located in VA or Department of Defense (DoD) systems.
2. **Advanced Account:** This account is only for Veterans/VA Patients. It is a higher level of access that may provide you the ability to view and refill your VA medications online. This account does not require that you have your identity Authenticated*. Having an Advanced account paves the way for you to get a Premium account.
3. **Premium Account:** This is the highest level of access to My Health^eVet features for Veterans/VA Patients. To get this type of account you need to complete Authentication*.

A Premium Account allows you to:

- View part of your official VA health record
- Participate in Secure Messaging with your VA health care team and other VA staff
- View your DoD Military Service Information (if available in DoD's electronic records)

You will have to log into My Health^eVet with your My Health^eVet User ID and Password to use the many features within the site. The Ask a Pharmacist App allows you to easily link to features within My Health^eVet, but does not duplicate them or allow them to operate within the app itself.

Setting up a My Health^eVet account for seamless connection with the app

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

1. Create a Basic My Health^eVet 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^eVet (e.g., a Premium My Health^eVet 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^eVet VA Patient account.

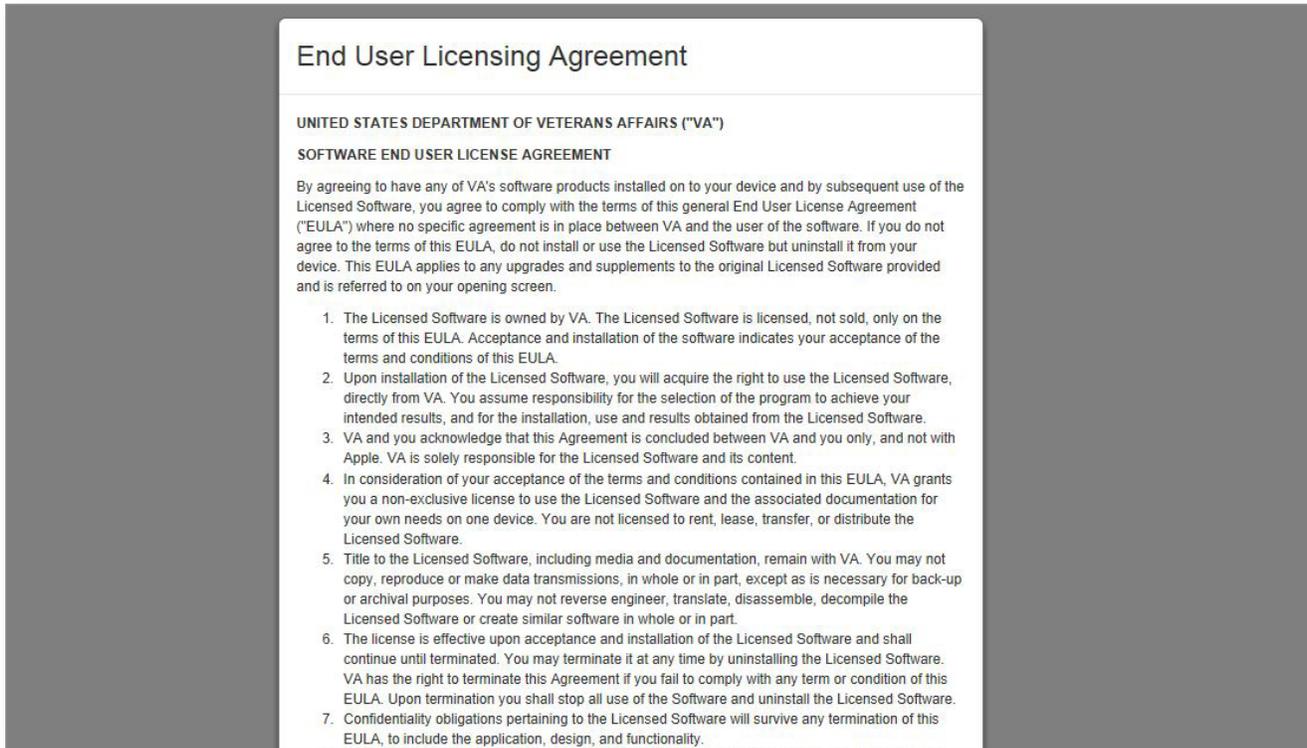
(*Authentication means you are verifying your identity.)

To learn more about the three My Health^eVet **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^eVet, you will be asked to log in with your User ID and Password. If you have already logged into My Health^eVet in the same session you are using the Ask a Pharmacist App, you will not have to log into My Health^eVet again, unless you have been inactive in My Health^eVet 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.



Getting to know the screen

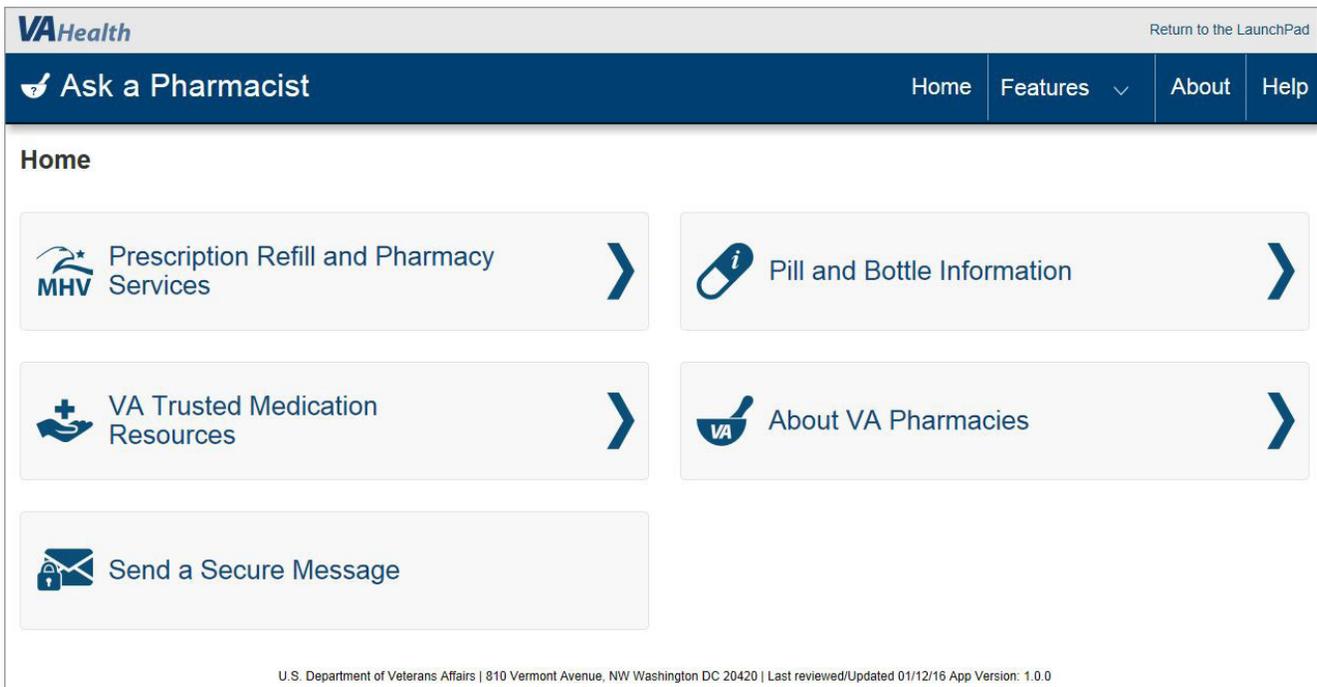
When you log into the Ask a Pharmacist App, the Home screen will have two main ways to move through the app: the horizontal navigation bar at the top, and the five buttons on the Home screen.

The navigation bar includes:

- Home
- Features – a drop-down menu providing access to the same features as the five buttons on the Home screen
- About – background information about the app
- Help – access to help hotlines and a built-in user manual

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

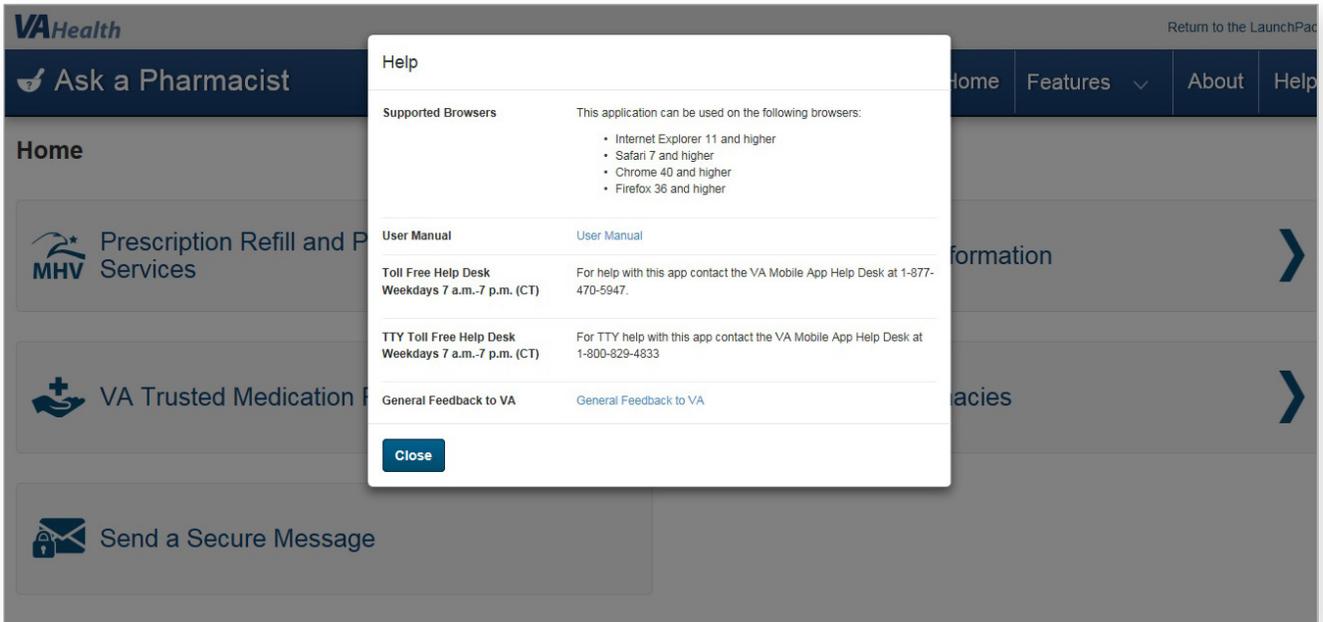
In the horizontal navigation bar at the top of the Home screen, tap **About** > A pop-up About box will appear, which provides background information about the app > Read the information, and tap **Close**.

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 to mobile.va.gov/training, and search for the name of the app.
- 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**.

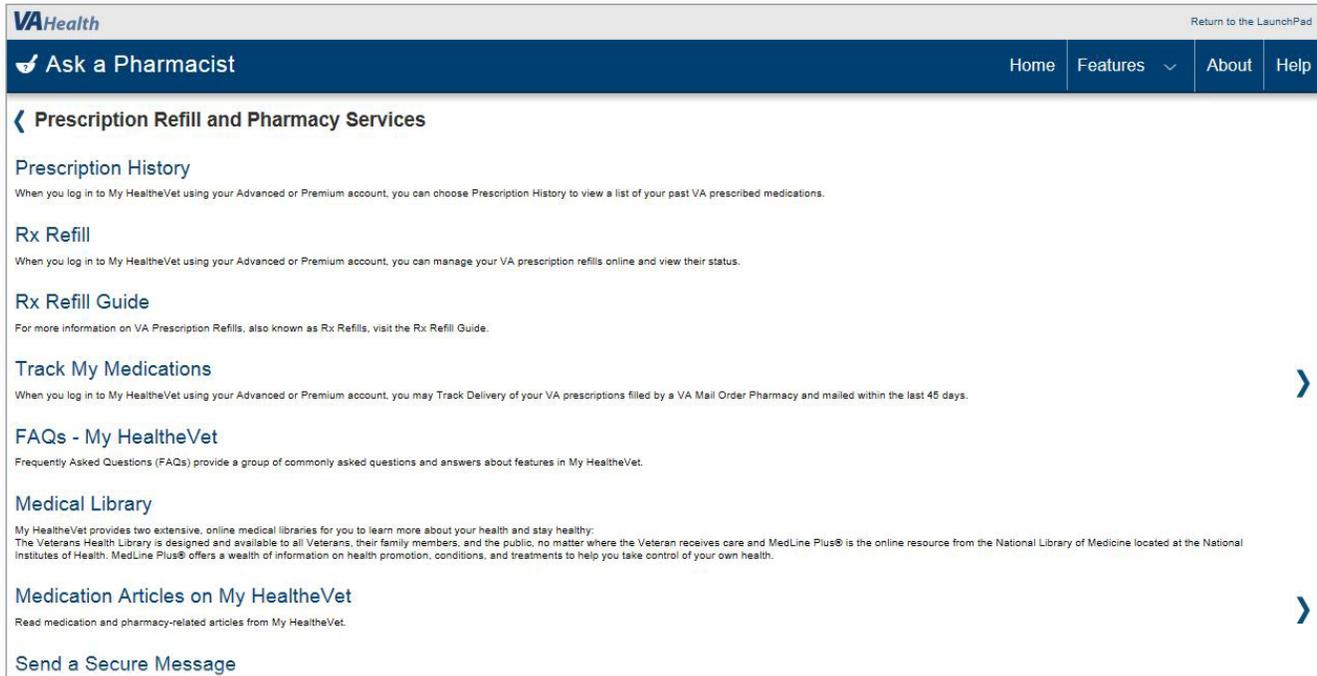


Accessing the VA Launchpad

You can access the VA Launchpad at any time by tapping **Return to the LaunchPad** in the top right corner of your screen. Through the VA Launchpad, you can access other apps without re-entering your DS Logon Level 2 (Premium) Account credentials.

Prescription Refill and Pharmacy Services

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



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

- **FAQs-My HealthVet** – You will go to a page on the My HealthVet website about commonly asked questions and answers and features in My HealthVet.
- **Medical Library** – You will go to a page on the My HealthVet 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 HealthVet** – You will go to a screen that lists the articles about medications that are on the My HealthVet website > Tap the name of the article you would like to read > You will go to a page on the My HealthVet website that features the article.
- **Send a Secure Message** – You will go to a page on the My HealthVet 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 HealthVet 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 HealthVet website. However, to use the features themselves within the My HealthVet website, you will have to log in with your My HealthVet credentials.

Pill and Bottle Information

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

Ask a Pharmacist

Home
Features ▾
About
Help

Pill Bottle Information

Label Example
 Yours May Look Slightly Different

Medication Safety Tips

- Keep out of the reach of children
- Store your medications securely
 - Keep in original container
 - Avoid storing in hot humid places
- Do not share your medication with others
- Do not keep outdated medicine or medicine you no longer need
 - Do not place in trash where children and pets may find
 - Check with your pharmacist on how to safely dispose
- Tell your provider or pharmacist if you are taking any herbals, vitamins or any other medication not provided by the VA

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.

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.

To return to the Home screen, tap either **Home** or the back arrow in the upper left corner of the screen.

VA Trusted Medication Resources

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

The screenshot shows the VA Health app interface. At the top, there is a header with the VA Health logo on the left and a 'Return to the LaunchPad' link on the right. Below the header is a dark blue navigation bar with the text 'Ask a Pharmacist' on the left and 'Home', 'Features', 'About', and 'Help' on the right. The main content area is white and features a back arrow icon followed by the title 'VA Trusted Medication Resources'. Below this title are five resource cards, each with a title, a brief description, and a right-pointing arrow icon:

- 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.

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.

To return to the Home screen, tap either **Home** or the back arrow in the upper left corner of the screen.

About VA Pharmacies

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

The screenshot shows the 'Ask a Pharmacist' app interface. At the top, there is a dark blue navigation bar with the app name 'Ask a Pharmacist' on the left and menu items 'Home', 'Features' (with a dropdown arrow), 'About', and 'Help' on the right. Below the navigation bar, the main content area has a white background with a dark blue header for the section 'How Do VA Pharmacies Operate?'. The text below explains that prescription drug services are a major component of outpatient services for eligible patients. It lists several operational policies, such as providing short supply for new or immediate need medications, processing prescriptions through a mail order system, and coordinating care across multiple facilities. A list of bullet points details these policies, including a 10-day advance notice requirement for mail orders and a 3-month supply limit for most medications. A link is provided for 'See Definition of Controlled Substance Schedules (DEA)'. The list concludes with a note that all patients should be educated about their medications during dispensing.

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.

To return to the Home screen, tap either **Home** or the back arrow in the upper left corner of the screen.

Send a Secure Message

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

The screenshot shows the My HealtheVet website interface. At the top, there's a header with the VA logo and navigation links. Below that is a search bar and a menu with categories like HOME, PERSONAL INFORMATION, PHARMACY, RESEARCH HEALTH, GET CARE, TRACK HEALTH, and MHV COMMUNITY. The main content area is titled "Secure Messaging" and features an "Inbox" section with a "New Message" button. The text explains that Secure Messaging is a way to communicate with your VA health care team without waiting on the phone or having to fight traffic to get to your local VA health care facility. It is described as a replacement for an in-person visit, but not for emergencies. The page also includes a "Member Login" section with fields for User ID and Password, and a "REGISTER" button. A "Related Links" section at the bottom right lists "House Committee on Veterans Affairs".

Accessing My HealtheVet'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 HealtheVet where you learn about sending Secure Messages to your VA care team. **NOTE:** To send a Secure Message, you have to have a My HealtheVet Premium account, and then log into My HealtheVet 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 Quick Start Guide, Slideshow and FAQs, are available at mobile.va.gov/training.

Help Desk Information

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.

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

My HealthVet – 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]