VA Pressure Ulcer Resource App

User Manual

VA

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration
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User Manual

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Overview

The VA Pressure Ulcer Resource (VA PUR) App is designed to help Veterans and their Caregivers learn about preventing and taking care of existing pressure ulcers/injuries. The VA PUR App is an easy-to-use tool that allows you to prevent, understand, and track pressure ulcers/injuries. The app also provides access to other useful resources to help manage your daily care. With the VA PUR App, you can:

- Create journal entries to track your pressure ulcers/injuries
- Set reminders to move, eat and take medications
- Get background information about ulcers/injuries, and tips for daily care and prevention
- Watch videos to learn about pressure ulcers/injuries and safely repositioning
- Create a list of questions to ask in your next appointment
- Get immediate help and locate nearby medical facilities

This user manual provides an in-depth, step-by-step guide for using the VA PUR App.

The Basics

Getting to know the screen

When you access the VA PUR App, you will go to the Home screen, which shows you the main features of the app and self-selected shortcuts (you will be able to create your own favorite shortcuts to access resources within the app.). Along the bottom (iOS devices) or top (Android devices) of the screen, there are four buttons to help you navigate the app:

- Home – Write journal entries, set reminders, find symptoms and causes, ask your medical team questions and create shortcuts to your favorite features.
- Learn – Learn about pressure ulcers/injuries; preventive measures and ways to manage nutrition, exercise, medicines, pain, vital signs and home safety; and tips for Caregivers.
- Tools – Watch video tutorials, check appointments, change your settings and learn about the app.
- Get Help – Obtain immediate support through text or chat, and get directions and help near your home.

You can access these sections at any time and from anywhere in the app by tapping the associated buttons.

Home Screen

Quickly access features for journal entries, reminders, symptoms and causes, and questions for your medical team. You can also customize your Home screen with shortcuts to your favorite features in the app.

Understanding the Home screen

When you first enter the app, you will automatically go to the Home screen. The Home screen houses these main features:

- Journal Entry – Record information about your pressure ulcers/injuries so you can track progress, and learn about how to check for signs of improvement.
- Set Reminders – Create and manage reminders to change positions, eat snacks and take medications.
- Find Symptoms and Causes – Learn about issues, treatments and tips related to pressure ulcers/injuries.
- Ask My Medical Team – Create a list of questions by choosing from topics, and save your list so you can reference it during your next appointment.
- Shortcuts – Choose up to five shortcuts to your favorite features in the app to add to your Home screen.

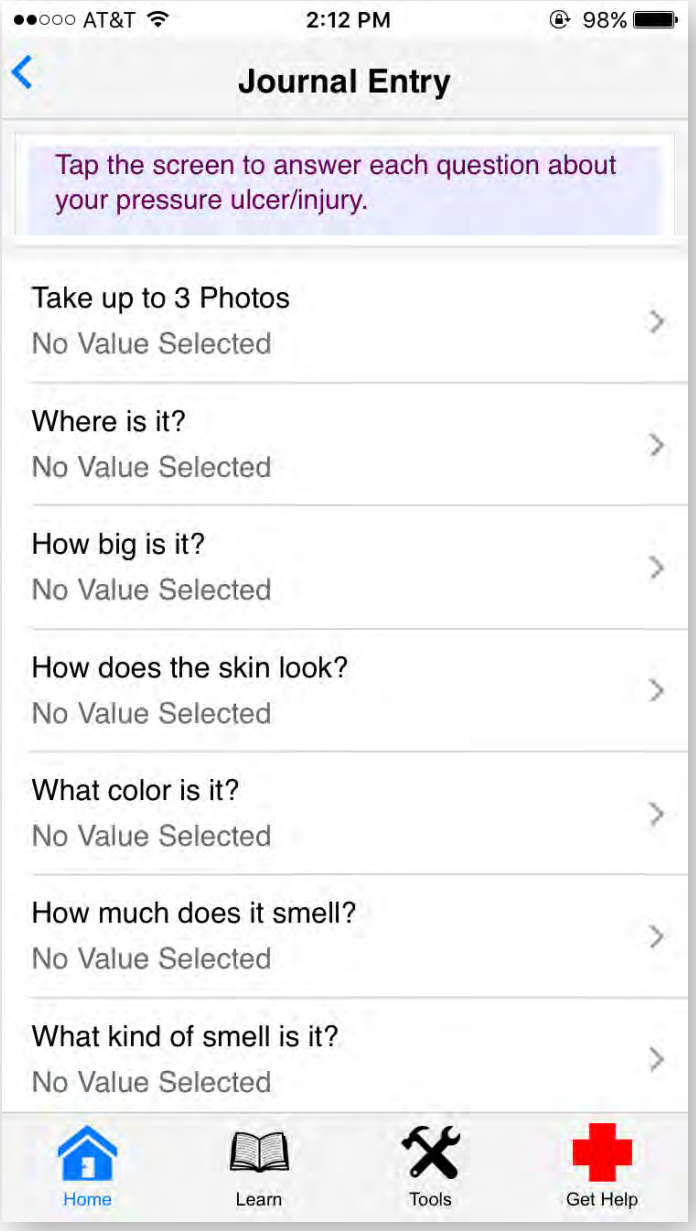
You can return to the Home screen at any time by tapping **Home**.

Creating shortcuts to your favorite features

On the Home screen, there are five spaces for you to create shortcuts to other features and information within the app. Tap one of the **Add Shortcut** buttons > You will go to a screen with a list of options > Tap the circle next to the feature(s) you would like to add > Tap **Save Settings** at the bottom of the screen > You will return to the Home screen, and you will see the shortcut(s) added to your Home screen. To delete shortcuts, tap one of the **Add Shortcut** buttons to return to the screen with a list of options > Tap the circle(s) to deselect the shortcut(s) you previously selected, and tap **Save Settings** at the bottom of the screen to re-save your options.

Journal Entries

Write journal entries, set reminders, find symptoms and causes, ask your medical team questions and use shortcuts you have created.



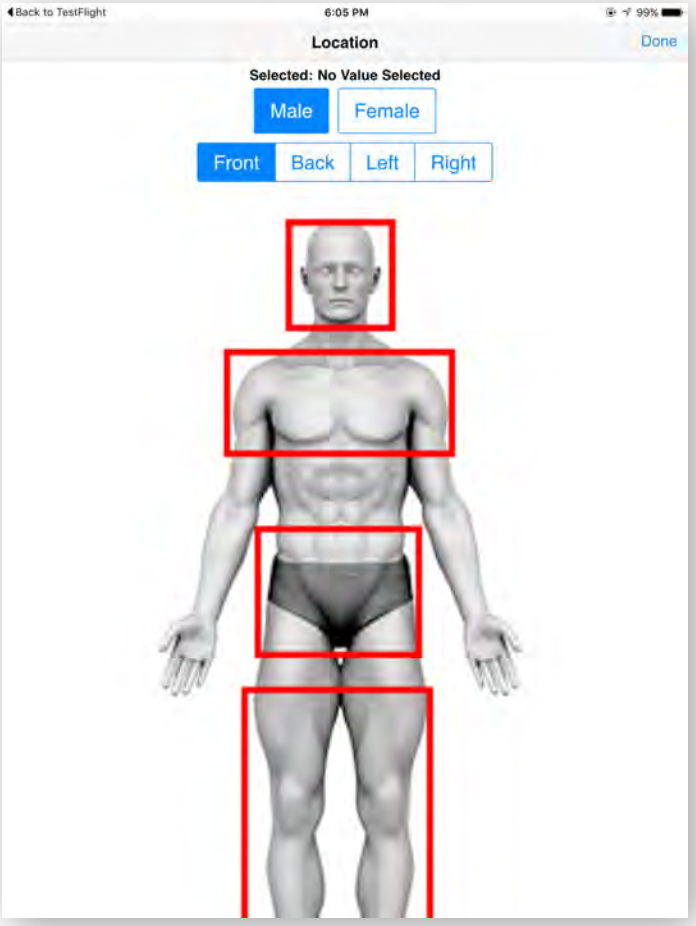
Writing a journal entry

Complete a form to describe your pressure ulcers/injuries. Tap **Home** (if you are not already on the Home screen) > Tap **Journal Entry** (a pop-up Check Skin Reminder box may appear to tell you to check your skin from head-to-toe before making your journal entry, and tap **OK** to close the box) > You will go to a Journal Home screen > Tap **Create New Journal Entry** > You will go to a Journal Entry screen, and tap on the questions to provide information about your pressure ulcers/injuries:

- **Take up to 3 Photos –** You will go to a Pictures screen with three images of a camera > Tap the image > You will go to your device's app for taking a picture > Take the picture as you would normally > Tap **Use Photo** to save or **Retake** to redo the picture > Tap **Done** to return to the Journal Entry screen.
- **Where is it? –** You will go to a Location screen with an image of a person > Tap either **Male** or **Female** > Tap either **Front**, **Back**, **Left** or **Right** > Tap the red boxes around the section of the body to indicate the ulcers/injury's specific location > Tap **Done**.
- **How big is it? –** You will go to a Size screen with images of fruit > Tap on the fruit that is about the size of your pressure ulcer/injury.
- **How does the skin look? –** You will go to a Skin screen with options to describe your pressure ulcer/injury > Tap on the options that relate best > Tap **Done**.
- **What color is it? –** You will go to a Color screen with a range of ulcer/injury color options and images > Tap the color that best relates.
- **How does it smell? –** You will go to a Smell screen with ranges and descriptions of the smell > Tap the description that best relates.
- **What shape is it? –** You will go to a Shape screen > Tap **Round**, **Oval**, **Irregular** or **Pencil**.
- **When does it hurt? –** You will go to a Pain screen > Tap **Hardly ever**, **Sometimes** or **Always**.
- **How much does it hurt? –** You will go to a Pain Level screen with numbers that are color-coded and provide a facial representation and description of pain level to help you describe how much pain the pressure ulcer/injury is causing > Tap on the number that best relates.
- **How does it hurt? –** You will go to a Pain Type screen > Tap **None**, **Burning**, **Aching** or **Stabbing**.
- **How deep is it? –** You will go to a Depth screen that describes depth in relationship to a cotton swab > Tap the description that best relates.
- **Is it draining? –** You will go to a Drainage screen > Tap **No**, **Sometimes** or **All the time**.
- **How much is it draining? –** You will go to a Drainage Amount screen with ranges and descriptions of drainage amounts > Tap the option that best relates.
- **What does the drainage look like? –** You will go to a Drainage Type screen with ranges and descriptions of drainage types > Tap the option that best relates.
- **Notes –** You will go to a Details page where you can enter any optional notes > Tap **Done**.

You will return to the Journal Entry screen after each selection, and your choices will appear under the questions > Tap **Save Journal Entry** > A pop-up Entry Saved box will appear confirming your entry was saved > Tap **Ok**. (**NOTE:** After you tap a question and are on the answer screen, if you tap Done in the upper right corner, you will return to the Journal Entry screen without any answer selected. Also, be sure that your answers relate appropriately to each other. For example, if you select that there is no drainage from your pressure ulcer, then tap **None** for the following questions that ask about amount and type of drainage.)

NOTE: Your medical team will NOT see your journal entry. If you have questions, concerns or problems, call your care team or 911.



Viewing a saved journal entry

Look at the entries you have already sent. Tap **Home** (if you are not already on the Home screen) > Tap **Journal Entry** > You will go to a Journal Home screen > Tap **Viewed Saved Journal Entry** > You will go to a Journal Entry screen where you will see a list of the previous entries you have created > Tap the entry you would like to view, and you will see the details from the entry.

Learning to make a journal entry

Learn to make a new journal entry. Tap **Home** (if you are not already on the Home screen) > Tap **Journal Entry** > You will go to a Journal Home screen > Tap **Make a Journal Entry** > You will go to a Video screen that has a button with a triangle inside it > Tap the button to play a video that explains how to create a journal entry.

Learning to check skin turgor (dehydration)

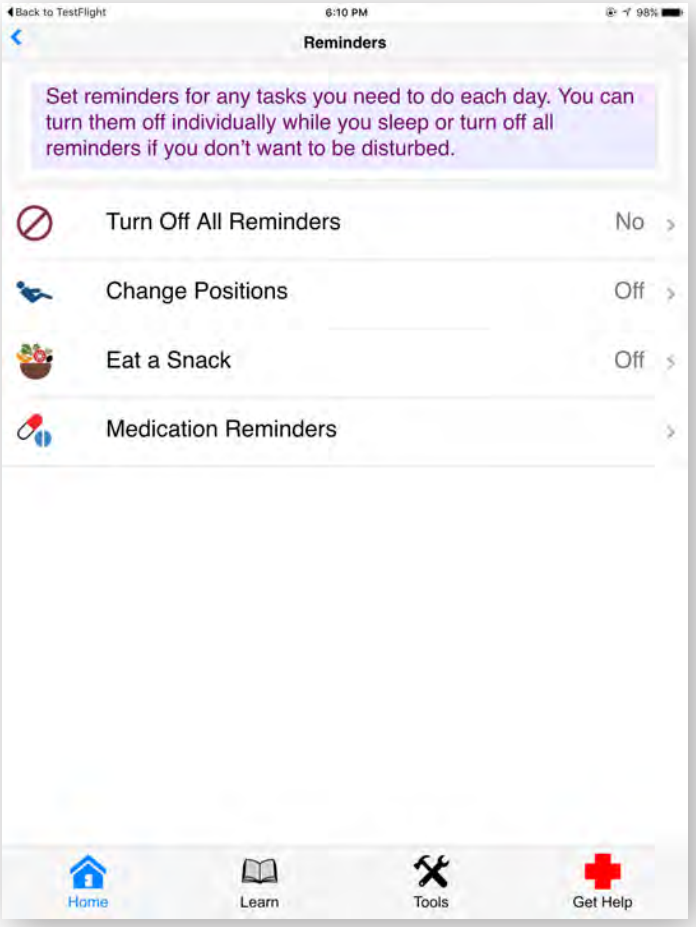
Learn how to check skin for severe dehydration. Tap **Home** (if you are not already on the Home screen) > Tap **Journal Entry** > You will go to a Journal Home screen > Tap **Check Skin Turgor** > You will go to a Video screen that has a button with a triangle inside it > Tap the button to play a video that explains skin turgor and how to check for severe dehydration.

Learning to check for blanching (color changes)

Learn to see if skin changes color correctly. Tap **Home** (if you are not already on the Home screen) > Tap **Journal Entry** > You will go to a Journal Home screen > Tap **Check for Blanching** > You will go to a Video screen that has a button with a triangle inside it > Tap the button to play a video that explains blanching and how to check if skin changes color correctly.

Reminders

Set reminders for changing positions, eating snacks and taking medications. You can turn off reminders individually or turn off all reminders for when you are sleeping or do not want to be disturbed.



Turning off all reminders

If you turn off all reminders, the app shuts off any reminder you set in the app. This is helpful if you are in an appointment or do not want to be disturbed. To turn off all reminders, tap **Home** (if you are not already on the Home screen) > Tap **Set Reminders** > You will go to a Reminders screen > Tap **Turn Off All Reminders** > Tap the circle next to either Yes or No > Tap **Done** > A pop-up Reminder box will appear confirming your reminder has been saved > Tap **Ok**.

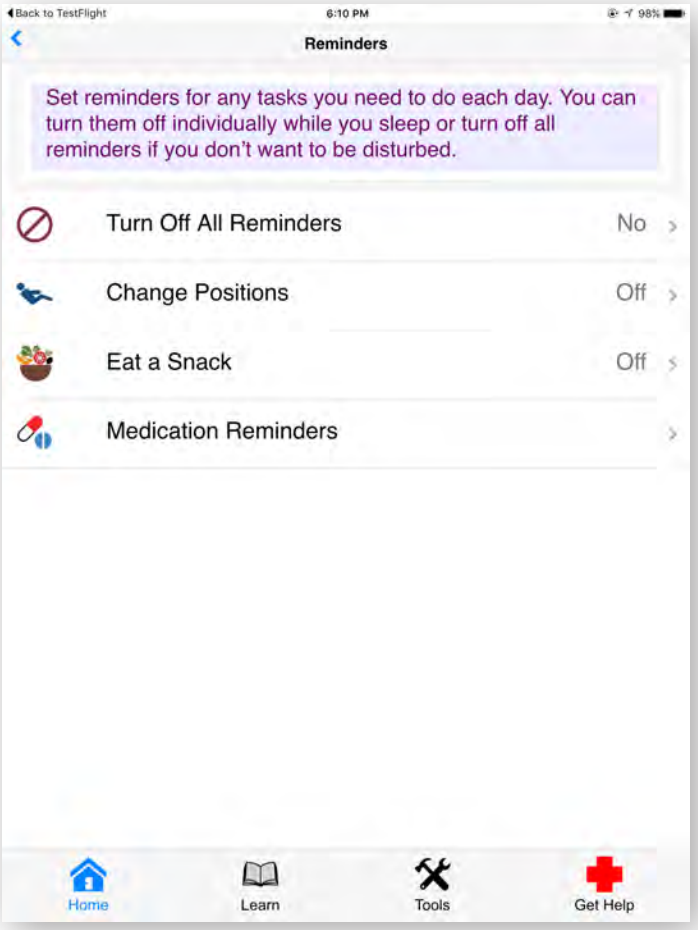
Setting a reminder to change positions

If you are in a wheelchair, you should change positions every 15 minutes. If you are bed-bound, you should change positions every 30 minutes. To set reminders to do so, tap **Home** (if you are not already on the Home screen) > Tap **Set Reminders** > You will go to a Reminders screen > Tap **Change Positions**, and you will go to a screen where you can set your reminder:

- Turn On – Tap the circle next to either Yes or No.
- Frequency – Tap the space to the right of the heading > A pop-up menu will appear > Tap either **Every 15 minutes**, **Every 30 minutes**, **Every hour**, **Every 2 hours** or **Every 3 hours**.

- Do you want to turn off these reminders while you sleep? - Tap the circle next to either Yes or No. If you tap the circle next to Yes, two options (Sleep at and Wake at) will appear > Tap **Sleep at**, and a pop-up box will appear > Scroll to select the time you will go to sleep, and tap outside of the pop-up box to close it > Tap **Wake at**, and a pop-up box will appear > Scroll to select the time you will wake up, and tap outside of the pop-up box to close it.

Tap **Done** > A pop-up Reminder box will appear confirming your reminder has been saved > Tap **Ok**.



Setting a reminder to eat a snack

If you are on a high-calorie, high-protein diet, your medical team may want you to eat a snack pretty often, so it is helpful to set reminders to snack based on what they tell you. To do so, tap **Home** (if you are not already on the Home screen) > Tap **Set Reminders** > You will go to a Reminders screen > Tap **Eat a Snack**, and you will go to a screen where you can set your reminder:

- Turn On – Tap the circle next to either Yes or No.
- Frequency – Tap the space to the right of the heading > A pop-up menu will appear > Tap either **Every 15 minutes**, **Every 30 minutes**, **Every hour**, **Every 2 hours** or **Every 3 hours**.
- Do you want to turn off these reminders while you sleep? - Tap the circle next to either Yes or No. If you tap the circle next to Yes, two options (Sleep at and Wake at) will appear > Tap **Sleep at**, and a pop-up box will appear > Scroll to select the time you will go to sleep, and tap outside of the pop-up box to close it > Tap **Wake at**, and a pop-up box will appear > Scroll to select the time you will wake up, and tap outside of the pop-up box to close it.

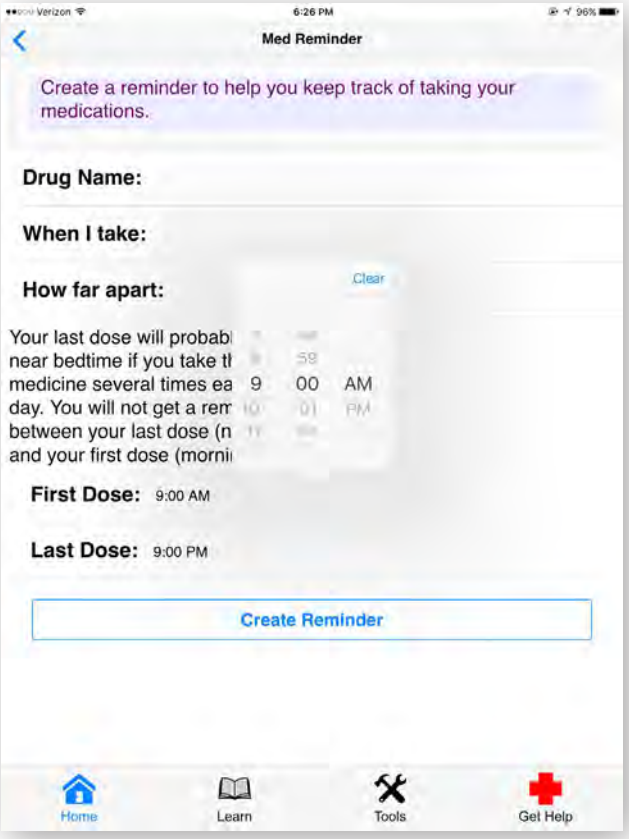
Tap **Done** > A pop-up Reminder box will appear confirming your reminder has been saved > Tap **Ok**.

Creating and managing medication reminders

Create reminders to help you keep track of taking your medications. Tap **Home** (if you are not already on the Home screen) > Tap **Set Reminders** > You will go to a Reminders screen > Tap **Medication Reminders** > Tap **Add Medication Reminder** > You will go to a Med Reminder screen where you will add information about your medicine:

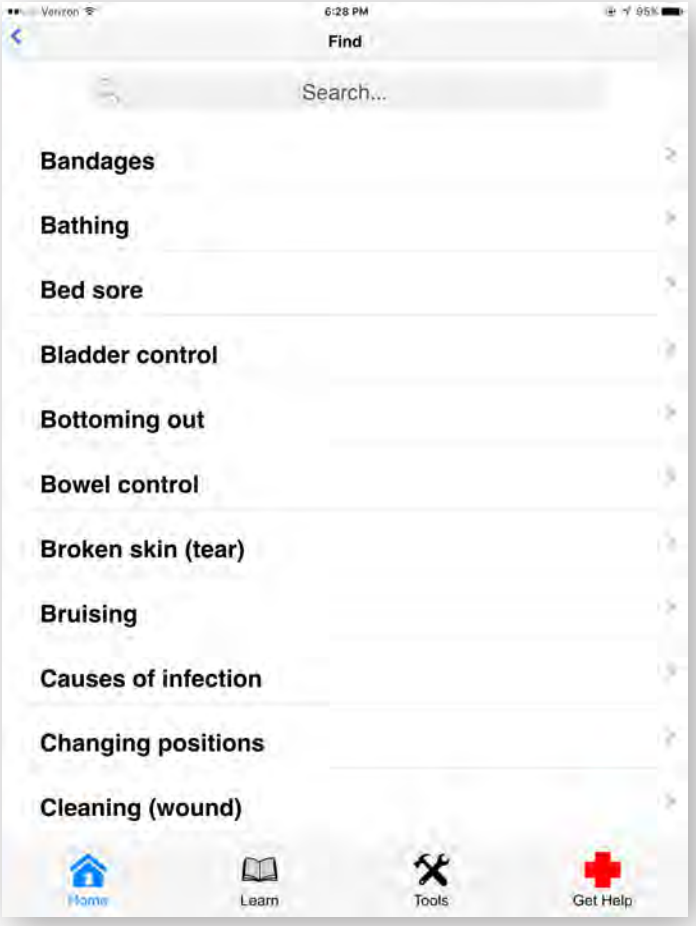
- Drug Name – Tap the heading > Type in the name of your medication.
- When I take – Tap the heading > A pop-up menu will appear > Tap **Daily**, **Weekly** or **Monthly**.
- How far apart – Tap the heading > A pop-up menu will appear > Tap **Once**, **Every 4 Hours**, **Every 6 Hours**, **Every 8 Hours** or **Every 12 Hours**.
- First Dose – Tap the time to the right of the heading > A pop-up menu will appear > Scroll to set the hour and minutes > Scroll to choose AM or PM > The time next to First Dose will adjust accordingly, and tap outside of the pop-up menu on the screen to close the pop-up menu. If there is not a first dose, tap the time to the right of the heading > A pop-up menu will appear > Tap **Clear**, and tap outside of the pop-up menu on the screen to close the pop-up menu.
- Last Dose – Tap the time to the right of the heading > A pop-up menu will appear > Scroll to set the hour and minutes > Scroll to choose AM or PM > The time next to Last Dose will adjust accordingly, and tap outside of the pop-up menu on the screen to close the pop-up menu. If there is not a last dose, tap the time to the right of the heading > A pop-up menu will appear > Tap **Clear**, and tap outside of the pop-up menu on the screen to close the pop-up menu.

Tap **Create Reminder** > A pop-up Reminder Created box will appear confirming your reminder has been saved > Tap **Ok**. A medication reminder will automatically be turned on when you create it. To turn off the medication reminder, tap **Home** (if you are not already on the Home screen) > Tap **Set Reminders** > You will go to a Reminders screen > Tap **Medication Reminders** > Tap the medication reminder you wish to turn off > Tap the circle next to Turn On either Yes or No > Tap **Save Reminder.**



Symptoms and Causes

Search for and learn about symptoms and causes for pressure ulcers/injuries.



Finding symptoms and causes

There are two ways you can find symptoms and causes: (1) scrolling through the available list, or (2) searching for a specific symptom or cause. Tap **Home** (if you are not already on the Home screen) > Tap **Find Symptoms and Causes** > You will go to a Find screen where you can either:

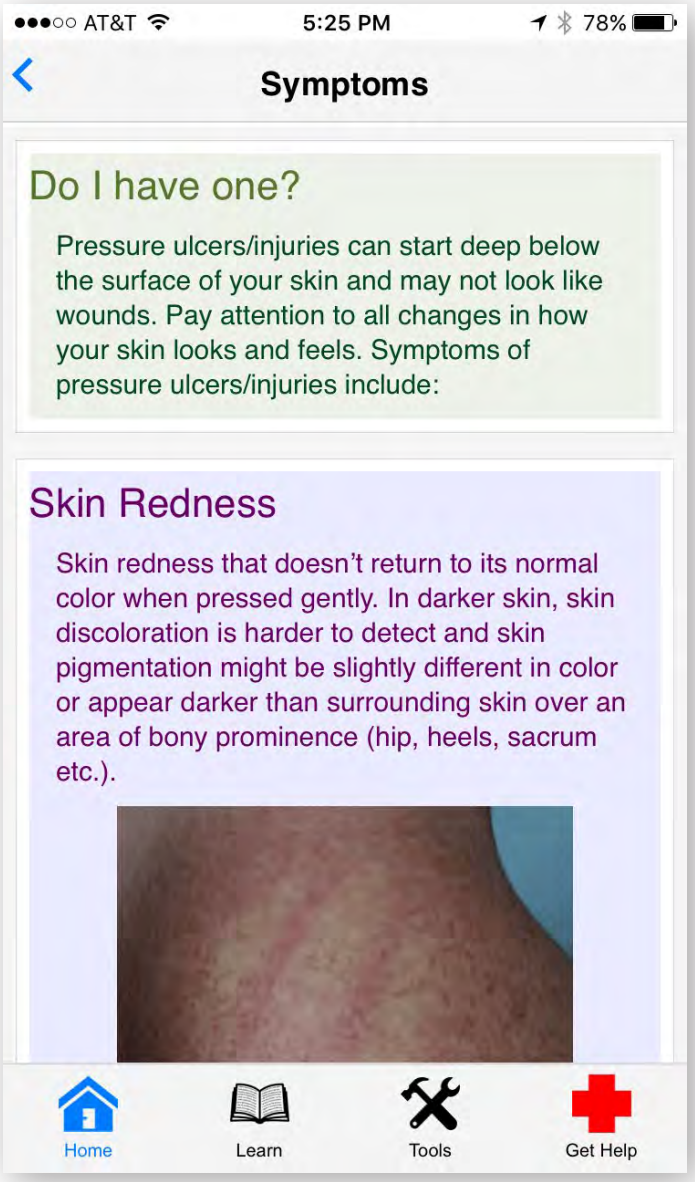
1. Scroll through the list – Scroll through the list, and tap on the symptom or cause that interests you.
2. Search for a specific symptom or cause – In the Search area at the top of the screen, begin typing in a topic > The list will narrow down to the symptoms and causes that match your search > Tap on the symptom or cause that interests you.

Learning about a specific symptom or cause

After you have selected the symptom or cause you want to learn about, you will go to the cause or symptom page. Each page is structured differently based upon the information provided. Here are some items you might see:

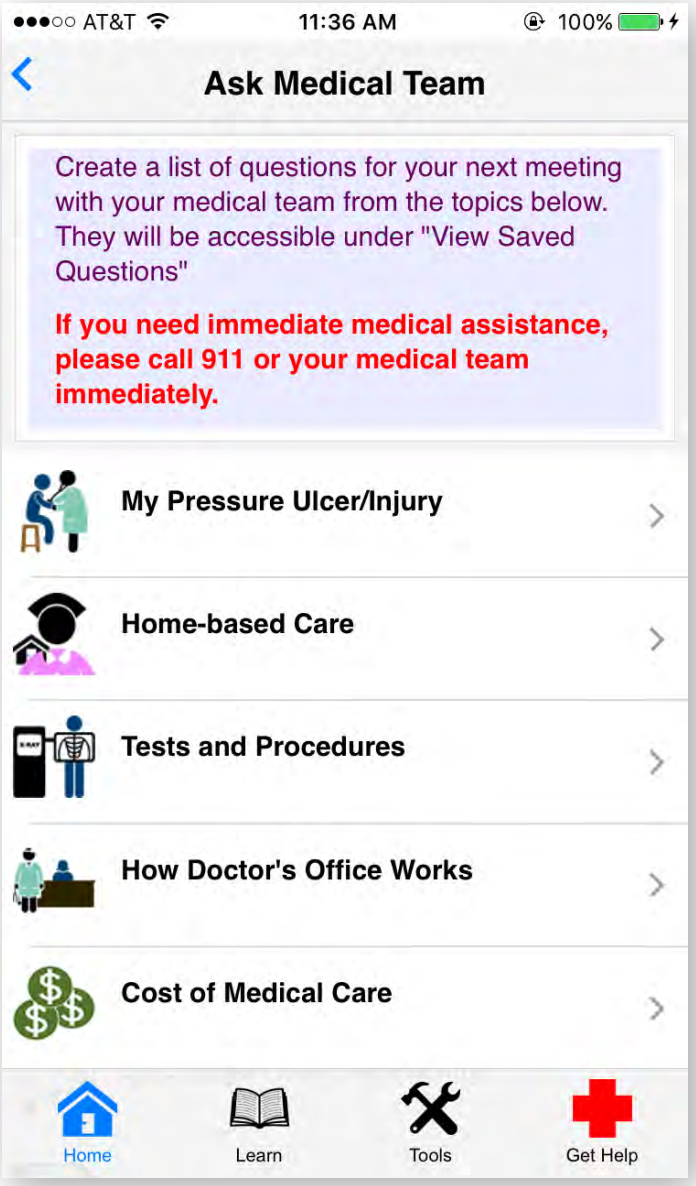
- Lists of information – Scroll down the page to read medical explanations and helpful tips.
- Images and diagrams – Scroll through the page to see ulcer/injury-related pictures.
- Slideshow – Tap the < and > arrows to move through the pictures.
- Drop-down menus with more information (marked with a v arrow) – Tap the heading in the drop-down menu > The information will expand below. To collapse the information after reading it, tap the ^ arrow.
- Links to more information or features within the app (marked with a > arrow) – Tap the heading to go to more information about the topic or to go to another feature within the app.
- Links to external references – Type or copy and paste the URL into a new browser window.

To return to any previous page, tap the < arrow in the upper left corner of the screen.



Questions for Medical Teams

Create a list of questions by choosing from topics, and your list will be saved so you can reference it during your next appointment.



Creating a list of questions to ask your medical team

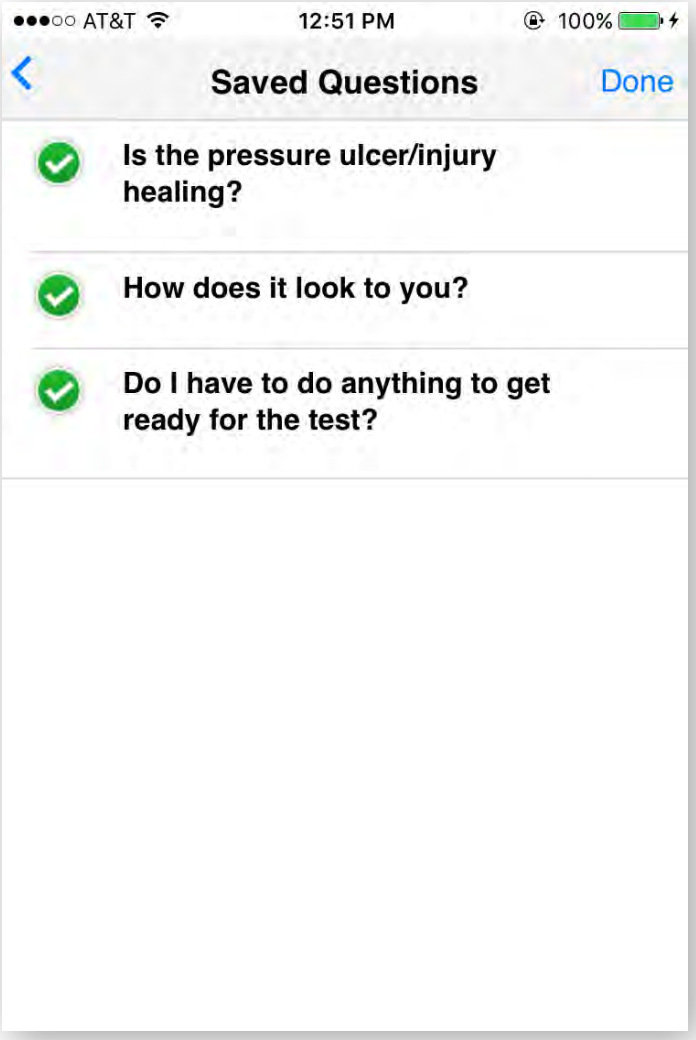
Tap **Home** (if you are not already on the Home screen) > Tap **Ask My Medical Team** > You will go to an Ask Medical Team screen > Tap on the six categories of information:

- **My Pressure Ulcer/Injury**
- **Home-based Care**
- **Tests and Procedures**
- **How Doctor's Office Works**
- **Cost of Medical Care**
- **Discharged from VA Facility**

You will go to each category's screen where you will see a list of questions related to the topic > Tap the circle next to the question(s) you would like to ask > Tap **Done** in the upper right corner of each screen, and you will return to the Ask Medical Team screen > Your questions will be saved to your questions list. To see your saved questions, tap **View Saved Questions**.

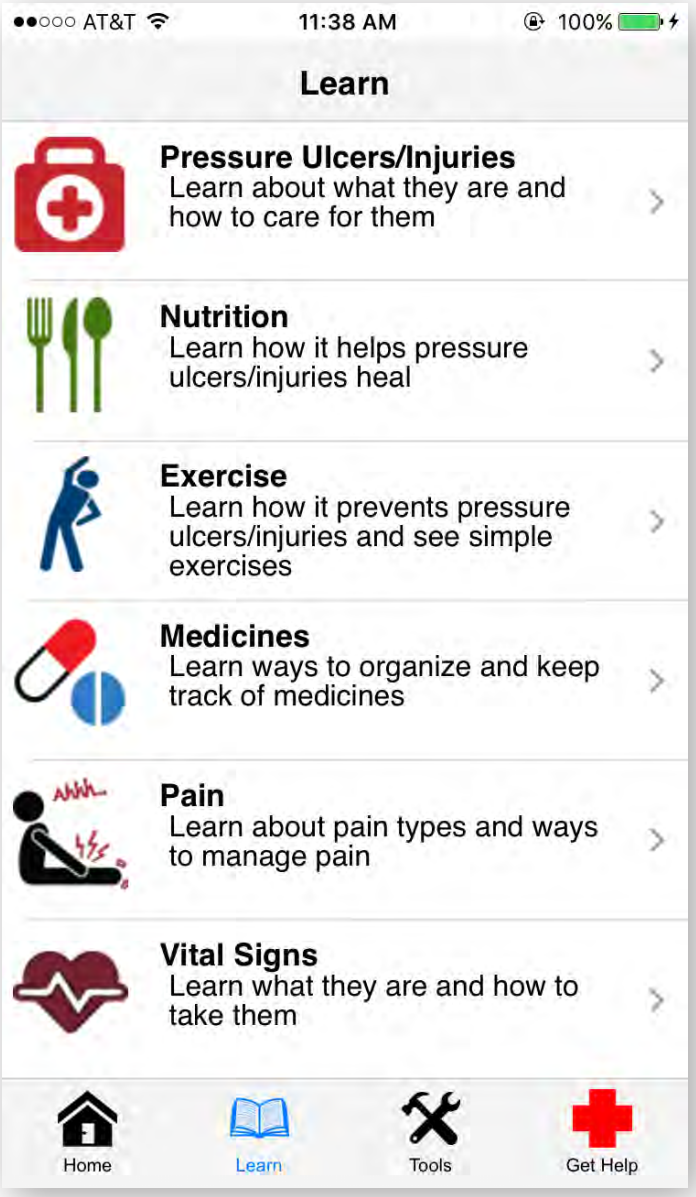
Viewing a list of your saved questions

Tap **Home** (if you are not already on the Home screen) > Tap **Ask My Medical Team** > You will go to an Ask Medical Team screen > Tap **View Saved Questions** > You will see the list of questions you saved. To return to the Ask Medical Team, tap **Done** in the upper right corner.



Learn

Learn about topics related to pressure ulcers/injuries care and prevention.



Learning about pressure ulcers/injuries and care

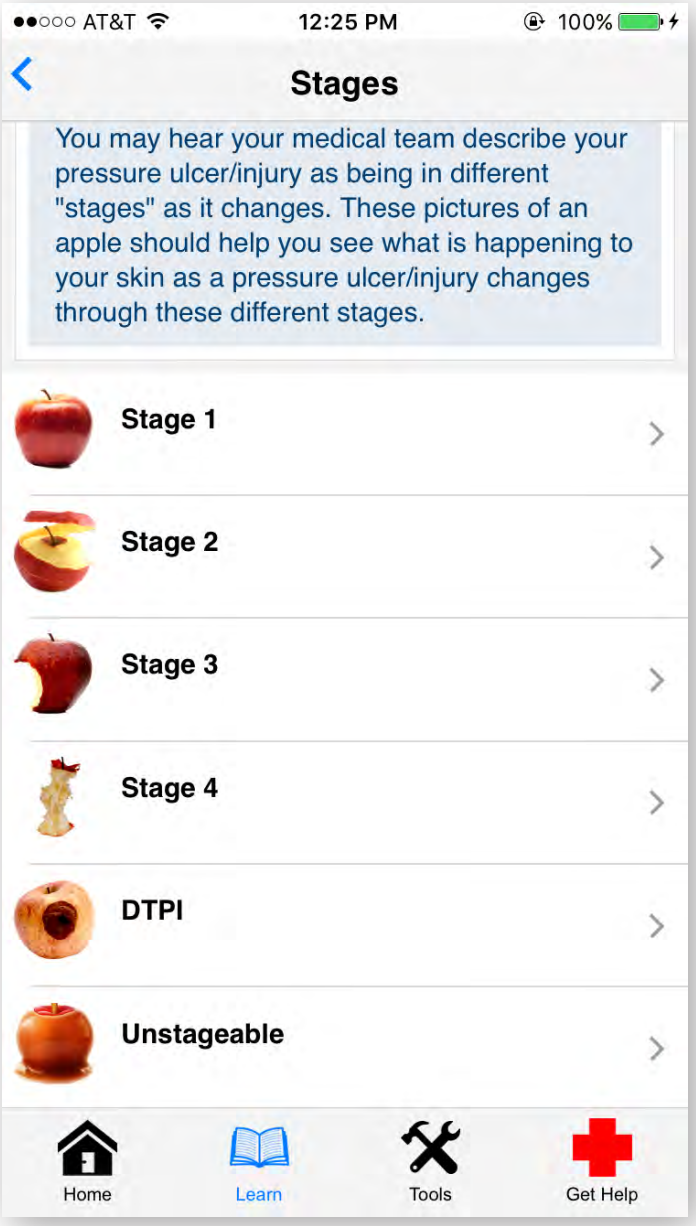
Tap **Learn** > You will go to a Learn screen with a list of categories you can explore> Tap on the topics to learn more:

- **Pressure Ulcers/Injuries**
- **Nutrition**
- **Exercise**
- **Medicines**
- **Pain**
- **Vital Signs**
- **Home Safety**
- **Caregiver Tips**

After you have tapped the category you want to learn about, you will go to the selected topic's page. Each page is structured differently based upon the information provided. Here are some items you might see:

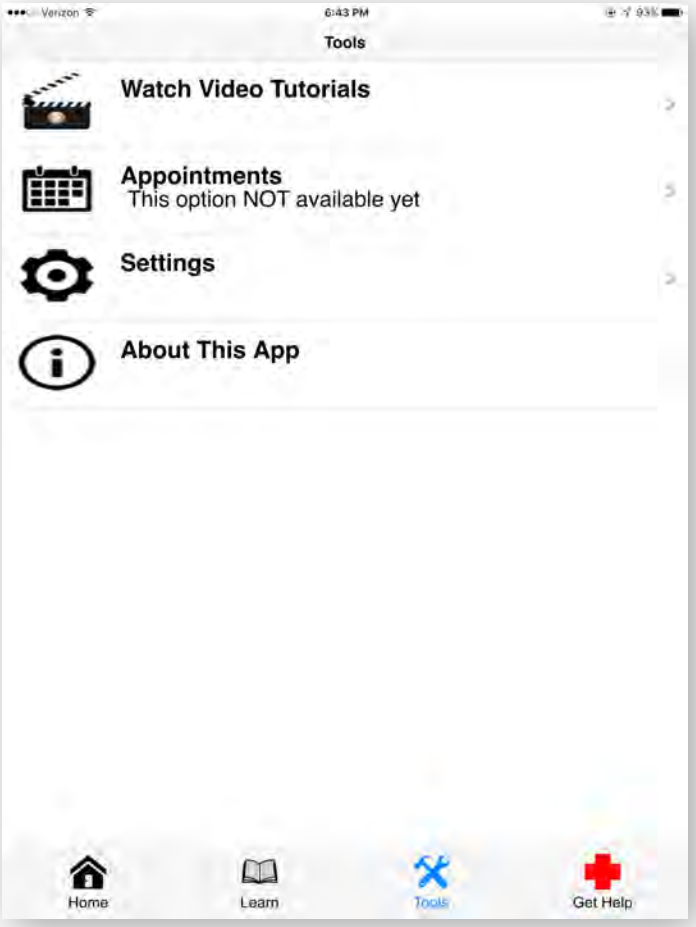
- Boxes of information – Scroll down the page to read medical explanations and helpful tips.
- Images and diagrams – Scroll through the page to see ulcer/injury-related pictures.
- Slideshow – Tap the < and > arrows to move through the pictures.
- Drop-down menus with more information (marked with a ˅ arrow) – Tap the heading in the drop-down menu > The information will expand below. To collapse the information after reading it, tap the ˄ arrow.
- Links to more information or features within the app (marked with a > arrow) – Tap the heading to go to more information about the topic or to go to another feature within the app.
- Links to external references – Type or copy and paste the URL into a new browser window.

To return to any previous page, tap the < arrow in the upper left corner of the screen.



Tools

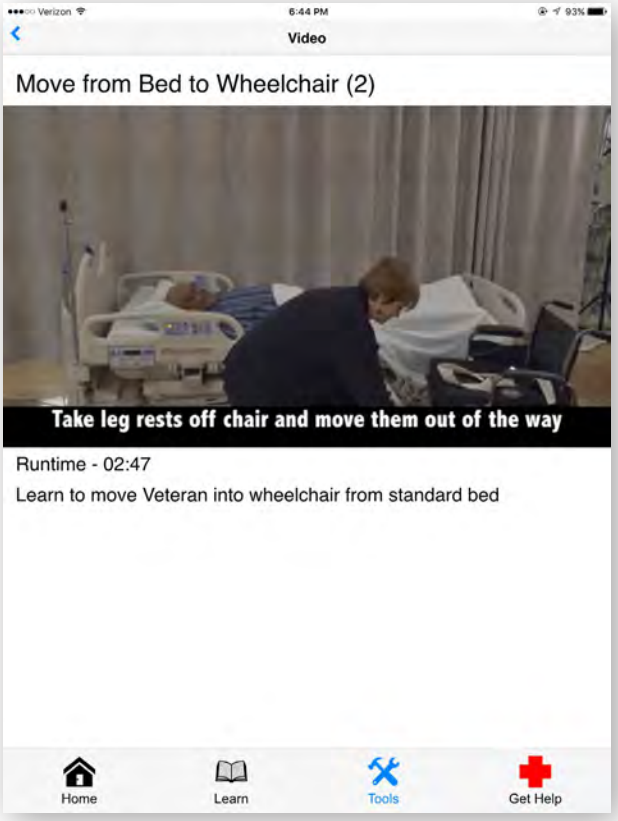
Watch video tutorials, request appointments, manage your settings and learn about the app.



Watching video tutorials

Tap **Tools** > You will go to a Tools screen with a list of the app's tools > Tap **Watch Video Tutorials** > You will go to a Watch Video screen that provides you with a list of topics you can learn about by watching a video > Tap on a topic that interests you > You will go to the topic's Video screen that has a button with a triangle inside it > Tap the button to play a video that provides background information and health tips.

NOTE: If the video continues to play once you leave the Watch Video Tutorials screen, exit the app. Re-access the app to continue accessing the app tools.



Requesting appointments

Tap **Tools** > You will go to a Tools screen with a list of the app's tools > Tap **Appointments** > (**NOTE:** This feature is not yet available in the app.)

Managing your settings

Tap **Tools** > You will go to a Tools screen with a list of the app's tools > Tap **Settings** > You will go to a Settings screen where you can tap the categories to adjust your settings:

- **My Medical Facility –** Selecting your primary VA Medical facility will allow you to call your facility automatically from the Get Help page in your app. Tap **Zip Code**, and type in your Zip Code > Tap **Within miles**, and type in a number for the distance you would prefer to travel > Tap **Find Facilities** > A list of facilities will appear that are located in the area you specified.
- **My Medical Team –** Add contacts to a list of medical team experts for quick access to their information. Tap **Add Contact** > Either (1) tap **Use Existing Contact**, and you will be able to choose from your phone contact list already stored in your device, or (2) add a new contact by filling out the contact form by tapping the fields (Role, First Name, etc.) and choosing from drop-down menus or typing in the information on each line > Tap **Done** > You will return to your Settings page, and the contact will be added to your list.

- Add up to five shortcuts to your home page (you can also choose shortcuts from your Home screen). Tap the circle next to the shortcut(s) you would like to add > Tap **Save Settings**. To delete shortcuts, tap the circle(s) to deselect the shortcut(s) and re-save your settings.

To return to any previous page, tap the **<** arrow in the upper left corner of the screen.

Learning about the app

Tap **Tools** > You will go to a Tools screen with a list of the app's tools > Tap **About This App** > Tap the categories of information to learn more:

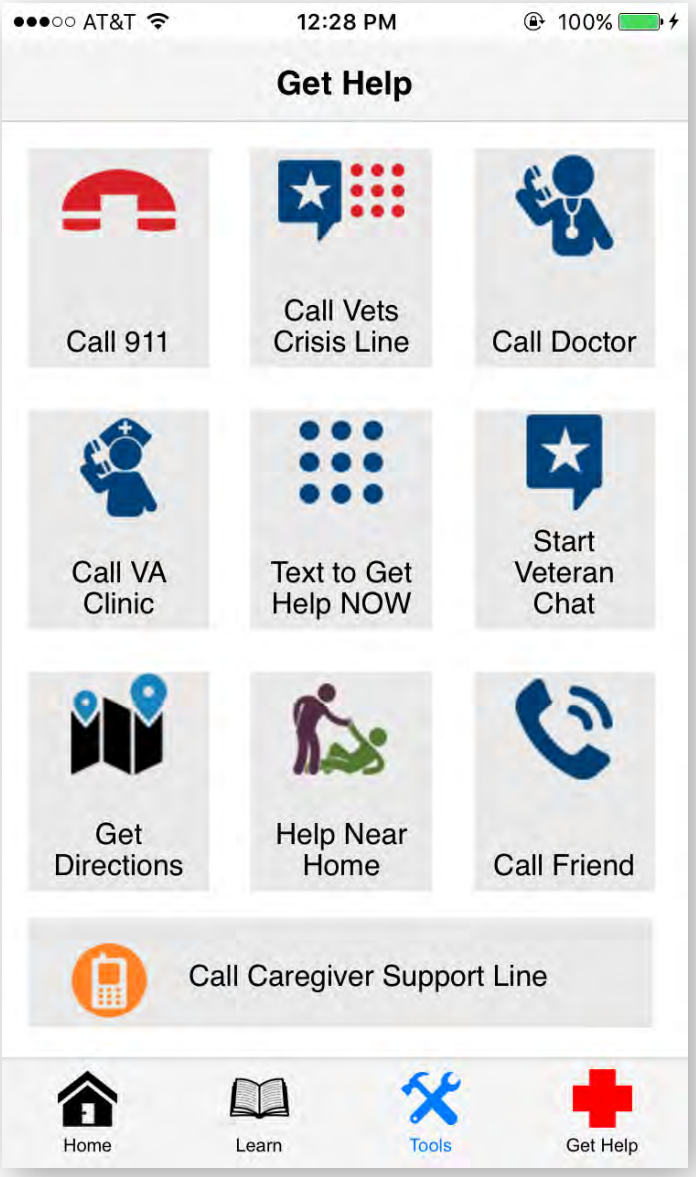
- **Description –** You will go to a page that describes the app. You can also tap **Use this App** > You will go to a Video screen that has a button with a triangle inside it > Tap the button to play a video that explains how to use the app's feature.
- **References –** You will go to page that lists the references for the information throughout the app. To view the source information, tap on the reference > You will be taken to an external website.

- **App Contributors –** You will to go a page that lists the experts on the project team involved in creating the app.
- **Legal –** You will go to a page that explains the risks and safety tips for using the app.
- **Contact Us –** You will go a page that allows you to provide feedback about the app. (**NOTE:** This is not to be used to communicate with your VA care team.) Tap the **Enter Your Name** bar, and type in your name > Tap the **Enter Your Email** bar, and type in your address > Tap the circle next to either Veteran or Caregiver > In the comment box, type in your feedback > Tap **Submit** > The message will pop up in an email draft > Tap **Send**.

To return to any previous page, tap the < arrow in the upper left corner of the screen.

Get Help

Access sources of support directly from your device.



Texting to get help

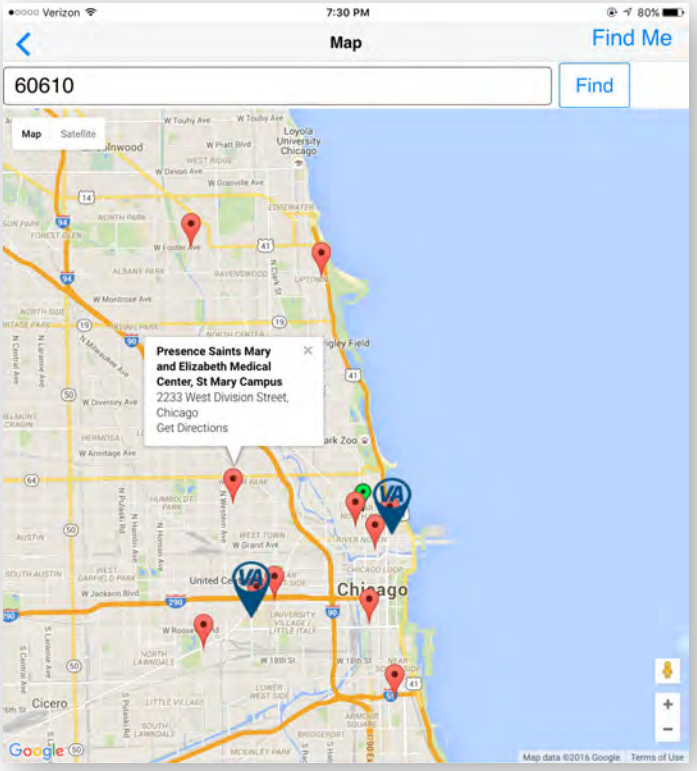
Tap **Get Help** > You will go to a Get Help screen > Tap **Text to Get Help NOW** to text the Veterans Crisis Line text-messaging service, which offers 24/7 confidential support > A new message will appear in your devices Message feature and the 'To' field of the message will include the number 838255 > Type your message, and tap Send. To learn more about the Veterans Crisis Line Text Service, including the Privacy Policy and message rates, visit ***https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/TextTermsOfService.aspx***.

Starting a Veteran chat

Tap **Get Help** > You will go to a Get Help screen > Tap **Start Veteran Chat**, and you will be taken to the Veterans Crisis Line website, which will open in a new browser window. To learn more about the Veterans Crisis Line Confidential Veterans Chat, visit ***https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/ChatTermsOfService.aspx?account=Veterans%20Chat***.

Getting directions to nearby medical centers

Tap **Get Help** > You will go to a Get Help screen > Tap **Get Directions** > You will go to Map screen > In the search area, type in either your Zip Code or address > Tap **Find** > Your map will adjust to your location and red balloons indicating locations of medical centers will appear > Tap on a location to get directions from your location. You may also tap **Find Me**, and the map will adjust to your current location > Red balloons indicating locations of medical centers will appear, and tap on a location to get directions from your location.



Getting help near your home from VA facilities

Selecting your primary VA Medical facility will allow you to call your facility automatically from the Get Help page in your app. Tap **Get Help** > You will go to a Get Help screen> Tap **Help Near Home** > You will go to a Help Near Home screen > Tap **Zip Code**, and type in your Zip Code > Tap **Within miles**, and type in a number for the distance you would prefer to travel > Tap **Find Facilities** > A list of facilities will appear that are located in the area you specified.

Help and Additional Information

Additional training materials for the VA PUR App

More resources, such as a Quick Start Guide, Slideshow and FAQs, can be found on ***mobile.va.gov/appstore***, and search for the app to access the resources.

Help Desk Information

If you need assistance with the VA PUR 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, 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

The app was developed according to an approved concept paper. The app was tested in a demo environment to ensure optimal functionality. Subject Matter Experts involved in creating the app are Devin Harrison, Damien Sharp, et al.

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

Blanching – the ability of the skin to change color based on the amount of blood flow to an area, which can indicate the presence of a pressure ulcer/injury

Skin turgor – the ability of the skin to change shape and return back to normal, which can indicate dehydration levels

VA – Department of Veterans Affairs

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