Pain Coach App for Veterans

User Manual

User Manual

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Overview

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The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Pain Coach mobile application (app) for Veterans (Pain Coach) offers helpful tools to track and manage pain. You can reference educational information about pain; track your pain using a daily pain diary and a monthly check-in; monitor your progress managing your pain and see tables and graph of changes in your pain level over time and; use techniques and tools to manage pain. The Pain Coach App was created with Veterans and service members in mind, but anyone with chronic pain can benefit from the app's educational resources, management tools and tracking features.

Although the app is meant to provide you with helpful tools to manage pain, the information it contains is not intended to be a substitute for clinical judgment or replace in-person visits with your VA care team.

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. Firefox 36 and higher

4. Google Chrome 40 and higher

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

The Basics

Prerequisites

To use the Pain Coach App, you must have 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.

Logging in

You may log into the Pain Coach App with ID.me, DS Logon Level 2 (Premium) or My Health*e*Vet Premium account credentials.

- ID.me Account users: Access Pain Coach > 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 Pain Coach > 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 Pain Coach > You will arrive at an Identity Provider Selection screen, and tap **My Health*e*Vet** > 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 to provide your Right of Access as part of the log in process. The 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.

  NOTE: You can access the Pain Coach App either directly or through the VA Launchpad. The VA Launchpad contains links to all VA apps. By signing into an app once (per session), you can access multiple apps without logging into each one individually.

Device and window size

Depending on the device and size of the screen you are viewing the app on, you will see one of two layouts for accessing the apps features:

1. If you are viewing the Pain Coach App with a wider screen, such as on a computer or in the landscape orientation of a tablet, the navigation options of Home, Features, About and Help will always be visible in upper-right corner. You will be able to directly tap these options from anywhere in the app, and you can tap **Features** to access a drop-down menu with the Track, Progress, Pain Toolbox and Learn options.

2. If you are viewing the Pain Coach App with a smaller screen, such as on a phone or in portrait orientation of a tablet, the navigation options Home, Track, Progress, Pain Toolbox, Learn, About and Help will always be accessible by tapping **menu** (three-line icon in upper right corner) and choosing the option from the drop-down menu that appears.

These materials are written as if you are viewing the app on a wider screen, so the Home, Features, About and Help buttons will always be visible.
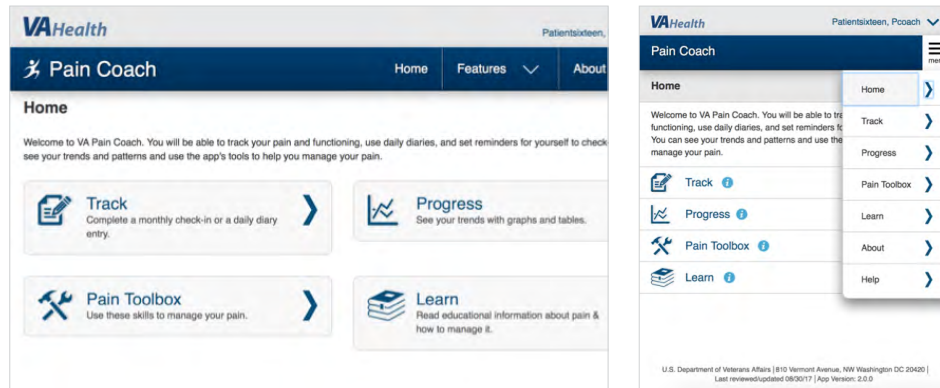
Getting to know the screen

When you access the Pain Coach App, you will see the home screen, which gives you an overview of the app's four main functions:

- Track – Complete daily pain diary entries and do a monthly check-in.
- Progress – Review daily pain diary and monthly check-in entries to see your trends with graphs and tables.
- Pain Toolbox – Use these skills to manage your pain.
- Learn – Read educational information about pain and how to manage it.

You can access these categories from anywhere in the app by tapping **Features**, then tapping the desired function from the drop-down menu.

Navigation

To move to different tabs directly within a subsection of the app, tap either **Select Report**, **Select Resource** or **Select Tool** in the upper right corner > A drop-down menu will appear > Tap the subsection you would like to go to. Throughout the app, you can also tap the **<** button or **Back** to return to the previous screen.

Learning about the app

Tap **About** > A pop-up About box will appear, which provides the app's name, version number, name of the developer, national release date and a brief overview of the app > Tap **Close** to exit the pop-up About box.

Accessing help for the app

Tap **Help** > A pop-up Help box will appear, which provides the app's supported browsers, information about the Help Desk, what do to in an emergency and how to provide feedback about the app > Tap **Close** to exit the pop-up Help box.

Accessing the VA Launchpad

In the upper right corner of the screen, you will see your name > Tap your name, and a drop-down menu will appear > Tap **Return to Launchpad** > You will go to the VA Launchpad.

Logging out

You will be automatically logged out after 15 minutes of inactivity. A Session Timeout warning is shown when you have two minutes remaining. To continue working, tap **Continue**. To log out, tap **Logout**. To log out manually, tap your name in the upper right corner of the Home screen > A drop-down menu will appear > Tap **Log Out**, and you will be logged out of the app.

Track

Document how your symptoms are impacting your life and schedule reminders for monthly check-ins.
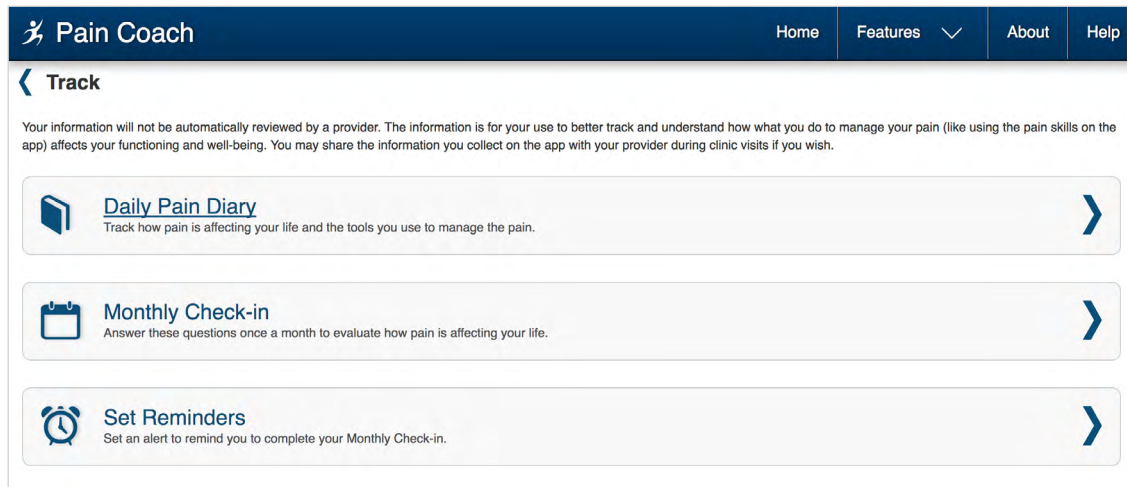
Creating a daily pain diary entry

Track pain day to day to monitor changes and view changes over time in the Progress section of the app. From the Home screen, tap **Track** > **Tap Daily Pain Diary**, and you will go to a Daily Pain Diary screen > To submit a daily pain diary entry, you must indicate your pain rating for that day. All other fields are optional > To submit your pain rating entry, tap the drop-down menu next to Pain Rating > Tap the number from 0 (no pain) to 10 (worst imaginable) that best describes your level of pain for the day > You may enter additional details to your daily pain diary entry by tapping on any or all of the following tabs:

- **Treatments & Tools Used** – Record what kind of treatments and tools you used to help you manage pain.

  - For each tool used (Activity Pacing, Muscle Relaxation, Visualization, Deep Breathing, Plan A Pleasant Activity, Manage Thoughts and Sleep Tips) tap the tool. A pop-up box asking you how helpful the tool was will appear > Tap the drop-down menu, and tap the number from 0 (not at all) to 10 (extremely) that best describes how helpful the tool was > Tap **Save** to save your answer, or tap **Cancel** to exit without selecting an answer.

  - For each additional treatment used, tap all that apply (Exercise, Medications, Stretching, Icing, Medications (Non-Prescription) and Other (if Other, type in the treatment used in the text box that appears).

- **Health Impact & Comments** Note how pain is affecting your health and add comments. Tap the drop-down menu next to the health impact you want to rate (Enjoyment Interference, Depression Level, General Activity Interference, Sleep Quality, Mood Interference) > Tap the number from 0 (none) to 10 (completely) that best describes the level of interference your pain has on that health impact > If you have any comments, tap the blank box next to Comments. Type in any comments you would like to add.

- **Pain Description** Easily check-boxes next to the kind of pain you are experiencing. Tap the check-box next to the pain symptoms you would like to record (options include aching, sharp, dull and shooting) > Tap the text box next to Worsened By and Improved By, and type in any comments you would like to add.

Once you have rated your pain and filled out the applicable tracking information in all three of the diary tabs, tap **Submit** at the bottom of the page to finalize your entry. If you want to change your entry before submitting, tap **Cancel** to erase any entries you have made for that day and start again. To view your past entries, go to the Progress section of the app (see the Viewing your completed pain diary entries section of the user manual for more information).

NOTE: Make sure you have entered the information you want to track and record in all three tab categories - Treatments and Tools Used, Health Impact & Comments and Pain Description - before tapping **Submit**. Once you tap **Submit** from any of the three Daily Pain Diary tabs you will not be able to edit the entry or enter the Daily Pain Diary again until the next day.

Creating a monthly check-in

Answer questions once a month to evaluate your pain. From the Home screen, tap **Track** > Tap **Monthly Check-in** > You will go through seven questions asking you about your pain intensity, pain interference, sleep quality, depression and overall status from a scale of 0 (best) to 10 (worst). Tap **Next** to go to the next question > Tap **Submit** to finalize the monthly check-in and view your average scores based on the questions. If the total score for depression is three or more, an Immediate Attention is Required notice will display indicating you should contact your VA care team. To view your past entries, go to the Progress section of the app (see the Viewing your completed monthly check-ins section of the user manual for more information).

NOTE: Once you have submitted your entry for the month, you will not be able to access this part of the app for 30 days, and a pop-up Too Early To Take Monthly Check-In box will appear > Tap **OK** to close the box.

Setting Reminders for your monthly check-in

Set a reminder to complete your monthly check-in. From the Home screen, tap **Track** > Tap **Set Reminders**, and a pop-up Set Reminders box will appear > Tap the drop-down menu next to Reminder Timeframe, and tap **Never**, **Every 1 Month** or **Every 2 Months** to set the frequency with which you would like to receive reminders > Tap **Save** to save your selection, or tap **Cancel** to exit without saving.
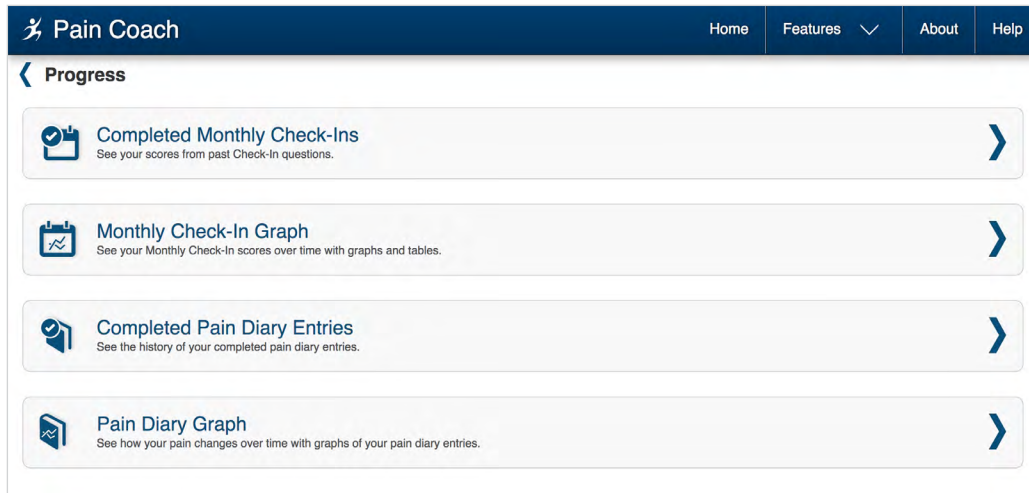
Progress

See the history of your monthly check-ins and pain diary entries..

Viewing your completed monthly check-ins

See your entries from past monthly check-ins. From the Home screen, tap **Progress** > Tap **Completed Monthly Check-Ins** > You will see a table of your monthly check-ins with columns for the date submitted, pain intensity, pain interference, sleep quality, depression and overall status > Tap the arrows at the top of each column to sort by the column > To view the full report, tap the monthly check-in row you would like to view > You will go to the Completed Monthly Check-In Detail screen, which will show you the complete monthly check-in.

View a graph of your monthly check-ins

View your monthly check-ins over time with graphs and tables. From the Home screen, tap **Progress** > Tap **Monthly Check-In Graph** > You will see graphs for your pain intensity, pain interference, sleep quality and depression. You will also see your overall status rating (Better or Worse) and the date of the last overall status rating > Tap on a graph for a pop-up box with a larger view of the graph > Tap Close to exit the pop-up. Tap **View Tabular Data** to view data in a table format.

Viewing your completed pain diary entries

See the history of your daily entries. From the Home screen, tap **Progress** > Tap **Completed Pain Diary Entries** > You will see a table of your daily pain diary entries with columns for date submitted, pain rating and tools used > Tap the arrows at the top of the date submitted and pain rating column to sort by the column > To view the full report, tap the daily pain diary entry row you would like to view > You will go to the Completed Pain Diary Entry Detail screen, which will show you the date submitted, pain rating, treatments and tools used, health impact and comments and pain description.

## View a graph of your daily pain diary entries

See how your daily check-ins change over time with graphs of your entries. From the Home screen, tap **Progress** > Tap **Pain Diary Graph** > Tap the blank Start Date field, and a pop-up calendar will appear > Tap the date you would as the start date to view up to a month range of pain diary entries > Tap **Go** > You will see the monthly average for your pain rating, enjoyment interference, general activity interference, pain intensity, pain interference, sleep quality and depression. You will also see your overall status rating (Better or Worse) and the date of the last overall status rating > Tap on a graph for a pop-up box with a larger view of the graph > Tap **Close** to exit the pop-up.
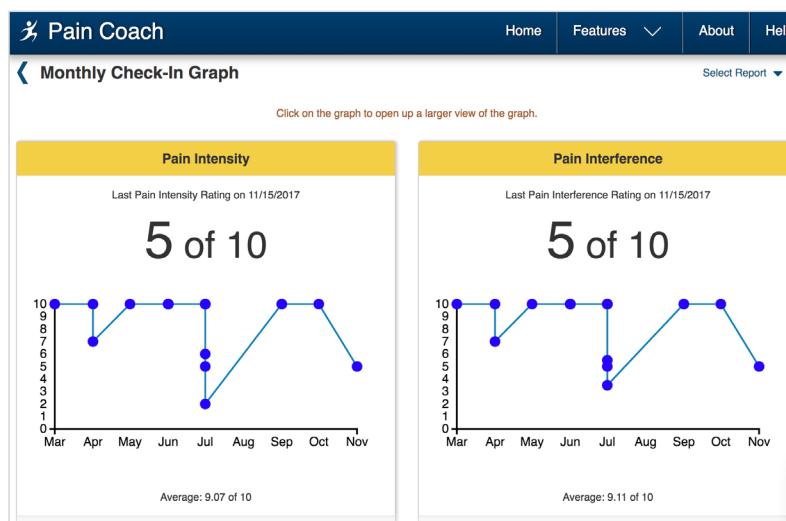
To move easily between the reports, tap **Select Report** in the upper right corner > A drop-down menu will appear > Tap the report you would like to access.

Pain Toolbox

Find skills to manage your pain.
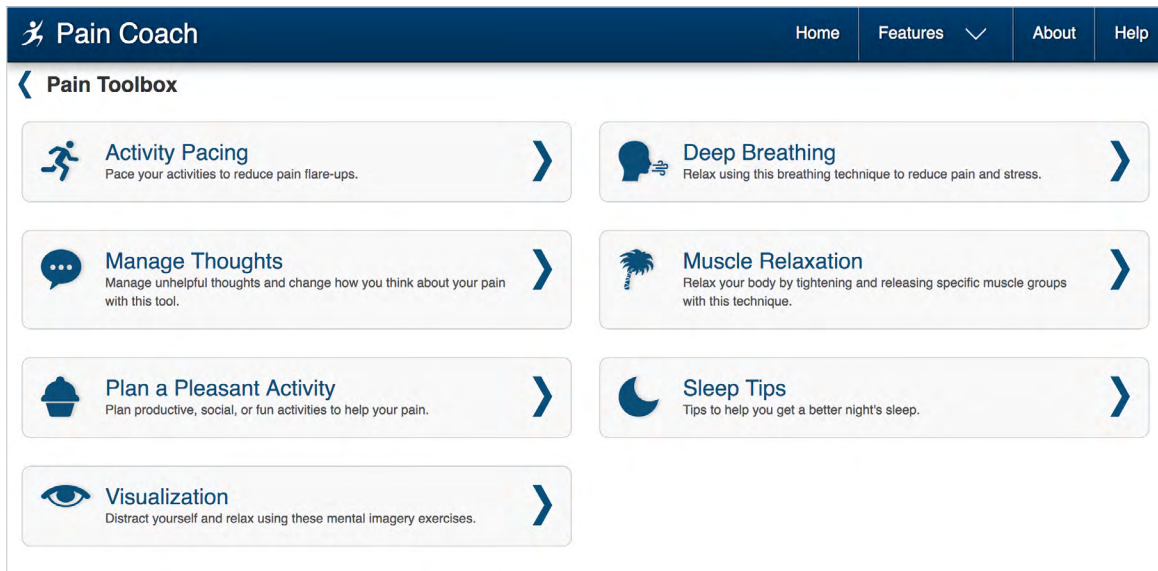

Using pain management tools

Use the app to access tools to help you handle your pain. From the Home screen, tap **Pain Toolbox** > You will see a list of available tools > Tap the tool you would like to use:

- **Activity Pacing** – Plans to structure activity and take timed breaks to preempt pain. From the Activity Pacing screen, tap **Next** > Tap an activity, or create a new activity by tapping **Create New Activity** > You will go to the Create/Update an Activity screen > Enter an activity name > In hours and minutes, enter how long the activity will take to complete, how long you can do the activity until your pain gets worse and how long of a break you should take > Tap **Save**, or tap **Delete** to delete the activity entirely > Tap **Begin Activity** > You will see the number of times and the duration of your active, rest and total time. Tap the play button (triangle) to begin and the stop button (square) pause.
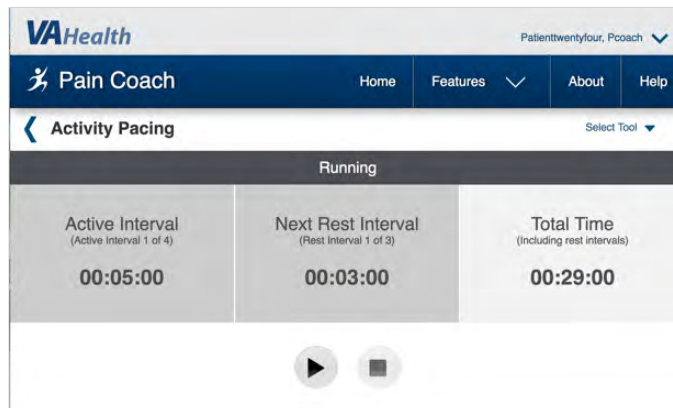
- **Deep Breathing** – A seven-minute directed exercise video to steady your breathing and calm you. From the Deep Breathing screen, tap **Next** > Tap the play button to start the exercise. Tap **View Text Transcript** to see the transcript.

- **Manage Thoughts** – Identify thoughts that may be interfering with how you manage your pain and create helpful thoughts. From the Manage Thoughts screen, tap **Next** > Tap the drop-down menu to select a negative thought you are having, or write one yourself in the blank text box > Tap **Next** > Analyze the questions presented, and tap **Next** > Tap the drop-down menu to select a positive thought or write one yourself > Tap **Next** > You will go to a Summary screen, where you will see the entire exercise.

- **Muscle Relaxation** – A nine-minute directed muscle relaxation exercise. From the Muscle Relaxation screen, tap **Next** > Tap the play button on the video to begin the exercise.

- **Plan a Pleasant Activity** – Ideas for beginning activities you have stopped because of your pain or for trying new activities. From the Plan a Pleasant Activity screen, tap **Next** > Tap the drop-down menu, and select an activity > Tap **Next**, and enter the date you plan to do the activity. You can add the activity to your calendar as an event by tapping **Add as a Calendar Event**, and an .ics file will download.

- **Sleep Tips** – View a sleep tip for how to have a more restful night. From the Sleep Tips screen, read a tip for falling asleep > Tap **Try Another Sleep Tip** to view another tip.

- **Visualization** – A four-minute directed exercise in which you picture pleasant images. From the Visualization screen, tap **Next** > Tap the play button to start the exercise. Tap **View Text Transcript** to see the transcript. Tap **Try Another** to go through a different exercise.
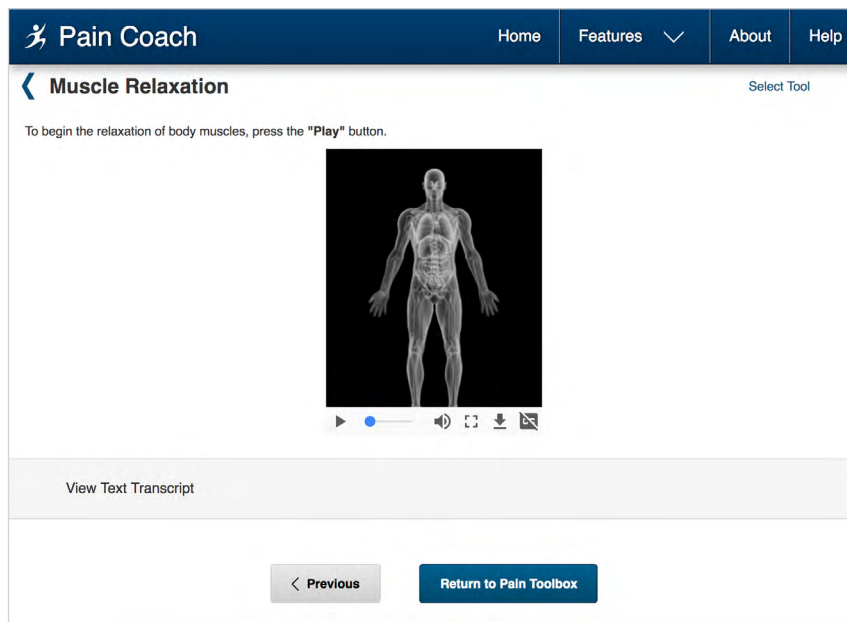

To move easily between the tools, tap **Select Tool** in the upper right corner > A drop-down menu will appear > Tap the tool you would like to access.

Tap **Previous** to return to the description of the exercise, and tap **Return to Pain Toolbox** to return to the Pain Toolbox screen.

Learn

Find terminology and answers to general questions about pain and the things that affect it as well as information for caregivers.
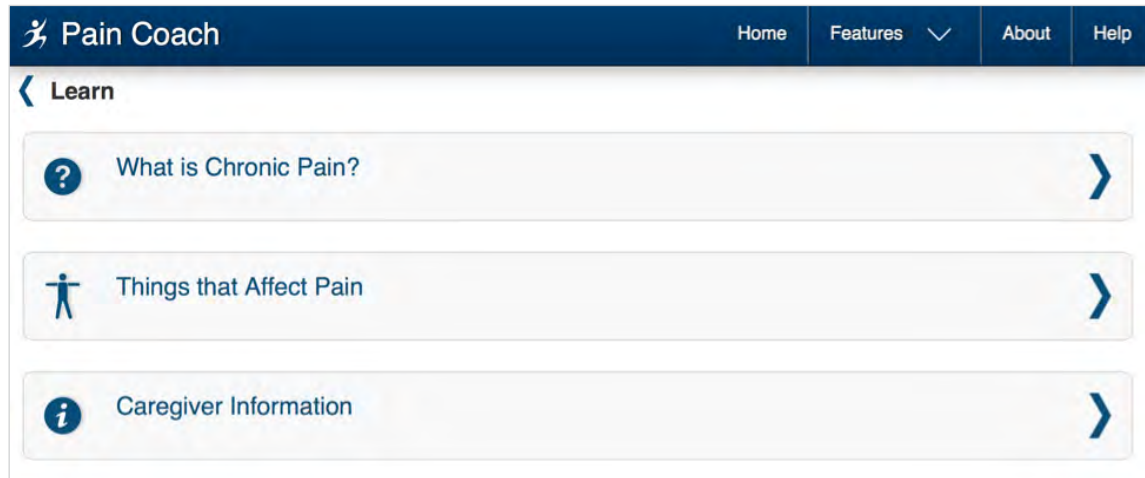
Accessing informational resources

Questions and answers for Veterans and Caregivers. From the Home screen, tap **Learn** > Tap one of the three categories of information:

- **What is Chronic Pain?** – Definitions, tips and resources about types and impact of pain for Veterans and Caregivers.
- **Things that Affect Pain** – Examples of how pain may impact activity, health, mood, relationships and thoughts and tips for setting goals and staying motivated.
- **Caregiver Information** – Guidance on how to best partner with a Veteran experiencing pain, as well as tips and resources.

Each category has subcategories. Tap the name of a subcategory to learn more.

To move easily between the resources, tap **Select Resource** in the upper right corner > A drop-down menu will appear> Tap the resource you would like to access.

Help and Additional Information

Additional training materials for the Pain Coach App

More resources, including 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 Pain Coach App for Veterans, 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.

ID.me Help

If you have questions about your ID.me account, visit **www.id.me/about**.

DS Logon Help

If you have questions about your DS Logon account, visit **mobile.va.gov/dslogon** or dial **1-800-983-0937** for assistance.

My Health*e*Vet Help

If you have questions about your My Health*e*Vet Account, visit **https://www.myhealth.va.gov/mhv-portal-web/user-login** or dial **1-877-327-0022** for assistance.

Emergencies

If you feel your information may have been compromised, contact your local VA facility to get 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**. **NOTE**: You should never use this app in an emergency. If you encounter an emergency, call your local medical center or dial 911 immediately.

Appendices

Appendix #1: Project References

This app was developed according to an approved concept paper. It was tested in a demo environment to ensure optimal functionality.

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.

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.

ID.me – A secure digital ID card that allows individuals to prove their identity online.

My Health*e*Vet – VA's online personal health record - designed for Veterans, active duty Servicemembers, their dependents and Caregivers -to help manage health care, partner with VA health care teams and provide opportunities and tools to make informed decisions about their health.

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]