

Welcome Home

**Operation Enduring Freedom
Operation Iraqi Freedom**



Homecoming

after Deployment

With deployment comes change. Knowing what to expect and how to deal with changes can make homecoming more enjoyable and less stressful.

Expectations:

- You may miss the excitement of the deployment for a while.
- Spouses may have become more independent. You may notice your spouse copes with things differently than you do.
- You may not want to talk about your combat experience if people keep asking.
- You may wonder if you still fit into the family.

Tips:

- Support good things your family has done.
- Take time to listen and talk with loved ones.
- Be patient with yourself and family members.
- Be aware that your family may not be the same as before; everyone may have changed.



Contact Us

The VA is also dedicated to assisting returning OIF/OEF veterans and their families during their transition from military to civilian life. If you or a family member would like to receive a free evaluation or assistance, please call:

**1-877-245-3678
(1-877-BHL-FOR-U)**



PHILADELPHIA VA MEDICAL CENTER
3900 Woodland Avenue | Philadelphia | PA 19104
215.823.5800

The VA—here to serve you.

The VA is honored to serve all our veterans, and offers a wide array of care—from primary care services to medication benefits.

The Department of Veterans Affairs has established 2 years of free care* for OIF/OEF veterans, from the date of separation from active duty. This is why it is important to register now, if you haven't already! At the end of your 2 years, you can choose to continue your care through the VA for lifetime!

The ACSJ, an independent survey of customer satisfaction within the VA, shows the sixth consecutive year VA's health care system has outranked the private sector for customer satisfaction, both in in-patient and outpatient settings. Providing outstanding health care is just one of the many services available to those who have served. To find out more information about benefits and how to register, patients may visit www.va.gov or call toll-free at 1-800-827-1000.

*For service related health issues

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On behalf of a grateful nation, Welcome Home!

Returning Home

The time after homecoming can be an exciting time for service members and families. Service members often describe a range of emotions, from excitement and relief to stress, tension or concern. All of these emotions are a normal part of a healthy transition from a war zone to back home.

The Department of Veterans Affairs has recognized symptoms of depression and combat stress reactions in OIF/OEF veterans. While some veterans who experience these reactions recover naturally, others may continue to struggle with memories and emotions related to their combat experience. Early treatment and intervention is important, as untreated minor symptoms may increase over time.

Myths & Facts of Mental Health

Myth 1: Only weak people have mental health problems.

FACT: Everyone is affected by combat. There is no relationship between how strong a person is and these symptoms, many people who are brave and strong may experience these symptoms.

Myth 2: Someone who has had a mental illness can never be normal.

FACT: People with mental illnesses can recover and resume normal activities. With the help of treatment, most people can live successful and full lives.

Myth 3: No one can help me.

FACT: Professional treatment helps, the earlier the better. There are multiple types of treatment, so you have the power of choice.

Symptom Check

Are you:

- Overreacting to minor events?
- Still snapping at your spouse, kids or buddies?
- Getting into fights or heated arguments?
- Avoiding people or situations?
- Still jumping at loud noises or staying revved up?
- Having trouble with sleep or nightmares?
- Drinking to calm down or help you sleep?
- Feeling numb?
- Having relationship problems?
- Not connecting with loved ones?

How the VA can help...

If you, your spouse, or a family member is experiencing problems during this time of transition, the VA offers free assistance!

We would encourage you to call our toll-free line:

1-877-245-3678 (1-877-BHL-FOR-U)

Assessments take about 15-20 minutes, and are completely confidential. When you call, please mention that you are an OIF/OEF veteran, so we may assure that your needs are well met!