

National Academies Link Hypertension, MGUS to Agent Orange Exposure

VFW urges VA to swiftly add both diseases to presumptive list

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WASHINGTON — The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. is calling on the Department of Veterans Affairs to add hypertension and a precursor to multiple myeloma to the current list of 14 presumptive diseases associated with contact with chemical defoliants used in Vietnam, Thailand, and along the Korean DMZ.

The VFW's case is bolstered by a new report just released by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine. The report, entitled [Veterans and Agent Orange: Update 11 \(2018\)](#), found that sufficient evidence exists that links exposure to at least one of the hazardous chemicals with hypertension and MGUS, or monoclonal gammopathy of undetermined significance. The hypertension finding is an upgrade from their 2014 report and MGUS is a newly considered condition.

Said VFW National Commander B.J. Lawrence, "There is no doubt in anyone's mind that Agent Orange made veterans sick, it made their children sick, and it brought pain and suffering and premature death to many. Even though it's been a half century since they were exposed, the results of that exposure is something they continue to live with daily," he said.

"The VFW thanks the National Academies for continuing to honor the charter that Congress gave them, and we now call on VA Secretary Robert Wilkie to use his authority and recognize the science in the report to swiftly add these two illnesses to the presumptive list so that these veterans can finally receive the assistance they earned and deserve," said Lawrence.

The VFW will continue to monitor the progress of the potentially two new presumptive illnesses. In the meantime, the VFW encourages all veterans who served in Vietnam, in

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

406 W. 34th Street
Kansas City, MO 64111
Office 816.756.3390
Fax 816.968.1157

WASHINGTON OFFICE

200 Maryland Ave., N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002
Office 202.543.2239
Fax 202.543.6719

info@vfw.org
www.vfw.org

Thailand or along the Korean DMZ to contact a VFW Service Officer to discuss whether they are eligible to file a VA claim for Agent Orange exposure. Click [here](#) to find a VFW Service Officer nearest you. For the list of 14 presumptive diseases, click [here](#).