



# Women veteran vitality

VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System

WINTER 2009/2010

## Be Recognized for Your Military Service

Have you registered with the Women In Military Service for America (WIMSA) Memorial to honor your personal military experiences?

The WIMSA Memorial is located at the ceremonial entrance to Arlington National Cemetery honoring women who have served in our nation's defense. The WIMSA Memorial was dedicated October 18, 1997 and was endorsed by the Departments of Defense, Transportation, Veterans Affairs and Interior.

Your patriotism and bravery are an integral part of our military history. By registering, your story holds a permanent place in history. We encourage you to be recognized by recording your stories of service, sacrifice and achievement.

## The Heart Truth

Heart disease is the number one killer of women in America, killing more than all forms of cancer combined. The good news is that education and prevention can save your life.

### Some surprising facts about heart disease:

- One in four women die from heart disease, while one in 30 die of breast cancer.
- 23 percent of women die within one year following a heart attack.
- Within six years of having a heart attack, 46 percent of women become disabled with heart failure.

Risk factors such as being overweight, smoking, diabetes, high cholesterol, high blood pressure or not being physically active, make you more likely to develop heart disease. You can

This includes women Veterans that are living and/or deceased, women who served overseas during conflicts in direct support of the armed forces in organizations like Red Cross, USO and Special Services. Those in the U.S. Public Health Service and Cadet Nurse Corps are included in a Special Honor Roll of Cadet Nurses.

Why is it important to register? Because what isn't recorded is lost. Help ensure that the story of women serving in the defense of our nation is never forgotten.

For more information or to register contact: WIMSA Memorial Foundation, Inc. Web site: [www.womensmemorial.org](http://www.womensmemorial.org) E-mail: [hq@womensmemorial.org](mailto:hq@womensmemorial.org) or call Judith Rosenkotter, at (308) 384-4070.

prevent heart disease—and you can start today. By learning about your personal risk factors and making healthful changes in your diet and daily habits, you can reduce your risk of heart-related problems.

### Not all heart attacks begin with sudden chest pain, many start slowly as mild discomfort. The most common warning signs are:

- Chest discomfort (pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain) lasting more than a few minutes.
- Discomfort in other areas of the upper body including arms, neck, jaw or stomach.
- Shortness of breath. Other signs include nausea, light-headedness or breaking out in a cold sweat.

—Continued on Reverse



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# OEF/OIF Women Veterans

## Why contact us?

The Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom (OEF/OIF) Program offers management and advocacy services to all Veterans who have served in combat since November 11, 1998 and are transitioning to civilian life. Case managers and advocates act on behalf of Veterans to obtain the services and benefits they are entitled.

## What we offer

The Transitional Care Clinic offers those services and programs to help Veterans return to civilian life. VA health care is available to those who recently served on active duty in the OEF/OIF war or the Global War on Terrorism theaters of combat.

## Combat stress remains even after you return home

After returning from a theater of combat, stress can significantly interfere with a the ability to relate to family and friends. The lingering effects of combat stress can be expressed with irritability, hostility, anger, trouble sleeping or emotional numbing.

## Frequently requested services by OEF/OIF Veterans:

- Orthopedic Care
- Hearing Examination
- Mental Health/Adjustment Counseling
- Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Screens
- Prosthetics
- Primary Care
- Case Management
- Compensation and Pension

Contact **Jody Kennedy** at (402) 995-4714 for more information or an appointment with a team member.

# Quitting Smoking and Pregnancy

It has long been known that smoking slows the growth of a fetus. It increases the risk of pre-term delivery and nearly doubles the risk of having a low-birthweight baby. Premies and babies with low-birthweight require special care. They face many health problems and are often sicker than babies born to mothers who do not smoke. These health problems include cerebral palsy, mental retardation and learning difficulties, problems with breathing, increased risk of colds and even death.

There is some good news! If a pregnant woman stops smoking before her third trimester, she is no more likely to have a low-birthweight baby than a woman who never smoked. For more information, please visit: [www.marchofdimess.com](http://www.marchofdimess.com), [www.Americanpregnancy.org](http://www.Americanpregnancy.org) or the American Lung Association at [www.lungusa.org](http://www.lungusa.org).

# There's Never Been a Better Time to Quit

The nicotine patch can be placed on your upper arm, torso or back, and works by providing a constant amount of nicotine into your bloodstream. Side effects may include mild itching, burning or tingling at the site, vivid dreams if left on overnight, or headache.

Nicotine gum or lozenges are good choices when cravings hit. These work by quickly providing nicotine into your bloodstream. Side effects may include nausea, upset stomach, hiccups or headache.

There are other options when it comes to quitting smoking. Bupropion is an antidepressant that doesn't contain nicotine. It helps to reduce nicotine withdrawal. Another option is varenicline (Chantix®), which works by preventing nicotine from binding in the brain. Side effects include nausea, upset stomach, gas, constipation, insomnia, depression and suicidal thoughts.

**Though there are many options for quitting, there is no magic pill that will make it easy. When you are ready to quit:**

- **Ask for help**—ask your doctor, nurse, a family member or your friends. Having a strong support system is key for success.

- **Make a list of reasons for wanting to quit**
- **Ask for resources**—Learn about your smoking habit so you can plan ways to manage the cravings. Try the 4 D's: delay, deep breathe, drink water, do something else.
- **Set a quit date**—Make a plan and stick to it. If you should happen to slip, think about the cause and how you can prevent slips. Chewing a piece of sugar-free gum or sucking on a piece of hard candy are great ways to satisfy your oral fixation.
- **Change your routine.** Instead of smoking first thing when you wake up, take a shower.

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