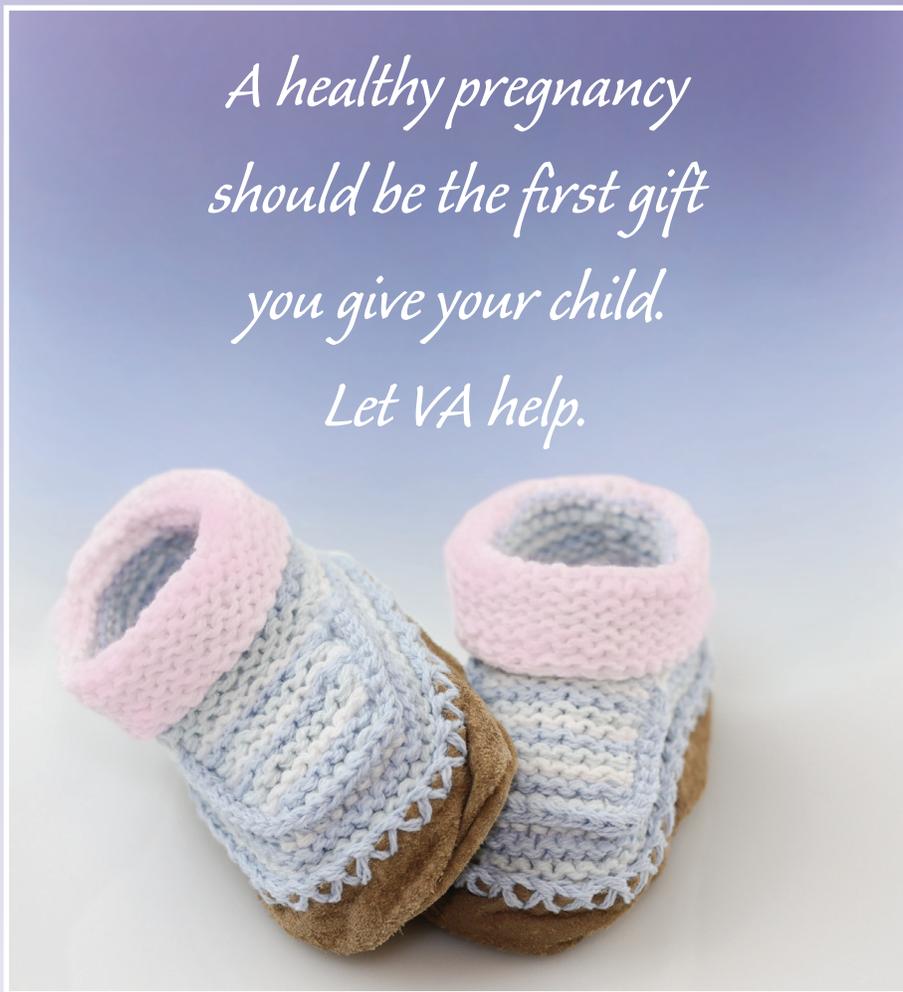




Maternity Care Benefits

*A healthy pregnancy
should be the first gift
you give your child.
Let VA help.*



Eligibility

Women Veterans and CHAMP VA registrants enrolled at a VA Medical Center or Clinic are eligible for Maternity Care Benefits.

Congratulations, You Are Pregnant!

After pregnancy is confirmed (by urine or blood test) your primary care provider will request authorization for maternity care. You will be contacted by a nurse from Southern Arizona VA Health Care System (SAVAHCS). The nurse has experience in obstetrics and will assist you in coordinating your care throughout your pregnancy.

Maternity Care Benefits And Coordination Of Care

The maternity care benefit begins with the confirmation of pregnancy and continues through 6-8 weeks after delivery or when you are released from obstetric care. Some, or possibly all of your care, may be provided by non-VA providers in non-VA facilities. This will depend on where you live and any other conditions that may complicate your pregnancy. SAVAHCS has two OB/GYN providers located at the main campus in Tucson. Plans are in progress for OB/GYN availability at the Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOCs) as well. You should continue to see your provider and other specialists in the VA system during your prenatal care.

A nurse will be monitoring your prenatal care beginning with the confirmation of your pregnancy. She will typically order your initial lab work, arrange any indicated consults while you are pregnant, and assist in obtaining your referral for non-VA care. You will be contacted periodically throughout your pregnancy to assess your overall well-being and to coordinate additional services as needed. After you deliver your baby, the nurse will contact you to find out how you and your baby are doing.

Covered benefits include:

- Pre-natal care and vitamins
- Classes for childbirth, parenting and breastfeeding (lactation)
- Genetic testing
- Labor, delivery, and postpartum
- Postpartum contraception
- Medically necessary newborn care for seven days starting at birth
- Breast pump and nursing bras

Maternity Benefits NOT covered:

- Prescriptions filled at an outside pharmacy, except for emergencies
- Transportation expenses
- Home delivery
- Experimental or Non-VA approved medical procedures
- Medical care for your newborn baby after the first seven days of life

Medical Record Alerts

Upon confirmation of your pregnancy, an alert will be placed in your medical record notifying all providers at SAVAHCS of your pregnancy. The alert notifies all who care for you at SAVAHCS that you are pregnant or breastfeeding. The alert will be removed once you are no longer pregnant or breastfeeding. The alert is for your safety and the safety of your baby.

Emergency Care

For emergencies while you are pregnant but less than 20 weeks, go to the closest emergency department. For emergencies once you are over 20 weeks, go to the hospital where you plan to deliver.

Medications

Medications prescribed by SAVAHCS providers can be filled at the VA Pharmacy. The VA can fill prescriptions written by providers outside of the VA if they have been authorized to provide care for you as a Veteran.

Pregnancy Education Book

The VA will give you a copy of **Pregnancy and Childbirth: A Goal Oriented Guide to Prenatal Care** (referred to as the “Purple Book”) for you to reference during your pregnancy. The book will come from either the SAVAHCS Womens Health Clinic nurse or the Women’s Health Liason at your Community Based Outpatient Clinic. You will also find additional information at the following website: Pregnancyatoz.com. The website was started over 15 years ago when funded by the Surgeon General. The site is continually updated, interactive, user friendly and free. It even offers an online version of the “Purple Book”.

How Do I Find A Provider To Deliver My Baby?

Choosing your obstetric provider is an important step in your prenatal care. It is suggested that you begin your search now. Only you can decide the most important criteria for you. Some questions to consider include:

- Where do you want to deliver? In which community? At what hospital?
- Do you prefer to be cared for by an obstetrician or certified nurse midwife?
- How convenient is their office to where you live or work?
- Do they accept VA patients? (The non-VA Care Coordination Office will help you determine this.)
- At what hospital does the obstetric provider deliver babies?
- Do other providers take calls for the obstetric provider? Will your selected obstetric provider or the on call provider deliver your baby?
- How does the obstetric provider’s practice operate with regards to certain procedures like intravenous fluids, pain medication, monitoring of your baby during the delivery, and episiotomy?
- What is the obstetric provider’s flexibility with other support people in the room during delivery?

What Resources Are Available To Me To Help Me Select My Provider?

If you are seeing a gynecologist who practices obstetrics, you might want to talk with the provider about delivering the baby. Many women also ask their friends, neighbors, family, and primary care providers. Pima County Medical Society keeps a list of OB/GYNs in the area. They can be reached at (520) 795-7985. You can also go to the American College of Obstetricians' website (www.acog/patient.org) for a listing of obstetricians in your area. Local hospitals typically list physicians by specialty, so you may find an OB/GYN by going to the hospital website. Look for the initials "FACOG" (Fellow of the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists) or "FACOOG" (Fellow of the American College of Osteopathic Obstetricians and Gynecologists) after a physician's name. These initials guarantee that the provider has met credentialing standards set by their specialty college.

Choosing A Certified Nurse Midwife:

Maternity care benefits cover a certified nurse midwife (CNM) to deliver your baby in a birthing center or hospital. They place a strong emphasis on natural childbirth and typically spend more time in your labor room than a physician; however, they are limited to managing patients with no medical problems or complications from prior births (cesarean section, multiple births).

How To Choose A Hospital

In most cases, you will deliver your baby at the facility where your OB/GYN provider has privileges. Some women actually choose their hospital first, then their provider. Most hospitals offer tours of labor and delivery and it is worth your time to schedule one to become familiar with their services. You can also find out about their labor and delivery services on the hospital website.

Other considerations to keep in mind include distance from your home, friends and family; whether an anesthesiologist is immediately available to place an epidural for pain control when and if you want one; and the hospital's nursery level. The NICU (neonatal intensive care unit) level determines how much on site care can be provided for your newborn. This is important information if you are experiencing complications early in your pregnancy.

Overview Of Non-VA Care

Once you have selected the provider that will deliver your baby, contact SAVAHCS Non-VA Care Coordination Office at (520) 792-1450, Ext. 5430. The Non-VA Care Coordination Office will confirm if your selected provider is in the VA vendor system. If the OB/GYN provider is in the vendor system, authorizations will be sent to you and your OB/GYN community provider. The authorization contains the name of the community provider and the services that have been authorized for payment by the VA. If you receive a bill from the community provider for a co-pay or for a service that is authorized, please instruct the community provider to bill the VA. For services not within your authorization, you may be responsible for payment to the community provider.

Support For Breastfeeding

VA provides breast pumps, nursing bras, creams, and other items that you may need in order to support successful breastfeeding. For more information, please call the Women's Health Clinic at (520) 629-4885.

Delivering hospitals have either certified lactation consultants or nurses who have a special interest and training in breastfeeding. They can help you before and after you are discharged. Many hospitals have

ongoing breastfeeding support groups. Support from a lactation specialist is a benefit the VA covers. For additional support after your discharge from the hospital, please contact your PACT Team Social Worker.

Insurance For Baby

To learn about medical care programs/insurance for your baby (after the covered seven days), please contact Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) at 1-800-334-5283 or (602) 417-7100, or visit their website at: www.azdes.gov/medical_assistance

Other Support Services

There are many community resources available for new mothers; however, these resources are continually changing. To provide you with the most updated resources, please contact your PACT Team Social Worker who can provide you with more information.

Homeless Services

For immediate and long-term housing assistance, see the walk-in social worker in the Homeless Clinic in the west end of Building 90, Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m., except Thursday from 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. Homeless Clinic also has showers and toiletries, washers and dryers, clothing, food boxes, and referrals for community resources. Visit the website for additional information.

http://www.va.gov/homeless/for_women_veterans.asp

Depression After Pregnancy

After you deliver, frequently ask yourself if you have been:

- Unable to laugh and see the funny side of things
- Unable to look forward to things with enjoyment
- Blaming yourself unnecessarily when things go wrong
- Anxious or worried
- Scared or panicky
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Unable to sleep
- Crying a lot
- Feeling sad or miserable
- Feeling like harming yourself

It is not uncommon for a woman to feel sad, afraid, angry or nervous after their baby is born. These feelings usually go away in one to two weeks after birth; however, if your symptoms persist for more than two weeks or get worse, you may have postpartum depression. Postpartum depression is a serious condition and early diagnosis and treatment is important. If you think you may have postpartum depression, please contact your primary care provider.

There is a scoring questionnaire inside the back cover of the Purple Book. Consider taking it to help yourself know the level of your depression. Please do not hesitate to call the Women's Health Clinic (520) 629-4885.

Contraception After Pregnancy

The SAVAHCS offers many choices for contraception after the delivery of your baby. Options include hormonal birth control (pill, patch, injection and ring), IUDs, implantable birth control and permanent sterilization. Long acting reversible contraception can often be done in one visit by an OB/GYN in the Women's Health Clinic. Please contact the Women's Health Clinic at (520) 629-4885 to schedule your visit to review your choices for birth control.

Veterans Crisis Line

The Veterans Crisis Line connects Veterans in crisis and their families and friends with qualified, caring Department of Veterans Affairs responders through a confidential toll-free hotline, online chat, or text. Veterans and their loved ones can call 1-800-273-8255 and Press 1, chat online, or send a text message to 838255 to receive confidential support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Support for deaf and hard of hearing individuals is available.



My HealtheVet

My HealtheVet is VA's online personal health record. It was designed for Veterans, active duty Service members, their dependents and caregivers. My HealtheVet helps you partner with your health care team. It provides you opportunities and tools to make informed decisions and manage your health care.

Specific features in My HealtheVet are available to you based on your account type. All users who have a [Basic](#) account can view their self-entered information. If you are a VA patient, you can upgrade your account to [Advanced](#) or [Premium](#). For more information about account types and what you can view, visit www.myhealth.va.gov/mhv-portal-web and go to My HealtheVet Account Types. You can also call 1-877-327-0022.

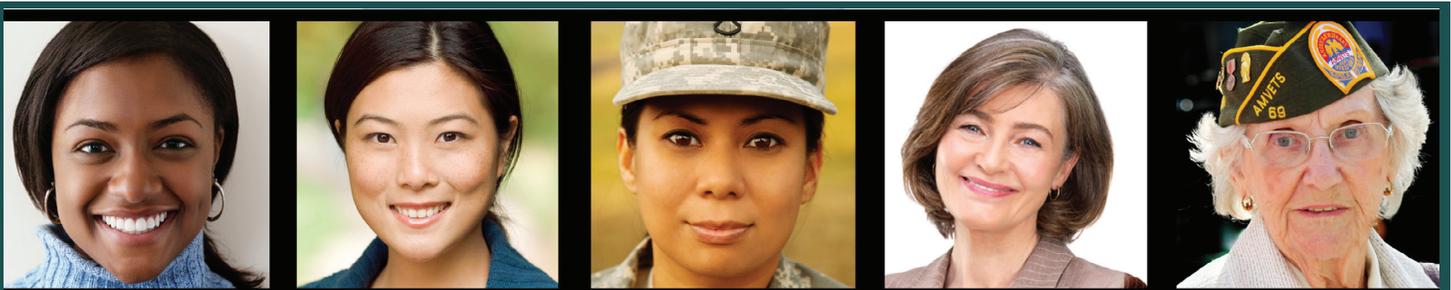
Among the newest features available to Veterans with a Premium Account are VA Notes. These are clinical notes that your health care team records during your appointments or hospital stays. Also available are your VA Immunization Records, more detailed lab reports, and a list of your current medical issues. These features are in addition to prescription refills, VA Appointments, and Secure Messaging - all very popular with Veterans!



Gateway to Veteran Health and Wellness

Important Numbers

Non-VA Care Office	(520) 792-1450, Ext. 5430
My HealtheVet	1-877-327-0022
Pharmacy	(520) 792-1450 or 1-800-470-8262
Pima County Medical Society	(520) 795-7985
Southern AZ Cost Containment System (AHCCCS)	1-800-334-5283, (602) 417-7100
Veterans Crisis Line	1-800-273-8255
Women's Health Clinic	(520) 629-4885
Women Veterans National Call Center	1-855-VA-WOMEN (1-855-829-6636)
Women Veterans Program Manager	(520) 792-1450, Ext. 5498



WOMEN VETERANS HEALTH CARE

★ *You served, you deserve the best care anywhere* ★



1.855.VA.WOMEN WOMEN VETERANS CALL CENTER



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