



# Compensation for Illnesses Obtained During Service in Southwest Asia



## Depending on the Time/Place of Service, Countries May Include

- |             |              |                      |
|-------------|--------------|----------------------|
| Afghanistan | Jordan       | Somalia              |
| Bahrain     | Kuwait       | Syria                |
| Djibouti    | Lebanon      | Turkey               |
| Egypt       | Oman         | United Arab Emirates |
| Iraq        | Qatar        | Uzbekistan           |
| Israel      | Saudi Arabia | Yemen                |

**If I was diagnosed with a *chronic disease* right after I got out of the military, can I be compensated?**

In some cases, yes. If diagnosed or the symptoms were documented within a year of your release from the military, you may be able to claim disability compensation from the VA for tuberculosis, multiple sclerosis, Hansen’s disease, many types of cancer, and other diseases. 38 USC §1112(a). Additionally, if you were a prisoner of war, there are many other chronic diseases that you may claim for compensation. 38 USC §1112(b).

## If I served in the Gulf War, do I qualify for disability compensation?

If you served in the Armed Forces during the Persian Gulf War and now have a qualifying chronic disability or other disability that you can prove stems from your service, you may be compensated. A Persian Gulf veteran is someone who served on active duty in the Armed Forces in the Southwest Asia theater of operations, Afghanistan, Israel, Egypt, Turkey, Syria, or Jordan. 38 USC §1117(f)

**What is a *chronic disability* for Gulf War compensation purposes?**

Symptoms of an undiagnosed illness or medically unexplained chronic illness, such as:

- Fatigue
- Unexplained rashes
- Headaches
- Muscle pain
- Joint pain
- Sleep disturbances
- Gastrointestinal issues
- Cardiovascular symptoms
- Abnormal weight gain or loss
- Neurological or neurophysical signs

38 USC §1117(g)



## Can I claim compensation if I was exposed to other *toxic chemicals* or *burn pits* while serving?

Possibly. You must be able to show that while in the military you experienced toxic exposure. The military has an exposure tracking record system. Your exposure will be presumed if you served in an area where airborne hazards were identified. 38 USC §1119. If you can prove that you served in an area where burn pits were used AND you have been diagnosed with one of the listed cancers, pulmonary diseases, or respiratory diseases, you can claim compensation. 38 USC § 1112