



PRESS RELEASE

Vietnam Veterans of America

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**Contact:
Mokie Porter
301-996-0901**

Message from VVA National President on COVID-19

“In light of the latest information about COVID-19, also known as the Novel Corona Virus, VVA is urging all of our members to visit the CDC and VA websites and to abide by all recommended precautionary measures meant to reduce the spread of the virus,” said John Rowan, VVA National President. “We also strongly encourage our members to refrain from sharing internet memes and unverified updates about the virus on social media which are not confirmed by reputable sources such as the CDC, World Health Organization (WHO), and Department of Veterans Affairs.”

VA website: https://www.publichealth.va.gov/n-coronavirus/#utm_source=VA%20Alerts&utm_medium=banner&utm_campaign=Coronavirus&utm_content=link1

CDC website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/summary.html>

WHO website: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

According to the CDC, while the current risk for the average American to contract the virus is low, the people who are at greatest risk due to COVID-19 includes those who are older, (particularly over 70) and those who have chronic conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, chronic kidney disease, cancer, and lung disease. Due to toxic exposures associated with military service such as Agent Orange, many of VVA’s members have comorbidities which make them susceptible to the most severe complications or death if they contract the virus.

If you develop symptoms of coronavirus (such as high fever, a deep dry cough, fatigue, and shortness of breath), CALL YOUR PROVIDER.

Currently, a doctor’s recommendation is the only requirement for the COVID-19 test.

If you are at [higher risk](#) of getting very sick from COVID-19, the CDC recommends that you should:

- [Stock up on supplies.](#)
- Take [everyday precautions](#) to keep space between yourself and others.
- When you go out in public, keep away from others who are sick, limit close contact, and wash your hands often.
- Avoid shaking hands

- [Avoid crowds](#) as much as possible.
- Avoid [cruise travel](#) and non-essential air travel.
- During a COVID-19 outbreak in your community, [stay home](#) as much as possible to further reduce your risk of being exposed.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue.
- Washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer when soap and water is not available.

Take everyday precautions to keep space between yourself and others. The coronavirus spreads mainly from person to person. When somebody who is infected coughs or sneezes, the virus can spread in respiratory droplets. These droplets might reach the mouths or noses of people who are in close proximity (about 6 feet), which could lead to an infection. These droplets can also land on surfaces, which people might then touch. This could potentially lead to an infection if a person then touches their mouth or nose.

“We want all of our members to create their plan *now* — ahead of time — in case they or someone close to them begins to exhibit symptoms,” said Rowan. “If you suspect that you may have contracted COVID-19 and are experiencing respiratory distress or flu-like symptoms, **CALL BEFORE** you visit your local VA medical center or clinic to receive instructions. Do not just show up at the medical facility as you may be a risk to others. As situations evolve in each community, medical providers may have different recommendations based on each individual situation.”