

# AVVA E - Health Newsletter

Fall 2013



*The Health Committee hopes that you enjoy this E-Newsletter which we are proud to share. Maybe you will find some helpful hints to make your lifestyle easier and healthier.*

*In no way, are we giving medical advice or taking the place of a visit to your Doctor. If you should see any signs of illness mentioned in the newsletter, please make a medical appointment.*

*We welcome any comments or suggestions that you may have. If you have any articles that you would like to submit, please do.*

*If there are any subjects that you might like to see just let us know and we will research it.*

Submit to: Elayne @: [mmm4evr1@aol.com](mailto:mmm4evr1@aol.com)



*We thank VVA for allowing us to use some of their materials and those of Web Weekly*

## Will you?

A study recently published on [TheHeart.org](http://TheHeart.org) shows that people who get the flu vaccine have fewer heart attacks than those who don't get immunized.

[Benico Barzilai, MD](#), Section Head of Clinical Cardiology at Cleveland Clinic, did not participate in the study but reviewed the results. He believes the benefits of the flu vaccine far outweigh the risks, and he agrees that the results, "...suggest that flu vaccination may be protective against cardiovascular events." However, he cautions that there is no definitive proof that flu shots act directly to lower the risk of heart incidents. "This is a very intriguing study but the mechanism of the protection is not entirely clear."

The study adds to the body of literature that shows a protective link between vaccination for the flu and reduction of the risk of acute myocardial infarction (heart attack). There is more work to be done, says Dr. Barzilai, who adds, "...a randomized trial of flu vaccination is sorely needed to prove its protective effects against myocardial infarction."



*"Autumn...the year's last, loveliest smile."  
~ William Cullen Bryant*

*On the first day of autumn, the sun is aligned with the center between the North and the South of the planet.*

*On that day, the light and dark hours are exactly the same length. That's why it is called 'equinox', derived from the Latin word 'aequus' ~ which means 'equal'*



**The AVVA National Health Committee would like to remind you that October is ~**

### **Agent Orange Awareness Month**

While many recognize August as the official awareness month, we are now closer to October and would like to share some valuable web sites and news with you.

We would like to think that every month of the year is Agent Orange Awareness month.

The Health Committee cannot begin to express in words the many thoughts about Agent Orange so we will let the attached articles speak for us.

Websites: these are just a few of many related to Agent Orange.

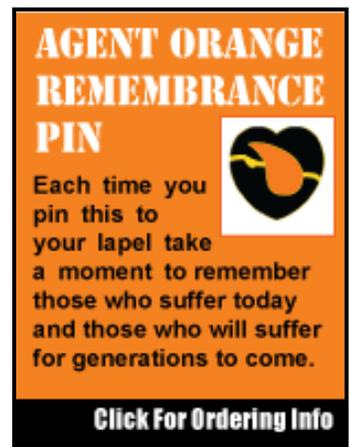
- <http://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/agentorange/diseases.asp>
- <http://www.veteranshealth.org/Vietnam/AO.html>
- <https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.171878540662.155876.7564527566> The purpose of this page is to display one of these pictures as your profile picture for the months of August & October to show support for Agent Orange victims and to spread awareness.
- <https://www.facebook.com/agentorangelegacy>
- <http://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/agentorange/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Faces-of-Agent-Orange/187669911280144>
- <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Faces-of-Agent-Orange/187669911280144>

Faces of Agent Orange is part of the Agent Orange Education Campaign, a project of Vietnam Veterans of America.

- <http://www.birthdefects.org/>
- <http://www.agentorangequiltotears.com/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/AOCOVBH> A/ Closed group; invited by email

### **Ideas for an awareness event:**

- Plan an Agent Orange Town Hall meeting. For more information: [Switzer3@frontiernet.net](mailto:Switzer3@frontiernet.net)
- Have a balloon release – you may have to check local regulations.
- Donate AO pins to members of your community to raise awareness.
- **Distribute an AO fact sheet and educate!**



<http://avva.org/Documents/AO-Pin-Order-Form.pdf>

***The pin is a lovely memento to give to the widows/widowers and family members of victims, to present to those who have Agent Orange related illness, or be worn by members just to keep the victims in our thoughts and prayers.***

*Please wear this pin in honor of those who have suffered or continue to suffer the effects of Agent Orange. The heart shape symbolizes the love we have for our Vietnam Veterans, who have given so much for our Country.*

*The broken crack in the heart shows the heartbreak that so many have endured due to the exposure to deadly dioxins.*

*The orange tear is still being shed each day by our veterans, their families and children due to the lingering effects over forty (40) years later.*

*Each time you pin this to your lapel take a moment to remember those who suffer today and those who will suffer for generations to come.*

**Agent Orange Fact:** Veterans have been seen with body burdens at or just over 1,000 ppt (parts per trillion) - it would take over 100 years to excrete 90% of it. Even if it all "went away" (excreted out of the body), that still does not account for the damage Dioxin does to the lymphatic system or the major organs and a person's DNA.





## Remember Agent Orange: The U.S.' Own Chemical Weapons History *By Beverly Deepe Kever*

Poised to decide whether to bombard Syria for its purported unleashing of chemical weapons on its people, U.S. policymakers might well remember America's own deadly use of Agent Orange in Vietnam and Laos half a century ago and the international outrage it produced.

"Remember Agent Orange" is especially relevant for Hawaii. Agent Orange was tested under a U.S. Army contract at the University of Hawaii's Kauai Agricultural Research Station 45 years ago. Several research workers, regularly drenched with the chemical containing dioxin, a dangerous toxin, died of cancer, according to court documents, and barrels of it were buried on Kauai for decades.

Besides Agent Orange, the U.S. secretly dumped 15 million-plus pounds of chemical weapons in Hawaiian coastal waters during or after World War II but these hazards were hidden from the public for half a century.

Syria is not the first Middle Eastern nation to use chemical weapons and President Obama is not the first commander-in-chief to face such a crisis.

In 1988, responding to the extensive use of chemical weapons in the Iran-Iraq war, President Reagan, addressing the U.N. General Assembly on Sept. 26, called for a conference to review the rapid deterioration of respect for international norms against the use of chemical weapons.

Convened by France, 149 states met in Paris, Jan. 7-11, 1989, for a Conference on Chemical Weapons Use. In its final declaration, the states "solemnly affirm their commitments not to use chemical weapons and condemn such use." They also reaffirmed the prohibitions established in the international agreement called the Geneva Protocol of 1925. Until 1975, the U.S. was the only major government not to ratify the protocol; it then also agreed that the protocol prohibited use of anti-plant chemicals in war.

The U.S. began using Agent Orange in 1965 to defoliate the double- and triple-canopy forests of South Vietnam and

Laos just as American combat units were being introduced and continued for six years, despite increasing Soviet propaganda against it and other international condemnation.

On Dec. 6, 1965, two Air Force spray planes flying at treetop levels began defoliating vegetation in Laos along the Ho Chi Minh Trail there. By the end of the month more than 40 sorties had defoliated almost 24 square miles of trails and roads with 41,000 gallons of herbicide, Paul Frederick Cecil wrote in his "Herbicidal Warfare" book. Other missions continued there for years.

That same month and year, C-123s started spraying in South Vietnam along the roadsides and forests below massive amounts of herbicides, including Agent Orange. By 1971, when the spraying was ended, about five million acres in South Vietnam had been sprayed with herbicides by U.S. fliers, Fred Wilcox wrote in "Waiting for an Army to Die."

Flying over South Vietnam, I could often see below the dying leaves of jungles or mangrove swamps stretching for miles in the once-lush countryside.

Approval for this defoliation policy was akin to the environmental warfare of destroying the grasslands and buffalo of the Native Americans a century earlier, according to Cecil, a U.S. Air Force veteran of Vietnam's defoliation operation and historian.

Following the U.S. Civil War, he elaborated: "The Army successfully employed environmental warfare to counter the 'hit-and-run' tactics of the plains Indians. Civilian destruction of buffalo herds upon which the tribes were almost totally dependent was applauded by the Army, and aided materially in forcing the tribes onto reservations, where they were more easily controlled."

One of the more controversial operations in Air Force history, defoliation was criticized so severely at home and abroad as a violation of international agreements, especially the Geneva Protocol of 1925, that the program was cancelled in 1971, Cecil noted. Thus ended, as Cecil explained, a combat organization "created in secrecy and disbanded in controversy," that was dedicated solely to the purpose of conducting war upon the environment by attacking plants instead of people.

In the final analysis in Vietnam, "The crop destruction program now appears to have been counterproductive and, as predicted by many officials from the beginning, provided the Communist world with a telling argument against the presence of American forces in Vietnam," Cecil concluded. "Despite some inconvenience to enemy forces, the burden of the program frequently came to bear on civilians, especially women and children and the very young and very old."

Even after the war had ended, however, the use of Agent Orange and other defoliants in Vietnam drew even more controversy in the 1970s when Vietnam veterans increasingly claimed serious health and genetic damage, when inconclusive medical studies were made and when numerous lawsuits were brought against the government (these were dismissed on procedural grounds) and then against the product manufacturers, who agreed in an out-of-court settlement to establish a \$180 million indemnification fund, without any admission of liability.

Results of Agent Orange's defoliation in South Vietnam appear long lasting in contrast to the sarin chemical the U.S. claims Syria has used; sarin dissipates in the air within six days.

Forests were destroyed and dioxin persists at levels exceeding standards of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. As The New York Times reported in 2007, the dioxin there has left traces in soil, animals, blood and breast milk and increased the risks of cancer and other diseases to the impoverished mountain peoples.

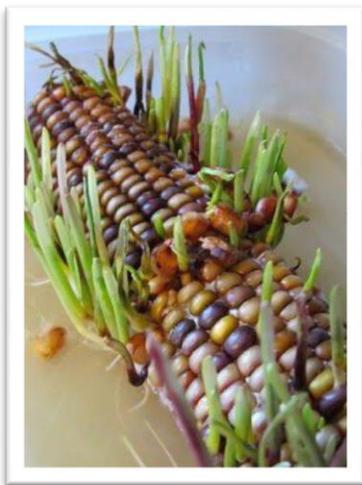
**About the author:** *Professor Emerita Beverly Deepe Kever is the author of the recently released "Death Zones and Darling Spies: Seven Years of Vietnam War Reporting"*

**Please read this and take action.**

<http://www.stopthemonsoantoprotectionact.com/2013/09/19/stop-monsanto-protection-act-merkley/>

### **Boycott GMO and factory-farmed foods**

One of the best ways to bring down Monsanto is to stop buying GMO products. Without labels on GMO foods, the only way to avoid them is to buy USDA-certified organic foods, or avoid any foods containing canola, soy, corn or sugar beets, as they are most likely GMO. It also helps to grow as many of your own vegetables as possible, using organic, non-GMO seeds. And because nearly 80 percent of GMO crops are fed to animals in factory farms, by boycotting meat, eggs and dairy products from animals raised in Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs), you can help dry up the market for Monsanto's seeds.



# **GMO's = Genetically Modified Organics**

**Lie:**

Consumers don't need labels to avoid GMOs. All they need to do is buy certified organic products.



[organicconsumers.org](http://organicconsumers.org)

Food companies routinely and intentionally mislead consumers by labeling products "natural" in order to attract health-conscious consumers. Because the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) does not prohibit the use of the word "natural" on products containing GMOs, most consumers are fooled by this label. According to a recent poll by the Hartman group, 61 percent of respondents erroneously believed that the use of the word "natural" implies or suggests the absence of GMOs, versus 63 percent who correctly believed that the label "organic" means that a product is GMO-free. Food companies should be required, as they are in some 60 other countries, to clearly state that a product contains GMOs. If companies truly believe their GMO ingredients are perfectly safe, why spend millions to keep from having to label them?

**Learn more about the Lies #GMO Labeling Opponents are Recycling in Washington State:**

[http://www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article\\_28148.cfm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article_28148.cfm)



**Some good information for reading...**

<http://www.naturalnews.com/GMO.html>

<http://www.bestfoodfacts.org/food-for-thought/gmo-human-health>

<https://www.facebook.com/1Exmo>

**You don't have to ingest GMOs** as food in order to be



exposed to them. There are plenty of other ways that GMOs come into our lives in many other forms.

**Beauty Care Products:**

Many beauty care products like deodorant sprays, lotions,

and facial cleansers, contain GMO derivatives. Look out for denatured alcohol which is simply ethanol made from BT corn. Also be weary of creams made with soy protein isolates, or dehydrogenated soy ingredients as these are also likely GMO.

**Cotton:** Is that shirt that you have on right now Organic? GM cotton covers more than 15 million hectares on the planet is accounts for more than 70 percent of all cotton grown. Chances are that your cotton swabs and balls are also GM Cotton.

**Ink:** While soy ink is marketed as an alternative to petroleum based products it is made from GM soy beans. Soy ink is printed on a variety of items from newspapers to magazines. It is also readily absorbed through the skin.

**Hand Sanitizer:** Not only do hand sanitizers fuel the creation of antibiotic resistant super bugs but they also contain ethanol made from GM corn.

Read more at <http://www.realarmacy.com/5-ways-you-are-exposed-to-gmos-without-eating-them/>



**Overmedicated?**

"The people in charge said, 'We want you to sign off on narcotic prescriptions on patients you don't see,'" she said. "I was absolutely stunned. And I knew immediately it was illegal. It works on the surface. It keeps the veterans happy. They don't complain. They're not coming in as often if they have their pain medicine. And the people in charge don't care if it's done right."

CBS News obtained VA data through a records request which show the number of prescriptions written by VA doctors and nurse practitioners during the past 11 years.

The number of patients treated by VA is up 29 percent, but narcotics prescriptions are up 259 percent.

A dozen VA physicians who've worked at 15 VA medical centers told us they've felt pressured by administrators to prescribe narcotics and that patients are not being properly monitored

"I have seen people that have not had an exam of that body part that they're complaining of pain in for two years," said a doctor who presently treats pain patients at the VA and had asked not to be identified. "It's easier to write a prescription for narcotics, and just move along, get to the next patient."

**Continue Learning:** [http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-18563\\_162-57603767/veterans-dying-from-overmedication/](http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-18563_162-57603767/veterans-dying-from-overmedication/)

**To Snore or Not to Snore**

If you can't get through the night without a symphony of snorts and saws, you're not alone. According to the [National Sleep Foundation](#), about 90 million American adults snore. Snoring is common in both men and women but is more frequent in men, says [Harneet Walia](#), MD, of [Cleveland Clinic's Sleep Disorders Center](#). It can disrupt your or your bed partner's sleep. It also can be a symptom of Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA), which may be linked to cardiovascular disease in the long term.

If you suspect OSA, seek treatment as soon as possible. For others with snoring, though, "lifestyle changes should always be the first line of treatment in the absence of OSA," Dr. Walia says.

**Drop extra pounds.** For overweight or obese people, snoring may be caused by extra weight around the throat, which leads to the collapse of the upper airway. Because of this, weight loss may decrease the frequency of snoring.

**Banish the brew before bed.** Alcohol may cause relaxation of the airway muscles while you sleep, so avoid it for several hours before bedtime.

**Change your sleep positions.** Sleeping on your back can cause your airway to close. If you snore, try sleeping on your side to open your airway.

"Lifestyle changes should always be the first line of treatment in the absence of OSA."

**Quit smoking.** Doing so may improve nasal congestion and thereby reduce snoring.

**Over-the-counter remedies:** In addition, a trip to the drugstore will show no shortage of over-the-counter solutions for snoring, but they are not always backed by research, Dr. Walia cautions. However, some treatments may help under the guidance of a doctor:

**Intranasal decongestants.** These may help if your snoring is caused by nasal congestion — especially the common cold. For chronic nasal congestion, intranasal steroid sprays may be used.

**Nasal strips.** These strips, designed to open the airway, can ease snoring in some patients, Dr. Walia says.

### Treatments for serious snorers

About half of those with loud snoring have obstructive sleep apnea, which also can include symptoms such as daytime sleepiness or tiredness, gasping for air or choking episodes at night and witnessed pauses in breathing while sleeping. For obstructive sleep apnea, your doctor might order a sleep study in the lab, called a polysomnogram, or a home sleep test. After diagnosis, there are treatments in addition to lifestyle changes that can help reduce snoring and improve your sleep.

### Continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP).

This is the most commonly used therapeutic treatment for sleep apnea. You'll wear a face or nasal mask overnight, which forces air through your airway to keep it open.

**Oral appliances.** These mouthpieces increase the size of the upper airway during sleep, advance the jaw and the tongue forward, and can help reduce snoring. They are safer than surgery and effective in certain patients if used correctly. They can be used in isolated snoring as well, Dr. Walia says.  
~ Cleveland Clinic

### REGISTER NOW: IMPORTANT MESSAGE TO CHILDREN OF VIETNAM VETERANS

- Vietnam Veterans of America Agent Orange/Dioxin Committee is asking the children of Vietnam veterans exposed to Agent Orange; adult children (we recommend you register your children also) who are ill and/or have birth defects, learning disabilities and/or mental health issues; to register with Birth Defect Research for Children, Inc. National Birth Defect Registry. Participation in the registry includes: Completing an online questionnaire:

[CLICK HERE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE REGISTRY.](#)

- The questionnaire will ask about you (the child) or your disabilities; health and family history of both parents; exposures during pregnancy and occupational exposures.
- A special section will ask about the veteran's service in Vietnam. This section was designed in collaboration with the New Jersey State Agent Orange Commission.
- Collected data will be used for a study of the pattern of birth defects and disabilities that have been most frequently reported in the children of Vietnam veterans.
- All data are confidential. Your permission would be requested before any researcher would get in touch with you.
- For more information contact Betty Mekdeci, 407-895-0802 or send email to:
- [betty@birthdefects.org](mailto:betty@birthdefects.org).



### Physicians Resource for Children of Vietnam Veterans

Vietnam veterans have been reporting that their children have been born with birth defects and other health problems for decades. This cry for help has fallen on deaf ears for many years.

We have created this one page document to help educate our doctors about the generational effects of Agent Orange on the Children of Vietnam veterans.

The children of Vietnam veterans exposed to Agent Orange continue to go without adequate medical intervention, without the support and services they so desperately need.

***Please print and take to your physicians.***

[Physicians Resource 2013](#)

To find document please link to this page:

<http://agentorangelegacy.blogspot.com/2013/05/physicians-resource-for-children-of.html>

cont.



**Epigenetics** — how genes change as a result of environmental factors in ways that can be passed onto the next generation



Geneticists were especially surprised to find that epigenetic change could be passed down from parent to child, one generation after the next. A study from Randy Jirtle of Duke University showed that when female mice are fed a diet rich in methyl groups, the fur pigment

of subsequent offspring is permanently altered. Without any change to DNA at all, methyl groups could be added or subtracted, and the changes were inherited much like a mutation in a gene.

Now, at the bar in Madrid, Szyf and Meaney considered a hypothesis as improbable as it was profound: If diet and chemicals can cause epigenetic changes, could certain experiences — child neglect, drug abuse or other severe stresses — also set off epigenetic changes to the DNA inside the neurons of a person's brain? That question turned out to be the basis of a new field, behavioral epigenetics, now so vibrant it has spawned dozens of studies and suggested profound new treatments to heal the brain.

According to the new insights of behavioral epigenetics, traumatic experiences in our past, or in our recent ancestors' past, leave molecular scars adhering to our DNA. Jews whose great-grandparents were chased from their Russian shtetls; Chinese whose grandparents lived through the ravages of the Cultural Revolution; young immigrants from Africa whose parents survived massacres; adults of every ethnicity who grew up with alcoholic or abusive parents — all carry with them more than just memories.

Like silt deposited on the cogs of a finely tuned machine after the seawater of a tsunami recedes, our experiences, and those of our forebears, are never gone, even if they have been forgotten. They become a part of us, a molecular residue holding fast to our genetic scaffolding. The DNA remains the same, but psychological and behavioral tendencies are inherited. You might have inherited not just your grandmother's knobby knees, but also her predisposition toward depression caused by the neglect she suffered as a newborn

<http://redicecreations.com/article.php?id=26114>

**Dropping the D from PTSD won't change stigma, study says** Researchers found no scientific proof supporting an Army idea to drop the word "disorder" from the term post-traumatic stress disorder as a means of removing the stigma from the disease, according to a RAND study.

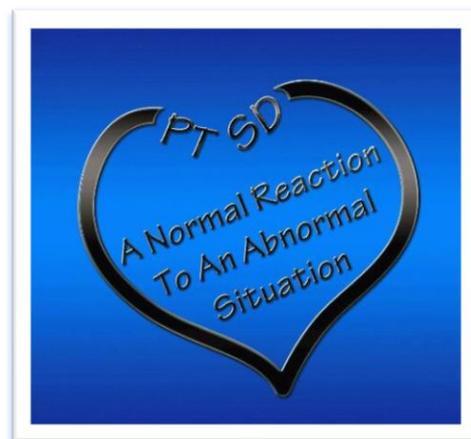
Claiming that soldiers would more willingly seek help for the illness if it was called post-traumatic stress or post-traumatic stress injury, the Army asked the American Psychiatric Association to change the name in its official manual of mental illnesses.

The association declined to do so in 2011. The illness stems from experiencing traumatic events such as sexual assault, traffic accidents or combat. Symptoms include distressing persistent memories of the trauma, feelings of intense anxiety, negative moods, a sense of emotional numbness and an avoidance of anything triggering flashbacks.

Even after the association refused to change the name of the illness, the Army has continued using the shorter term "post-traumatic stress." The service has even begun to use the term in place of PTSD in official documents, RAND researchers found.

But scientists found no studies suggesting that people suffering the disease would be any more inclined to seek treatment if the name was changed. Using the shorter term could also create confusion since labeling it a "stress," something typically short-lived, contrasts with "disorder," which more accurately describes the illness' persistent symptoms, scientists said. "A name change at any level is unlikely to generate a significant increase in individuals willing to be diagnosed or treated," the study says.

<http://beta.congress.gov/congressional-report/113th-congress/senate-report/107/1>



cont.

## Gulf War Syndrome, Other Illnesses Among Veterans May Be Due To Toxic Environments



In 1991, as part of Operation Desert Storm, former U.S. Army Spc. Candy Lovett arrived in Kuwait a healthy 29-year-old eager to serve her country. Two decades later, she's accumulated a stack of medical records over five feet high -- none of which relates to injuries inflicted by bullets or shrapnel.

"It's just been one thing after another," said the veteran, who now resides in Miami and whose ailments run the gamut from lung disease and sleep apnea to, most recently, terminal breast cancer. "At one point," she said, "I was on over 50 pills."

Former Air Force Tech. Sgt. Tim Wymore, who was deployed to Iraq in 2004, suffers from an array of health problems that mirror Lovett's. "Everyone has the same things," said Wymore, who has inexplicably shed 40 pounds in the last few months. "It's just weird."

Wymore and Lovett -- and countless others who served in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere in the desert region over the past three decades -- have struggled to understand this, but they share one nagging conviction: These ailments are tied to service in a war zone.

Their suspicions -- long rebuffed by insurance companies -- are now getting support from some doctors and environmental health researchers, who suspect that American soldiers are being unnecessarily exposed to heavily contaminated environments while serving overseas. Even when not engaged directly in combat, they say, servicemen and women -- typically without protective masks or other simple precautions -- live and work amid clouds of [Middle Eastern dust](#) laden with toxic metals, bacteria and viruses, and surrounded by plumes of smoke rising from [burn pits](#), a common U.S. military practice of burning feces, plastic bottles and other solid waste in open pits, often with jet fuel.

Research published in December 2012 raises the possibility that in some instances, soldiers may have been exposed to

airborne cocktails that included low levels of a [deadly chemical warfare agent](#), the nerve gas sarin, which wafted hundreds of miles from U.S.-bombed Iraqi facilities.

"I knew something strange was happening," said Dr. Anthony Szema, who recalled returning from summer vacation a few years ago to find that his typically older, overweight clientele had been eclipsed by throngs of apparently sturdy 20- to 25-year-old non-smokers wearing uniforms. His subsequent investigation concluded that [new asthma diagnoses](#) among Long Island, N.Y.-based forces were far more common among soldiers who deployed to war zones than those who had stayed state-side.

"There are lots of dangers of war," said Szema, an assistant professor at Stony Brook University School of Medicine. "But at least some of them are preventable."

Overall, the military has seen [rates of neurological, respiratory and cardiovascular disorders](#) rise 251 percent, 47 percent and 34 percent, respectively, according to a USA Today analysis of military morbidity records from 2001 to 2010.

Still, connecting any particular exposure to a disease is extremely difficult, and federal officials suggest it is too early to jump to conclusions.

"There is concern that there could be long-term effects" of dust and burn pit exposures, said Dr. Paul Ciminera, director of the Post-9/11 Era Environmental Health Program at the U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs. "Right now, there is insufficient evidence." That's slowly changing.

Dr. Cecile Rose, director of the occupational and environmental medicine clinic at National Jewish Health, said that while investigation of these exposures are in their infancy, she is seeing a number of returning troops who suffer from respiratory diseases -- virtually all of whom say they experienced substantial exposure to dust storms and burn pits while overseas.

"The more we do this," she said, "the more compelling it is that there is a problem."

**SOURCES OF ILLS** A thin crust of sand naturally covers the Middle Eastern desert landscape. But once that protective layer is crushed, say, by a tank or caravan, the fine grains are vulnerable to being swept up into the air. Research has found that military activity can [raise the likelihood of dust storms five-fold](#), and that the annual number

of dust storms has been on the rise in the Middle East since the Gulf War.

Navy Capt. Mark Lyles, chair of health and security studies at the U.S. Naval War College's Center for Naval Warfare Studies, speaking as a private citizen, speculated that the smoking gun for many of the diagnosed and undiagnosed diseases may well be this ubiquitous dust, which can linger in the air for days after a dust storm and gets continuously kicked up by boots, wheels and gusts of wind.

The [microscopic dust particles](#) can be "great delivery vehicles" for toxins, Lyles said, because they "bind to everything" yet are small enough to sneak past the body's natural defenses into the lungs and other tissues.

With high temperatures and low humidity, a soldier tends to breathe through the mouth rather than the nose, especially when wearing heavy armor and exercising. "That opens the door for larger particles to penetrate deeper into the lungs," explained Lyles.

"If you're riding behind a vehicle or lying on the ground or just following someone on foot," Lyles added, "the exposure level goes way up -- let alone any wind pick-up or dust storm."

In samples of Middle East dust, Lyles has identified [aluminum](#), lead and other metals that have been linked to conditions affecting the neurological, respiratory and cardiovascular systems. Lyles has also found what he considers "significant levels" of bacteria, fungi and viruses in the dust particles.

Szema, too, is finding [metals including titanium](#) in biopsies of veterans' lungs and in samples of Middle Eastern dust. "And the dust is sharp," he said, comparing it to asbestos. Mice exposed to the dust as part of Szema's research developed lung inflammation and suppressed T cells, key soldiers in the immune system's invader-fighting arsenal. He is testing a novel drug that he believes will protect the body from these effects.

"It would not surprise me at all if we identify organisms associated with illnesses found in various personnel," said Dale Griffin of the U.S. Geological Survey, who has also worked on [analyzing dust samples](#).

Others are more skeptical. "It's to be expected that veterans link what they see, smell, taste and feel to diseases. Our job is to identify and quantify what is going on," added Dr.

Michael R. Peterson, a post-deployment health consultant with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

"But science changes," Dr. Bernard Rosof, on the board of directors at Huntington Hospital in N.Y., told HuffPost. "And we can't negate the possibility that we might find something in the future."

The committee concluded that there is no standard treatment approach for these veterans, and that the cause or causes of chronic multisymptom illness may never be found.

"What they are suffering from is medically unexplained, but very real," added Rosof. "We need to give it the attention it deserves



***Don't it always seem to go, that you don't know what you've got 'til it's gone?*** Those were the memorable lyrics from a popular 1970's hit song by Joni Mitchell, titled "Big Yellow Taxi," that I just heard playing on the radio.

Truer words were never spoken, and those speak to the heart of my message today. With rare exception, most people take the most important things in life for granted.

Let me begin by saying that we're all guilty of this to some degree. While it's true that some of you are more tuned in to this than others, most people don't give a second thought to the most precious things in life until they're unavailable and the spotlight of awareness is brightly focused upon them.

So today I thought I'd share with you five of the most common things that I think most people take for granted:

**1. Food and Water:** When we get hungry or thirsty, we can simply pull into any fast-food joint or store and get something to drink and grab a quick bite to eat. We're also quite accustomed to having our grocery stores stacked high and deep with a vast variety of purchasing options. Food and water is typically only a few minutes away, even at the worst of times for most of us.

**2. Your Health:** When I say health, I actually mean many different things beside the opposite of illness. I'm also referring to things we just do without thought every single day, like your ability to walk, use your hands, speak, hear,

cont.

smell, taste and think clearly, for just a few examples. The body is an amazing creation and the fact that it operates smoothly most days is still a magnificent mystery to me that far too many of us simply take for granted.

**3. Time:** This is an interesting concept because I don't think that most people realize how much they take time for granted until, that is, they get a bit older. Age has a way of teaching us all about how precious time is and how quickly it passes by us. *Where did all of those years go?* That's a question I hear a lot from people as they age and mature.

**4. Your Significant Other:** There's an unfortunate kind of complacency that seems to take hold in most relationships that's born out of familiarity and naturally comes with the passage of time. The sad reality is that taking your significant other for granted can be emotionally distressing to your partner and potentially devastating to your relationship. Since human nature tends to take us in this direction, we should all be on guard about the downside of taking our companions for granted.

**5. Friends and Family:** I think most people believe that their friends and family will always be there for them and, as a result, those loved ones often aren't treated with the kindness, love and respect they deserve. The reality is that these are the very people who we should attend to the most in our lives

**For most people,** happiness is the Holy Grail in life. However, countless people who achieve great financial success find themselves very unhappy. When all is said and done, money and material things don't bring you true happiness. And just as the Holy Grail was said to possess miraculous powers, so does happiness. It brings with it a mysterious ability to lift your spirit and brighten your life.

Take your happiness temperature on occasion. Since there is no actual medical tool for that evaluation, I have a question to help you see where you fall on the happiness scale. On a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 being the least and 10 being the most, how happy would you say you currently are? Give this some serious thought and be brave enough to be honest. Of course, this is an unscientific method and this number can change from minute to minute. Still, it is a self-report that will provide you with some important feedback about your general state of your happiness.

If you don't score high on the happiness scale, why not make today the day you begin moving up by actively and mindfully seeking a happier life?

~Dr. John H. Sklare [www.theinnerdiet.com](http://www.theinnerdiet.com)

**Dr. Phil's test interesting and fun to take.**  
<http://www.slideshare.net/VistaComm/dr-phil-test-1670404>

***You mean well, but it's easy to say the wrong thing to a loved one who has the blues. And that may only add to his or her troubles. Here are the top 9 statements to avoid and what to say to help someone overcome depression...***

Which piece of advice will most likely cheer up a clinically depressed person?

- A. "Pull yourself together."
- B. "Look on the bright side."
- C. "Don't worry. It's nothing serious."

The answer: None of the above. Such statements probably will make a depressed mate or friend feel worse. That's because depression – an illness characterized by extreme sadness, changes in sleep patterns, appetite, energy level or mental focus – is a touchy subject and difficult to talk about.

Unlike high blood pressure or other health conditions, "there's unnecessary stigma attached to depression," says Richard Shadick, Ph.D., director of the counseling center at Pace University in New York. "Some people still view it as a sign of weakness."

And that makes for awkward conversations on both sides. But talking about depression easily and openly isn't impossible. With some forethought, you can find the right words to help ease depression's pain. **For full article:** [http://www.lifescrypt.com/health/centers/mens/articles/what\\_not\\_to\\_say\\_to\\_a\\_depressed\\_mate.aspx](http://www.lifescrypt.com/health/centers/mens/articles/what_not_to_say_to_a_depressed_mate.aspx)

**As Vietnam Veterans and family members of Vietnam Veterans, many of us are unfortunately painfully familiar with the health hazards of dioxin. Decades after soldiers were exposed to Agent Orange and dioxin in Vietnam, EPA has still not yet finalized their report on dioxin and cancer.**

The EPA's landmark report—the "Dioxin Reassessment"—still remains a draft, which has stymied the agency's development of federal dioxin regulations for over 25 years.

EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson pledged to finalize this assessment by December 2010. Nearly four years later after EPA's self-imposed deadline, we are still waiting for this assessment to be complete. In August 2011, EPA announced a plan to complete both the cancer and non-cancer assessment. EPA's non-cancer assessment was completed in February of 2012, thanks in part to pressure from Vietnam Veterans, yet the cancer assessment has still not been completed eighteen months later.

**\*\* URGENT DIOXIN / AGENT ORANGE ALERT \*\***

**Tell EPA: Finalize Dioxin Cancer Study, After Decades of Delay**

**Dioxin** has been classified as a known carcinogen by government authorities around the world including the World Health Organization's International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) and the US Department of Health and Human Services National Toxicology Program (NTP). **Yet, EPA's cancer assessment is still not complete. Americans have the right to know about dioxin's cancer hazards.**

**After signing the petition, here's other ways you can help!**

- Share the petition on Facebook and Twitter!
- Write a personalized letter to EPA, demanding they finalize their dioxin cancer assessment. Share your personal story about how dioxin/agent orange has impacted you and your family.

**Here's the mailing address:**

Administrator Gina McCarthy  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA)  
1200 Ariel Rios Building  
Washington, DC 20460

Call or write your member of Congress and US Senators. Ask them if they will write a letter to the EPA urging them to finalize the dioxin cancer assessment.

**TAKE ACTION – SIGN THE PETITION TO EPA**

**As Vietnam Vets, we have the power and moral authority to tell the federal government to finalize their dioxin cancer study. You can help make a difference by signing a petition to EPA online!**

*Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA),  
Associates of Vietnam Veterans of America Inc.,  
Center for Health, Environment & Justice (CHEJ).*



May no Soldier  
go unloved  
May no Soldier  
walk alone  
May no Soldier  
be forgotten  
May no soldier  
be left behind  
when they return  
home!

**Take Action!**

**What is S.851?** This legislative bill is to expand the Veteran of Administration's Caregiver program to pre 9/11 veterans. Currently only post 9/11 veterans are eligible for all of the benefits the program has to offer. If eligible, this is what the program provides: The VA Caregiver program will provide your caregiver (which you choose), training, ongoing support, counseling, Champ VA health insurance, respite care, reimbursement for lodging and travel, and a monthly stipend between \$600-\$2,000.

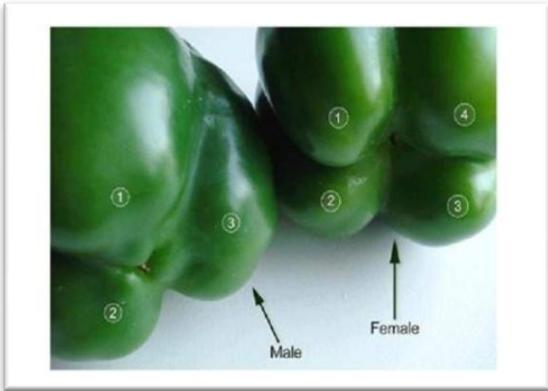
**Who is eligible:** A veteran that has an inability to perform 1 or more activities of daily living, need supervision or protection based on symptoms of neurological or other impairment. Currently you **MUST** be a post 9/11 veteran. To clarify, no you do not need a 100% rating to be eligible for this program.

**We need your help:** Currently S.851 passed out of the Senate's Committee on Veteran Affairs. We need everyone calling their 2 senators and asking them to support and co-sponsor this bill. **SECONDLY**, we need to pressure the House Committee on Veterans Affairs to **MIRROR** S.851. Please call: 202-225-3527 and ask them to mirror this bill. **THIRD**, Call your Representatives and educate them about S.851 and urge them to introduce the same bill on the House side.

If you run into any office opposing the bill because of budget issues, remind them the program saves the country money. The current program for post 9/11 veterans passed because they knew it saved money. They can read the current bill for more detail. **CONGRESS** said they would expand the Caregiver program after two years **IF** the VA reported the program worked and the VA could handle the expansion. The VA reported it does work and they can handle the expansion. Tell Congress they can **NOT** leave pre 9/11 era veterans behind. We deserve and have earned the same benefits.

<http://beta.congress.gov/congressional-report/113th-congress/senate-report/107/1>

<https://www.facebook.com/Supportingcaregiverexpansion>



Flip the bell peppers over to check their gender. The ones with four bumps are female and those with three bumps are male. The female peppers are full of seeds, but sweeter and better for eating raw and the males are better for cooking.



- » Water
- » Blue Berries
- » Sweet Potato
- » Avocado
- » Tomato
- » Yogurt
- » Garlic
- » Beans
- » Almonds
- » Apples
- » Eggs
- » Lemon
- » Ginger
- » Brussel Sprouts
- » Spinach
- » Olive Oil
- » Oats
- » Fish
- » Cottage Cheese
- » Cocoa

### Things your mother should have told you:



1. Stuff a miniature marshmallow in the bottom of a sugar cone to prevent ice cream drips.
2. Use a meat baster to “squeeze” your pancake batter onto the hot griddle and you’ll get perfectly shaped pancakes every time.

3. To keep potatoes from budding, place an apple in the bag with the potatoes.
4. Run your hands under cold water before pressing Rice Krispies treats in the pan and the marshmallow won’t stick to your fingers.
5. Spray your Tupperware with nonstick cooking spray before pouring in tomato-based sauces and there won’t be any stains.



### 2 Ingredient Lemon Bars

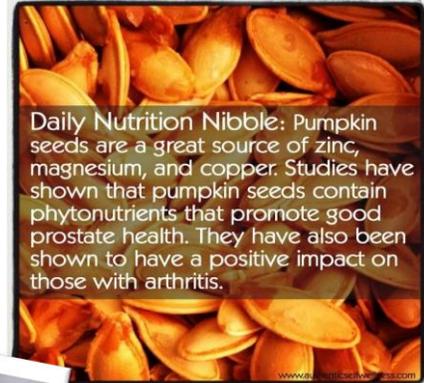
- 1 Box Angel Food Cake mix (make sure you grab the 1 step kind)
- 1 21 oz can lemon pie filling.
- ...
- preheat oven to 350
- Mix both ingredients together well, it takes a minute but you’ll get there.
- Pour into a 9x13 baking pan (I sprayed mine to be sure it didn't stick)
- Bake for 20-25 minutes until brown.
- If you cut into 24 bars, it's 2 WWP+, 12 bars is 4 WWP+ (Weight Watchers friendly)

# October Happenings

Make that Carving Last - Spray a mixture of bleach and water on the inside of your fresh pumpkin daily or coat the inside w/ petroleum jelly to keep mold and dehydration



## Great ideas



Daily Nutrition Nibble: Pumpkin seeds are a great source of zinc, magnesium, and copper. Studies have shown that pumpkin seeds contain phytonutrients that promote good prostate health. They have also been shown to have a positive impact on those with arthritis.



holes made with a drill



Just imagine the look on your Childs face when they see this.

### FAIRIES IN A JAR DIRECTIONS:

1. Cut a glow stick and shake the contents into a jar.
2. Add diamond glitter
3. Seal the top
4. Shake hard



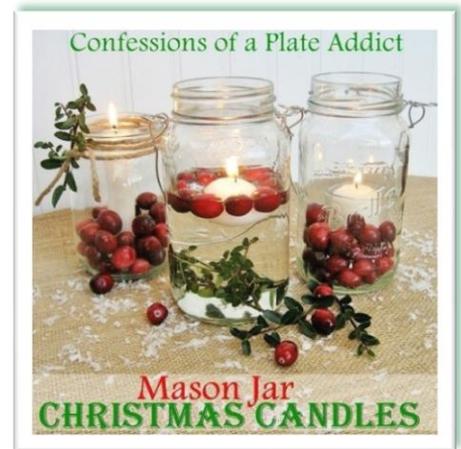


## *Easy Christmas Gifts or Stocking Stuffers*

Terra cota pot, face decorations and pipe cleaners (twigs from the yard would be cute too)



**Hot Chocolate mix**  
**Chocolate chips**  
**Marshmallows**  
**Cone made of cellophane**



**handprints for an apron?**



NO ENERGY OR MATERIALS REQUIRED