

KEY ASESMENT QUESTIONS
for
Service Members, Veterans, and Their Families (SMVF)

Ask EACH patient this question...

“Have you or a loved one ever served in the U. S. Armed Forces?”

This is the one question which should be asked by all organizations when assessing the needs of members of the military community Service Members, Veterans, and Their Families (SMVF). This rubric encompasses the universe of military service and will allow providers to stratify subsets of military service by type, duration, combat exposure, and degree of involvement to properly refer individuals to the most appropriate services and resources. Doing so avoids confusion about who is a veteran. Some individuals even though they have been in the military and worn a military uniform, don't consider themselves veterans particularly women SMVF. Others due to their military experience may not have qualified for veterans' status or eligibility for veterans' benefits or services.

If you get a positive response, you may want to further examine this experience. But remember that this is optional and further inquiry depends on each unique situation, with the goal to help you to help the SMVF navigate to the right service.

Ask yourself is my practice prepared to identify and then treat or refer to known treatment or therapy sources for post deployment problems?

What branch of service did you join?

U.S. Army
U.S. Navy
U.S. Marine Corps
U.S. Air Force
U.S. Coast Guard

Did you serve on Active Duty?

Did you serve in the National Guard?

Did you serve in the Reserves?

Why did you join that branch of service?

What did you hope to accomplish?

What was your Job in the military? Or What was your career group

<u>Service</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Officer</u>	<u>Enlisted</u>
ARMY		Branch (Functional Area)	MOS (Military Occupational Specialty)
NAVY		Designator	Rating or NEC (Navy Enlisted Classification)
MARINES		MOS	MOS
AIR FORCE		Air Force Specialty Code	Same (AFSC)

Did you serve overseas?

When?

Where?

How long?

Was the overseas assignment enjoyable?

Did you have any combat tours?

How many?

When?

Where?

What about the intensity of combat?

Can you describe the intensity of your combat experience?

Were you satisfied with the training and preparation you received prior to deployment?

How do your family members feel about the military?

You may want to employ some standardized assessment tools

- Primary Care Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Screen (PC – PTSD)
- Combat Exposure Scale (CES)
- PTSD Checklist – Civilian Version (PCL – C)
- Trauma Symptom Checklist – 40 (TSC – 40)
- 3 Question DVBIC TBI Screening Tool
- PAIN – A critical question is whether or not someone is experiencing pain
 - While a critical area you must be prepared to have an appropriate response to the answer of this question including referral to known treatment or therapy sources.
- Other measures as appropriate

What about the separations or deployments?

Avoid “stupid questions.”

Did you kill anyone?

Did you see any camels?

Was the desert hot?

Was the jungle hot? – Vietnam Veterans

Issues specifically related to Women (Gender Differences)

More research is needed

Timeline for the Integration of Women in the Military began in the early 1990s and is still occurring with restrictions being lifted

Military Sexual Trauma (Men Too)

Factors that could affect differing rates of PTSD diagnosis

Race

Ethnicity

Age

Rank differences

Difference in range and intensity stressors

Different rules about female involvement in combat (real or perceived followed or ignored)

When and how men and women present health and mental health issues

Women veterans have different tendencies to seek help outside of DoD/VA than men

Career effect of reporting a mental health problem may be different for women than for men

May affect apparent differences between men and women

Clinicians may have gender-specific biases

Less likely to diagnose PTSD in women

May be more likely to diagnose personality disorder in women