

# **Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center**

## **Primary Care Helpful Tips**

### **Information:**

When entering the facility for your appointment, the first team member that you may encounter will be an Advanced Medical Support Assistant (AMSA). At this time, you will need to make sure your demographic information such as address, telephone number, emergency contact, next of kin and other health insurance information is accurate.

Make sure to have your VA issued identification card (VIC) or other government issued picture identification. If you don't have this card, our staff can assist you on how to obtain a VIC card from the Eligibility and Enrollment Office.

### **Primary Care Visit:**

When you meet your new Primary Care Provider (Physician, Nurse Practitioner or Physician's Assistant) let them know what your main health concerns are. If you have been seen in another healthcare system, it's always helpful to bring your health records including: a list of your current medications, any laboratory test results, radiological test results (x-rays), or other essential health information you would like them to know.

You will also meet one of the caring, licensed nurses on your Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT). The nurse will help you prepare for your primary care visit. The VA is focusing on how to assist you in prevention of illness while promoting your own better health. Your PACT team is very vital in coaching you along the way. You as the Veteran and patient are in charge of your own healthcare needs. Be sure to ask about the many resources available to veterans to assist you in living a happier, healthier life including smoking cessation, limitation of alcohol, eating wisely, staying active, striving for a healthy weight, stress and anger management, and staying up to date on recommended screening and immunizations. ([www.prevention.va.gov](http://www.prevention.va.gov))

After your visit please check out at the front desk with the AMSA.

If you cannot make your scheduled appointment please call us at least 24 hours in advance if possible to reschedule so that your appointment can be given to another veteran in need.

Call the VA Appointment & Information Center 713) 794-8985 OR 1-800-639-5137.

There are also resources available for Homeless Veterans and those who identify with the LGBTQ community.

If you are having a new problem (symptom) and you need a sooner appointment, please call the Primary Care Call Center at (713) 794-7228 (PACT) between the hours of 8:00am – 4:00pm or the above 1-800-639-5137. The VA Appointment & Information Center will get a message to your health care team. If you are having chest pain or any other emergency symptoms, please call 911.