Are there any risks in participating?

- The risks of a blood draw include pain, bleeding, bruising, or infection. If you are injured as a result of having blood drawn, VA will provide medical treatment for your research-related injury at no cost to you.
- Filling out the questionnaire may result in distress if you are to find out about family health conditions of which you may not have been aware. If you become distressed or have questions, please call the MVP information center at 866-441-6075.
- There is a slight risk of a breach of confidentiality. The next section describes how VA will minimize this risk.

What confidentiality and privacy protections are in place?

Patient safety and information security are the top priorities in MVP and all VA research initiatives. A number of safeguards are in place to help ensure privacy and confidentiality for those who take part.

- All blood samples will be stored in a secure, state-of-the art VA biorepository.
- All blood samples and medical and other personal information will be labeled with a code so that no one can directly identify participants. Only a small number of authorized VA employees will have access to the key to the code.
- Researchers who are approved access to analyze samples and data will not receive name, date of birth, address, or social security number of participating Veterans.

Contact Information:

For more information about MVP, visit **www.research.va.gov/mvp** or call toll free **866-441-6075.**

If you have questions about your rights as a program participant, or you want to make sure this is an approved VA project, you may contact the VA Central Institutional Review Board (IRB) toll-free at **877-254-3130.**

Department of Veterans Affairs

MVP

Million Veteran Program:
A Partnership with Veterans

Veterans Health Administration
Research & Development
Improving Veterans' Lives www.research.va.gov

DISCOVERY INNOVATION ADVANCEMENT

MVP Program Purpose

The Department of Veterans Affairs' Million Veteran Program (MVP) is a national, voluntary research program designed to provide a better understanding of how genes affect health and illness, with the goal of improving health care for Veterans. Participation in MVP is entirely voluntary and will not in any way affect Veterans' access to health care or benefits.

What are genes, and how do they affect health?

Genes are made up of DNA and are inherited. They are the instructions for building and maintaining our bodies. Genes determine the color of our eyes and hair, our height, and other personal traits. Through complex interactions with our environment and various lifestyle factors, certain genes may also contribute to our risk for disease, including common illnesses such as heart disease, diabetes, and cancer. In fact, genes may be a critical part of why some people get diseases and others do not.

Genes may also affect how we respond to certain medications. Because of their genetic make-up, some people may respond better than others to a particular treatment, or experience different side effects. Overall, a better understanding of how genes work may help to prevent and improve treatment of disease.

MVP is a research program that could allow current Veterans to help transform health care, not only for themselves, but for future generations of Veterans.

What is MVP?

The Million Veteran Program aims to be one of the largest studies of genes and health in the United States with an expected enrollment of one million Veterans over the next five to seven years. The Department of Veterans Affairs has established MVP as an important opportunity to understand how genes affect health. The ultimate goal is improving Veterans' health. An increasingly common way to gain knowledge in this area is to collect genetic samples and health information from large groups of people, and then to conduct comparisons to learn which genes are linked to which health traits.

What is involved in participation?

The goal of MVP is to partner with Veterans receiving services in the VA health care system who volunteer to share their health information, as well as genetic material. Active involvement in this program includes:

- Filling out surveys about health and health-related behaviors;
- Providing a blood sample (containing DNA) that will be stored for future research;
- Completing an optional health assessment.

By consenting to participate, you are allowing secure access to your VA and VA-linked medical information on an ongoing basis. You are also allowing for future contact.

What are the potential benefits?

Research findings based on MVP may potentially lead to new ways of preventing and treating illnesses in Veterans and all Americans and help to answer questions like "Why does a treatment work well for some Veterans but not for others?"; "Why are some Veterans at a greater risk for developing an illness?"; and "How can we prevent certain illnesses in the first place?" While your participation may not immediately benefit you, findings from MVP over time will benefit all Veterans and the population at large.