



Cardiovascular Disease

Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death in the U.S. and one of the leading causes of hospitalization and disability in the VA. It also is associated with other comorbid conditions that impact veterans, such as diabetes mellitus (DM), spinal cord injuries, and posttraumatic stress disorder.

Most heart attacks are due to smoking, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, obesity, DM, diet, lack of exercise, high alcohol use, and stress. Many of these risk factors trend higher for veterans. Some

veterans also are at higher risk due to exposure to hazardous materials. For example, veterans with ischemic heart disease who were exposed to Agent Orange or other herbicides during military service do not have to prove a service connection.

Currently the VA Office of Research and Development is sponsoring more than 70 clinical trials covering cardiovascular disease, ranging from using veteran peer coaches who promote cardiac health to robotic training for stroke neurorehabilitation.

Heart Health^{1,2}

HEART DISEASE

is the number 1 cause of death in the U.S.,
killing 787,000 in 2013

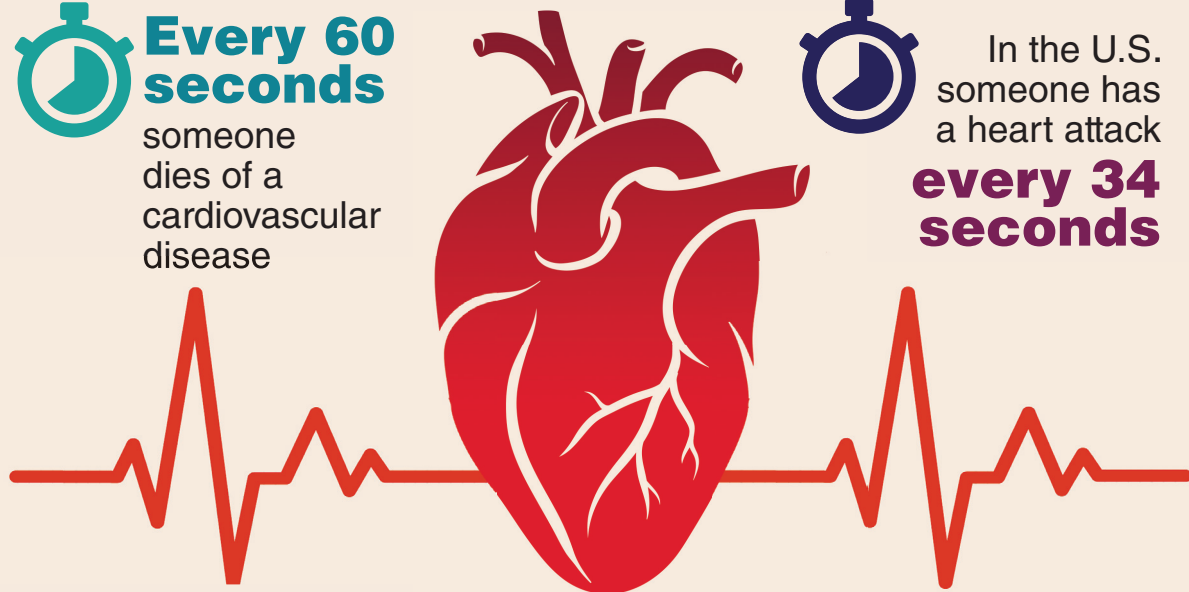


Every 60 seconds

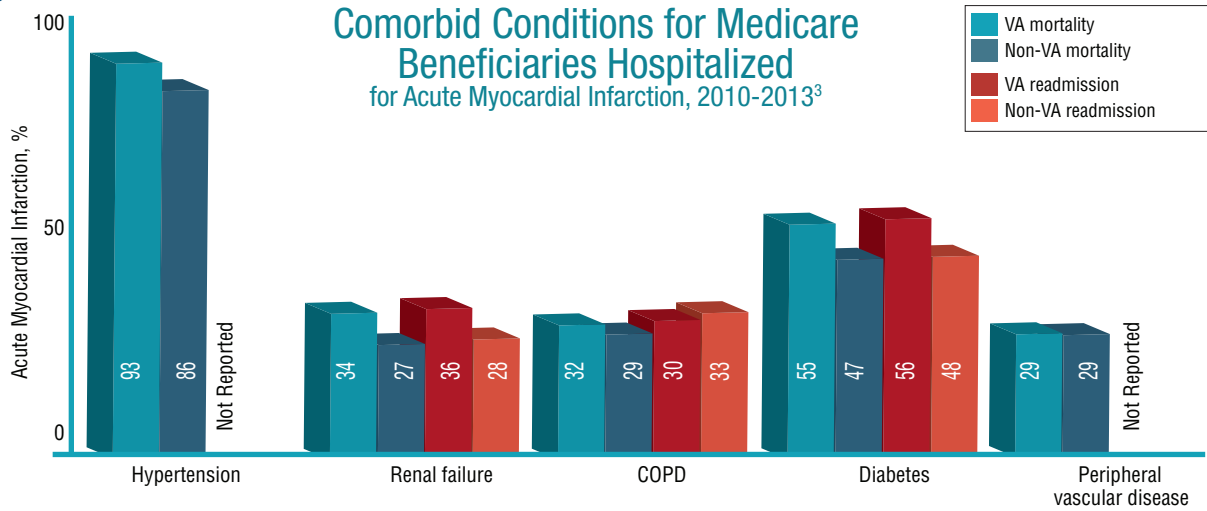
someone dies of a cardiovascular disease



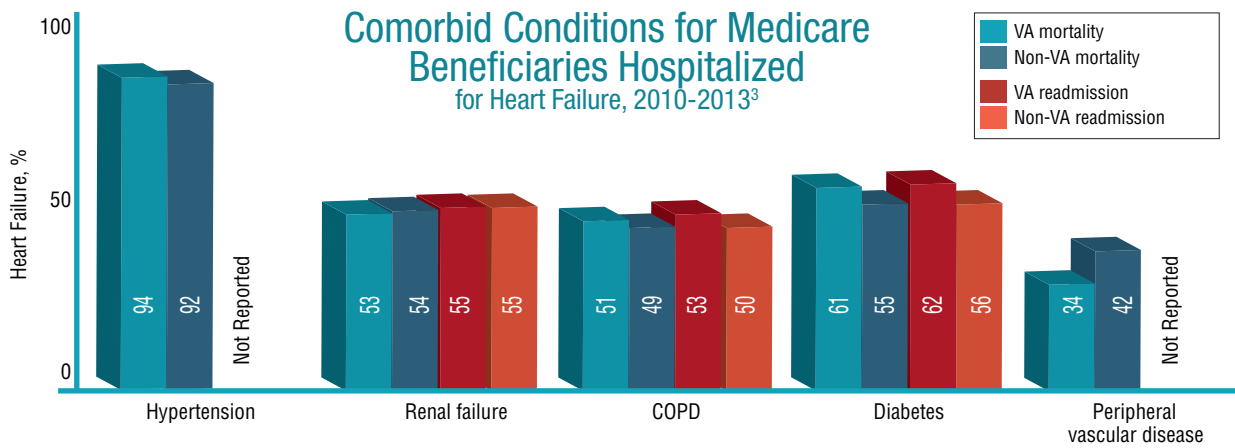
In the U.S. someone has a heart attack **every 34 seconds**



Comorbid Conditions for Medicare Beneficiaries Hospitalized for Acute Myocardial Infarction, 2010-2013³

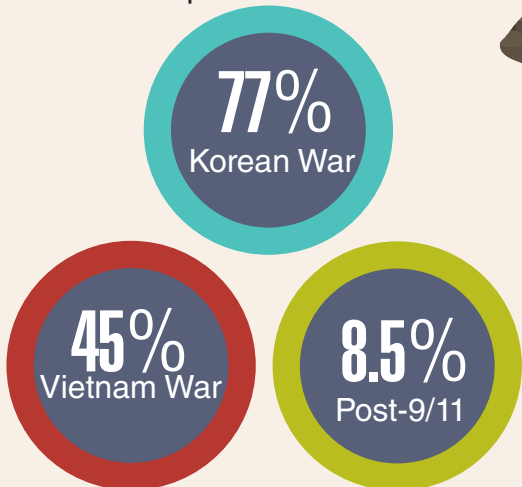


Comorbid Conditions for Medicare Beneficiaries Hospitalized for Heart Failure, 2010-2013³

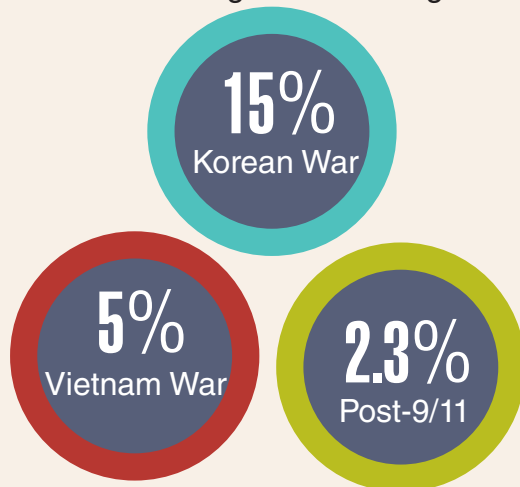


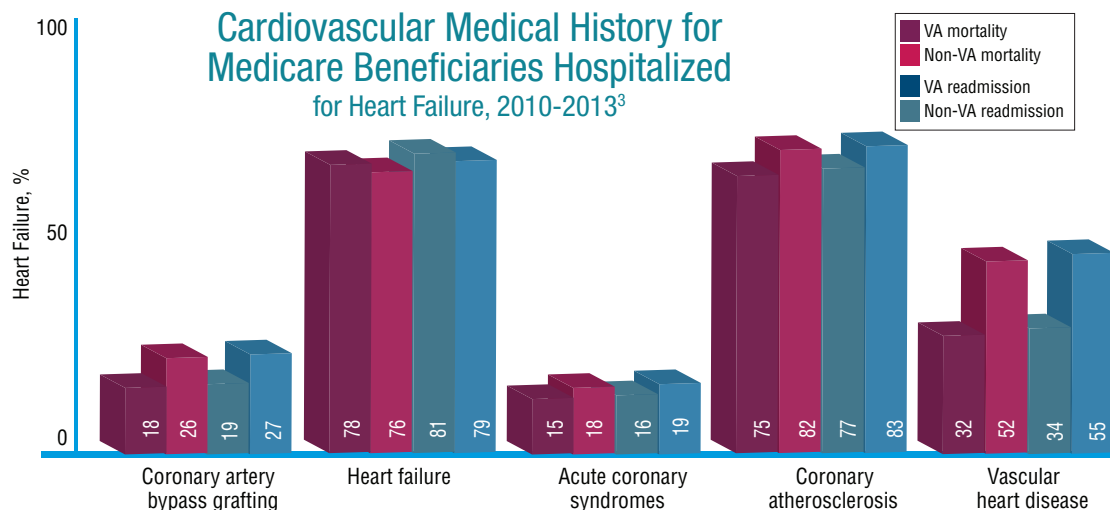
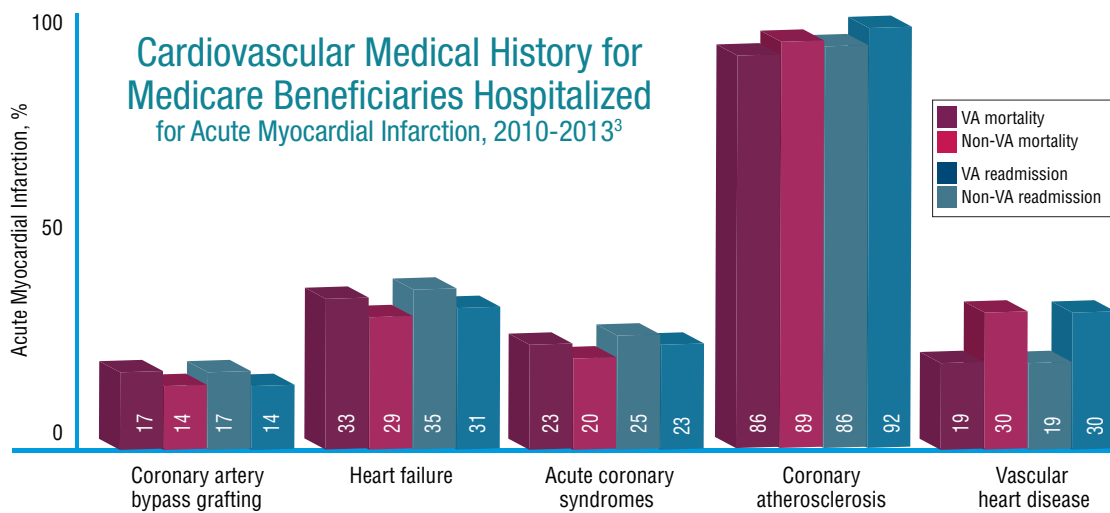
Troops May Be Getting Healthier⁴

Signs of coronary atherosclerosis in troops killed in combat



Percent of autopsies that showed 50% or greater blockage





Costs of Heart Failure^{5,6}



\$30,719 per patient

was spent on patients who were treated for heart failure at the VA in 2010



Cardiovascular disease- related costs are projected to rise to **\$818 billion** by 2030



117,870 VA patients had heart failure in 2010

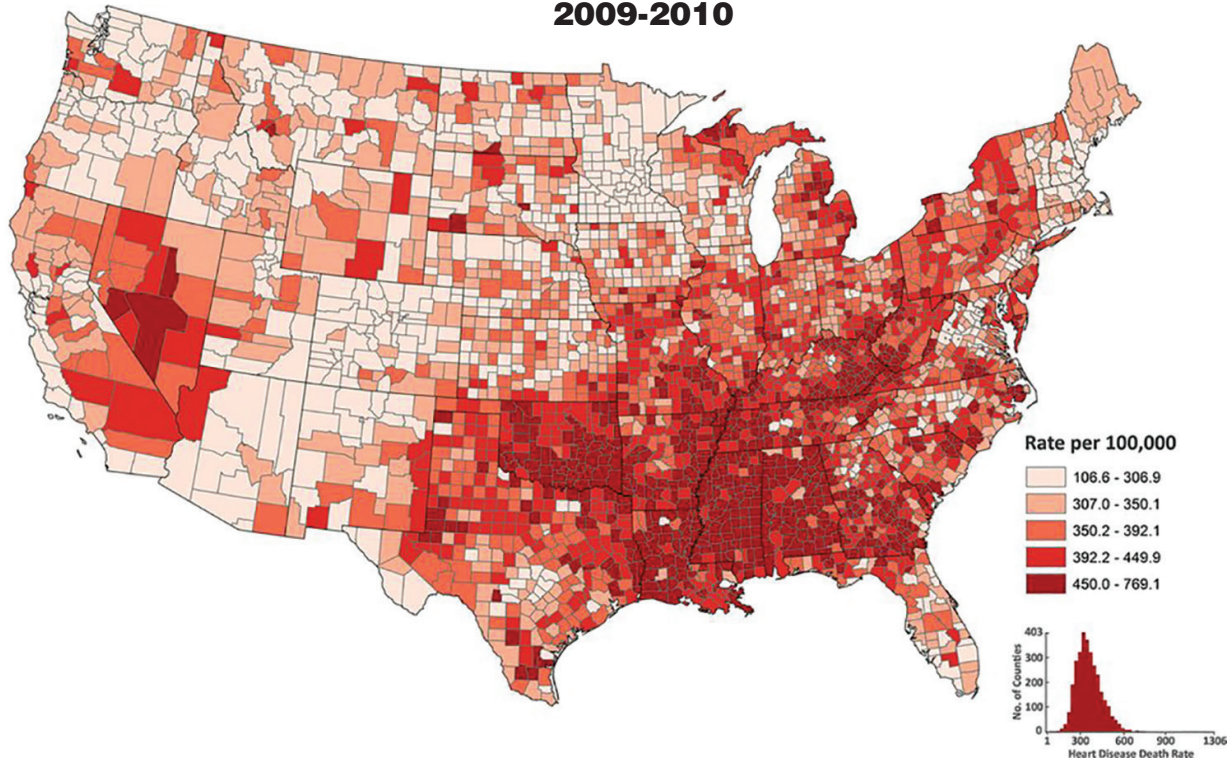


...and lost productivity costs could exceed

\$275 billion

Geographic Patterns of Heart Disease Mortality⁷

2009-2010



Stroke⁸



Number 1 cause of disability and **number 3** cause of death in U.S.

6 OUT OF 10 people who die of strokes are **women**

795,000 strokes occur each year


185,000 people who survive a stroke, have another

\$68.9 BILLION was spent on strokes in the U.S. on health care and lost productivity in 2009

Women Veterans^{9,10}

1/3  **OF FEMALE VETERANS**

have high cholesterol or high blood pressure

40%  of female veterans have at least 2 risk factors for heart disease