

1996 Update

- skin cancer** moves from **No** association to Probably Not an association category
- spina bifida** is added to the category of Possible Association; other birth defects remain in the Probably Not category
- acute or subacute **peripheral neuropathy** is added to the Possible association category leaving chronic persistent peripheral neuropathy in the Probably Not category
- porphyria cutanea tarda** is removed from Positive association category to the Possible category

1998 Update

- urinary bladder cancer** moves from **No** Evidence to Probably Not category

Important Contact Information

- American Legion National Headquarters
(202) 861-2772 or
1-800-433-3318 or
www.legion.org
- Agent Orange Review
Environmental Agents Service
VA Central Office
810 Vermont Avenue
Washington DC
(202) 273-8580
- National Academy Press
2101 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20418
1-800-624-6242 or
www.nap.edu



For more information contact:

***Veterans Affairs &
Rehabilitation Commission.
The American Legion
1608 "K" Street, NW
Washington, DC 20006
(202) 861-2772
www.legion.org***

3/99

Vietnam Veterans



Institute of Medicine and Agent Orange Research



What Role does the Institute of Medicine have in Agent Orange Research?

This brochure is for those who want to understand the Institute of Medicine's (IOM) role in determining compensation benefits for Vietnam veterans exposed to herbicides.

A federal law was passed, The Agent Orange Act of 1991, that directed the Department of Veterans Affairs to enter into a contract with the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) in order to have an independent examination of the association between herbicide exposure in Vietnam and illness in veterans. NAS delegated this task to IOM which created a distinguished panel of experts to exhaustively study this issue.

The IOM committee was formed in 1992 and published its first comprehensive report in 1994, *Veterans and Agent Orange: Health Effects of Herbicides Used in Vietnam (VAO)*. IOM sought veterans' input throughout the study process. This report has been, and will be, updated approximately every two years until 2004. (Full reports available through the National Academy Press)

The Institute of Medicine was created in 1970 by the National Academy of Sciences to examine policy matters related to public health.

Categories of Association between Illness and Exposures

- Positive association
- Possible association
- Probably Not an association
- No association evidenced

Each illness IOM researched was placed into one of the above categories. Each update evaluates new scientific evidence to ensure the condition is appropriately placed in the proper category. The IOM may change the placement of a particular condition as new evidence becomes available.

An illness can be grouped in the Positive association category if the IOM determines the collective scientific evidence to be statistically valid, reliable and relevant. The professional opinion of the committee, as scientists, plays an integral part in the decision making process concerning the validity of studies.

How is compensation effected by the IOM Process?

VA grants compensation for all conditions recognized by the IOM reports as having a Positive association.

1994 VAO Report

Positive Association

- chloracne
- soft tissue sarcoma
- non-Hodgkin's lymphoma
- Hodgkin's disease
- porphyria cutanea tarda

Possible Association

- multiple myeloma
- respiratory cancers (lung, trachea, larynx)
- prostate cancer

Probably Not an Association

- Cancers: hepatobiliary, nasal/nasopharyngeal, bone, cervical, uterine, ovarian, breast, testicular, renal, Leukemia, childhood cancer in offspring
- spontaneous abortion
- birth defects
- infant death and stillbirths
- low birthweight
- infertility
- cognitive and neuropsychiatric disorders
- motor/coordination dysfunction
- peripheral nervous system disorders
- metabolic and digestive disorders (includes diabetes)
- immune system disorders
- respiratory disorders

No Association Evidenced

- skin cancer
- gastrointestinal tumors
- bladder cancer
- brain tumors

