January is Cervical Cancer Awareness Month!

For women, cervical cancer was once the number one cause of death from cancer. Thanks to the Pap test, the number of women in the United States who develop cervical cancer has dropped. The Pap test allows your doctor to treat changes in your cervix before they develop into cancer.

The five minutes needed for a cervical cancer screening can identify potential problems early and improve your chance of successful treatment. Your VA Primary Care Provider (PCP) can do a Pap test as part of a routine physical exam.

For more information on cervical cancer visit: www.womenshealth.va.gov

Women Veterans Advocacy Council has Openings for New Members

Be a women’s health advocate!

The Advocacy Council was created in March of 2010 to provide a voice for women Veterans who are getting their health care at the Milwaukee VAMC or one of its CBOCs. Its members meet monthly to raise concerns, formulate recommendations for desired changes, suggest needed resources, acknowledge and support beneficial programs.

Members are women Veterans who receive health services at the Milwaukee VAMC or one of its Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs).

Please contact Jill Feldman at (414) 384-2000, ext. 41926 for more information or an application.
Got the Winter Blues?

Seasonal Affect Disorder (SAD), also commonly referred to as “winter blues” or “seasonal mood disorder,” is a type of depression that occurs when reduced exposure to sunlight causes changes in brain chemistry that leads some people to sadness.

Not everyone who feels blue during the winter months suffers from SAD, but women are at higher risk of being affected by this type of depression, says Dr. Colleen Heinkel, a clinical psychologist in women’s health at the VA’s Milwaukee campus.

Symptoms to look for include:

- Appetite changes, especially a craving for foods high in carbs
- Social withdrawal or having problems getting along with other people
- Oversleeping or feeling a greater need for sleep
- Lack of motivation or decreased energy

Tips to keep up your summer spirits when the sun disappears:

- **Get outdoors.** Take a walk, eat lunch at a nearby park, or simply sit on a bench and soak up the sun. (Don’t forget sunscreen!) Even on cold or cloudy days, outdoor light can help brighten your mood.

- **Exercise.** Physical activity helps relieve stress and anxiety, both of which can increase SAD symptoms.

- **Light therapy.** When bright light reaches your eyes, it sends signals to your brain that regulates the hormone serotonin to maintain mood balance. The VA offers light therapy boxes to eligible Veterans. Talk to your health care provider about the best one for you.

If the winter blues are making it hard to get through your daily routine, contact your primary care provider or mental health provider as soon as possible. If you have suicidal thoughts, call 911 or the VA Crisis hotline: 1 (800) 273 TALK and “press 1 for Veterans.”

WDVA Wisconsin Women Veteran of the Year Award

The Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) recognizes women Veterans who have compiled a record of exemplary service as a military service member, a Veteran, and outstanding member of the community by awarding a Wisconsin woman Veteran.

Beginning in September 2008, WDVA has selected one woman Veteran annually who meets these criteria. Veterans, Family Members, Veterans Service Organizations, County Veterans Service officers, and other Veterans groups are encouraged to submit nominations.

Nominations must be received no later than October 1st of any year. The award will be presented to the recipient in November. Nomination applications can be found on the Women Veterans Woman of the Year Award webpage at: [www.WisVets.com/WomenVets](http://www.WisVets.com/WomenVets)
The University of Evansville, Evansville Vet Center, and the Department of Veterans Affairs VA Health Care/Marion, Illinois will be presenting the sixth annual Honoring Women Veterans Conference this summer on UE’s campus in Evansville, Indiana.

This FREE conference is designed to be a fun and informative way to celebrate the contributions of the service women both past and present.

The Honoring Women Veterans Conference offers:

- Current information about your military benefits
- Networking opportunities and resources for employment opportunities
- Complimentary lunch
- Pampering with facials, manicures, massages, prizes, and more
- A chance to meet fellow women veterans of all ages and branches of service

Space is limited so to learn more and to register for your FREE spot, visit www.evansville.edu/veteransaffairs or contact:
Trudy Buckman at (812) 473-5993 or Cheri Leonhardt at (800) 423-8633

Please join us for the fifth annual Women Veterans Week at Camp American Legion. During this time the entire camp is reserved for women only. The camp is a haven for those who are seeking physical, psychological, or spiritual healing. The camp is located on Big Carr Lake in the American Legion State Forest.

Women from all service eras are welcome!

There is no cost for food or lodging
Participants are accepted on a first come first served basis until all accommodations are filled.

For more information call
Kevin Moshea, Director
(715) 277-2510
Every VA hospital has a Women Veterans Program Manager to help women navigate the system and to promote high standards of care for the women Veterans we serve. The WVPM for the Milwaukee VA Medical Center and outpatient clinics is Jill Feldman, PhD, LCSW. She is eager to hear your thoughts and concerns.

414-384-2000 (or toll-free 1-888-469-6614) extension 41926
Women’s Resource Center, Milwaukee VAMC, Building 109