

# Fwd: The Fourteener, VA ECHCS Newsletter- September

## **The Fourteener**

VA Eastern Colorado Health Care System News

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### **Upcoming events:**

**Sept. 14** [VA ECHCS Stand Down for Veteran Homelessness](#)

**Sept. 21** [VA ECHCS Healthy Aging Fair](#)

**Sept. 22** [VA ECHCS Suicide Prevention Summit](#)

**Sept. 29** [Pueblo Stand Down for Veteran Homelessness](#)

**Oct. 9** Columbus Day Outpatient clinics are closed

**Oct. 17** [Colorado Springs Stand Down for Veteran Homelessness](#)



## VA ECHCS News and Stories



### New Space Center Clinic in Colorado Springs

VA ECHCS is excited to announce the opening of our new Space Center Clinic!

The Space Center VA Clinic is located near East Platte Ave. and North Powers Blvd. at 565 Space Center Dr., Suite 130, in Colorado Springs. This clinic will add another 16,000 square feet for primary care, physical therapy and mental health. Laboratory services will be added soon. This expansion will help better serve our patients in one of the fastest growing Veteran areas!

If you live in the Colorado Springs area, make sure to double check your appointment letters for the location of your appointment! Call 719-638-5000 to schedule an appointment.

Visit the [VA ECHCS Facebook](#) page to see pictures of the new clinic.

## Walk-in Battlefield Acupuncture

Did you know we have a walk-in Battlefield Acupuncture clinic for our Veteran patients at the Rocky Mountain Regional VA Medical Center?



Battlefield Acupuncture (BFA) is an acupuncture protocol where semipermanent needles (lasting up to three days) are placed in the ear to reduce pain. The visit usually takes less than 10 minutes with pain relief lasting anywhere from one day up to one week.

Recently, VA ECHCS Director, Michael Kilmer, a Coast Guard Veteran, tried out BFA for himself. If you're a patient who gets care in VA ECHCS you can also give BFA a try. The walk-in clinic is every Monday (except holidays) from 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. The walk-in clinic is located at the RMR facility building A room A1-232 (first floor White Aster room). All Veterans experiencing pain are eligible, on a first come first serve basis. Learn more about BFA at [www.veteranshealthlibrary.va.gov](http://www.veteranshealthlibrary.va.gov).

Visit our [Facebook page](#) for more photos of Director Kilmer trying out BFA.



## COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic Change

To better serve our Veterans, we are now offering COVID vaccines at your Primary Care clinics. Due to this change, our COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic will be closed going forward.

We are confident that by providing the COVID vaccines at multiple locations, we will accommodate more veterans. Contact your PACT for more information or to schedule an appointment.

Visit our [VA ECHCS website](#) for more information on clinics and scheduling.

## More than 1,000 Veterans apply for PACT Act-related benefits via VA-county partnership

"I noticed my quality of life going down," said Krall, 75, diagnosed this year with Parkinson's disease, which VA can presume was caused by his exposure to Agent Orange when determining his eligibility for disability compensation and health care.



Krall was one of more than 1,000 Veterans attending the El Paso County PACT Act claims clinics Aug. 7-9 in Colorado Springs. The three-day event culminated months of coordination between VA and El Paso County, prompted by The Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act, or PACT Act.

"We are a prime example of how partnerships between local and federal agencies can maximize resources and better serve the needs of the Veteran community,"

said Marshall Bosworth, El Paso County Veteran service officer (VSO), who also coordinated monthly PACT Act briefs with VA support from March to July.

The Pikes Peak area is known for military service. It is home to Fort Carson, Peterson Space Force Base, Schriever Space Force Base, Cheyenne Mountain Air Force Station and U.S. Air Force Academy. Of the more than 730,000 people who live in El Paso County, roughly 15% are Veterans, nearly twice the state rate, according to U.S. Census Bureau estimates.

[Read Full Story](#)



## Healthy Living Tips

**JOIN US** for the first Healthy Aging Fair on Sept. 21 in the Rocky Mountain Regional Medical Center Auditorium from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. The fair includes a brief yoga demonstration, presentations on topics such as cognitive health and nutrition, and educational booths.

**Did you know taking steps to change certain lifestyle behaviors can help you maintain health and quality of life as you age? Below are a few tips to get started.**

**Move your body** – Physical activity can help you reduce risk of common health conditions like hypertension and depression, protect your brain as you age, and give you more energy and strength. If your health care provider says it is safe, older adults should get at least 150 minutes of exercise each week.

- Did you know many adults age 65+ are eligible for a FREE gym membership with SilverSneakers? Check your eligibility at [silversneakers.com](https://silversneakers.com)

**Connect with family, friends, and community**- Loss of social connections can lead to isolation, which can impact our overall health. Stay connected with others by scheduling phone calls or visits or attending a class or community event.

**Get routine medical care and screenings** – Seeing your doctor regularly will help you establish a plan to prevent or manage conditions that develop as you age. If you find it is difficult to follow through with recommendations like taking medications on time or checking blood pressures, your health care team can help you come up with strategies to help you stay on track.

- Did you know your VA health care team can order you helpful tools to manage your medications? Ask your health care provider about available

aids.

**Keep your mind active**- Keeping your brain active by doing meaningful and fulfilling activities, learning new skills, and staying mentally stimulated may help maintain thinking ability and improve mood and quality of life.

**Avoid tobacco, alcohol, and non-prescription drugs**- Avoiding tobacco, drugs and alcohol can have an impact on your longevity and quality of life, no matter your age.

- Interested in connecting with the VA to help you work on cutting down or quitting an unhealthy substance? Talk to your health care team or visit <https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/substance-use/> or <https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/quit-tobacco/>.

**Eat well and stay hydrated**- Water is essential for life and makes up about two-thirds of our body weight. Every cell and organ require water to function. It's always important to consume enough water, but especially in the warm summer months.

- “Drink eight glasses of water per day.” This often-heard piece of advice may not be enough to meet your fluid needs. Hydration needs vary based on age, weight, activity level, climate, and medical conditions. Thirst is not a good indicator of hydration status. It is important to drink before you feel thirsty and throughout the day.



**Tips to stay hydrated:**

- Start your day by drinking a glass of water.
- Get a water bottle you like and carry it with you.
- Drink 1 cup of water before each meal.
- All fluids count but limit the amount of caffeinated beverages you drink.
- Fluids should be consumed before, during, and after physical activity.
- Eat more fruits and vegetables. Many fruits and vegetables are at least 90% water by weight.



**Watermelon Salad-** Courtesy of Michelle Robinson

**Ingredients:**

¼ cup Extra Virgin Olive Oil

2 Tablespoons Lemon Juice

3 cups of Watermelon (seedless, chopped)

1 cup Cucumber (chopped)

1 cup Feta Cheese (crumbled)

½ cup Mint (chopped)

**Directions:**

Gently combine all ingredients

For more recipes visit: <https://www.nutrition.va.gov/Recipes.asp>

Questions about nutrition, schedule an appointment with a dietitian at 303-398-6380.

Resources: <https://www.nia.nih.gov/>

**Your Bottom Line Up Front - The BLUF**





Do you disagree with the decisions VA has made about your medical care? Learn how to appeal those decisions by checking out the newest episode of [The BLUF!](#)

In addition, you'll learn about the 2024 COLA increases, assuming you don't get overwhelmed by acronym fatigue!

[The BLUF](#) is a short-form (3 minutes or less) weekly video which explores services offered by VA to #Veterans.

Be sure to like, subscribe, and ring the notification bell to stay up to date with everything going on at VA.

## Work with VA ECHCS

VA Eastern Colorado Health Care System is always looking for individuals with a passion for serving Veterans. In fact, many of our employees are Veterans. We have open positions in clinical, administrative and facility management positions. Make the difference in the lives of Veterans and apply to work with us!

[See open jobs at VA Eastern Colorado Health Care System](#)