Veterans may be eligible for disability compensation and health care benefits for any disease that VA recognizes as related to military service or radiation exposure during military service.

Surviving spouses, children and dependent parents of Veterans who died as the result of diseases related to military service or radiation exposure during military service may be eligible for survivors' benefits.

**Presumptive Diseases Related to Ionizing Radiation Exposure**

VA has recognized, or presumed, certain cancers as related to ionizing radiation exposure during military service. These are called “presumptive diseases.”

If a Veteran who participated in a radiation-risk activity (including “Atomic Veterans”) develops one of the diseases listed below, VA presumes the disease is related to ionizing radiation exposure during service. These Veterans do not have to prove a connection between these diseases and their military service to be eligible to receive disability compensation.

**Cancers of the** bile ducts, bone, brain, breast, colon, esophagus, gall bladder, liver (primary site, but not if cirrhosis or hepatitis B is indicated), lung (including bronchiolo-alveolar cancer), pancreas, pharynx, ovary, salivary gland, small intestine, stomach, thyroid, urinary tract (kidney/renal, pelvis, urinary bladder, and urethra), leukemia (except chronic lymphocytic leukemia), lymphomas (except Hodgkin’s disease), and multiple myeloma (cancer of plasma cells).

Surviving spouses, children and dependent parents of Veterans who participated in a radiation-risk activity and died as the result of one of the diseases listed above may be eligible for survivors' benefits.

**Other Diseases Associated with Radiation Exposure**

If a Veteran who was exposed to radiation during military service (including "Atomic Veterans") develops one of the diseases listed below and meets other requirements, disability compensation may be provided, on a case-by-case basis, according to VA regulations.

Surviving spouses, children and dependent parents of Veterans who were exposed to radiation during military service and died as the result of one of the diseases listed below may be eligible for survivors' benefits.

Eligibility depends on how much radiation the Veteran received and other factors, such as the period of time between exposure to radiation and the development of the disease. For these
Veterans, VA recognizes that the following diseases are possibly caused by radiation:

- All cancers
- Non-malignant thyroid nodular disease
- Parathyroid adenoma
- Posterior subcapsular cataracts
- Tumors of the brain and central nervous system

For Atomic Veterans, VA asks the Department of Defense’s Defense Threat Reduction Agency* to document status as an Atomic Veteran and provide the actual or estimated radiation dose received by a Veteran.

**Note:** VA also will consider the possibility that other diseases not listed above were caused by radiation, if supported by medical or scientific evidence. To be eligible for disability compensation, VA must be able to establish that it is at least as likely as not that a Veteran’s disease was caused by his/her exposure to radiation during military service.

**Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS)**

Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) is not associated with radiation exposure. However, VA has recognized ALS diagnosed in Veterans with 90 days or more of continuously active service in the military was caused by their military service.