



Minneapolis VA Chronic Pain Rehabilitation Program FAQs

What is the philosophy of the Chronic Pain Rehabilitation Program?

Here at the Minneapolis VA Chronic Pain Rehabilitation Program, our team of pain rehabilitation specialists wish to assure you that we *know* you are in pain and we want to help you to manage your pain and improve your quality of life, even when curing your chronic pain is not possible. Your previous pain treatments may have focused on what can be done to you to decrease your pain. Within the rehabilitation program, the treatment team will be here to provide you with the knowledge, skills, and experiences to increase your confidence to make positive changes in your life and feel more in control of your pain.

In addition to the support from the treatment team, you will experience support from and give support to other veterans with chronic pain who are participating in the program at the same time.

What should I expect?

The Chronic Pain Rehabilitation Program is designed to reactivate your body, mind, and attitude through engagement in a structured schedule of daily activities that are geared to help meet your rehabilitation goals.

You will be quite busy and engaged in the program activities throughout the day. This is necessary in order to help you break the cycle of pain and begin applying the new skills you are learning. All participants are expected to attend the scheduled programming every day.

What about my medications?

Your team pharmacist and medical provider will review all of your medications and look for combinations of medications that might cause problems. They will suggest changes, if needed. The CPRP staff will ensure you understand any changes in your medication.

Opioid Pain Medications: If you are taking any opioid pain medications (Vicodin, Percocet, oxycodone, morphine, tramadol, etc) you will be tapering off of these medications during the course of this program. It is normal to worry about tapering off pain medications you have been taking for a long time. However, because you are active and have team support, withdrawal symptoms are usually mild and manageable. The goal is to help you become more confident about being able to enjoy life and manage your pain without opioid pain medications.



What about alcohol, marijuana and Urine Drug Tests?

During the 4-week program you are expected to abstain from alcohol, marijuana and illicit substances. You are also expected to give a Urine Drug Test weekly during the program. If you are currently using alcohol, marijuana or illicit substances, we strongly recommend that you taper off or discontinue these drugs at least 4-6 weeks before CPRP. Please note that medicinal marijuana is not allowed on VA property due to Federal regulations.

How long will I stay?

You should expect to be here for four 4 weeks. There is no programming on weekends. You are welcome to go home on the weekends or remain in Building 10 if you choose.

Treatment days will begin promptly at 8:00 AM and run until about 3:30 PM, M-F. You will have a daily schedule of activities throughout the program.

Where will I stay?

During the program most participants will live in a dormitory building (Building 10) on the campus of Minneapolis VA Medical Center. It is about a 1 block walk from the hospital entrance. Participants are able to live at home during programming, but they are encouraged to lodge in Building 10.

What about travel expenses?

Eligibility for travel reimbursement for CPRP is determined by the Minneapolis VA Travel Office (Minneapolis VA Travel Office is located in 1S-114. Phone: 612-467-1396).

For beneficiaries lodging in Building 10:

Travel to Minneapolis VA Medical Center at the **beginning of CPRP and return home at the end of CPRP** will be eligible for travel reimbursement. Travel from Minneapolis VA Medical Center to home and back to Minneapolis VA Medical Center **each weekend** during CPRP WILL NOT be eligible for travel reimbursement.

For beneficiaries lodging at home:

Eligibility for **daily travel** reimbursement to and from Minneapolis VA Medical Center to participate in CPRP programming will be determined by Beneficiary Travel Department.



For beneficiaries in the event of early discharge or voluntary departure:

Reimbursement authorization for travel home will be determined by the CPRP program manager and Minneapolis VA Mobility Manager

For DoD/active duty service members:

Travel is the responsibility of DoD

What do I wear?

Please be prepared to wear your own clothing. Because you will be active during the day and may sweat during physical activity, it is best to bring a change of clothing for each day. Laundry facilities are very limited so it is best to plan to do laundry on the weekend when you are home. Pack clothes that are loose fitting and comfortable and shoes that enable you to be active. Bring toiletries or other necessities as you wish. We encourage you to leave valuable items and jewelry at home.

What about meals?

Three cafeteria hot meals per day will be provided for all participants on Monday breakfast through Friday dinner. Weekend meals are also provided to those staying in Building 10. Feel free to bring special snacks and/or non-alcoholic beverages you may want throughout the day and evening. If you have a reusable water bottle, please bring it - there are drinking fountains available throughout the facility.

What kind of family/supporter education is available?

In-person attendance of family/support activities is highly recommended, especially during our Family and Friends Day at the end of the second week. However, information discussed during these activities will be available by phone or mail to those who are unable to attend. Family/support members must be 18 years of age or older to attend Family and Friends Day.

If your family/support member has travel considerations, you may contact Building 10 Administration [612-467-4289] to arrange overnight stay with you. Please contact Building 10 Administration one week prior to family day to coordinate lodging. Service animals are welcome but pets are not allowed. Any additional housing accommodations for family/support members will need to be arranged and paid for by your family/support member.

What happens after the program is finished?

The treatment team will work with you to plan how you can continue your rehabilitation success after you graduate. We will inform your healthcare and mental health providers within the VA of your rehabilitation progress.



As part of discharge planning, you will work with your case managers to make follow-up appointments with members of the Chronic Pain Rehabilitation Program treatment team approximately 1 month after you complete the program. We will attempt to schedule all of these appointments during discharge planning. Follow-up appointments occur at 1, 6 and 12-month intervals. Monthly group aftercare is available for 12 months after graduation.