

# WOMEN

## You are not alone in overcoming military sexual trauma

**Military Sexual Trauma (MST) is sexual assault or sexual harassment that occurred during a Veteran's military service:**

- Being threatened or pressured into sexual activities, such as with threats or promises of better assignments
- Sexual contact without your consent, such as when asleep or intoxicated
- Being physically forced to have sex
- Being touched in a way that made you uncomfortable
- Repeated comments about your body or sexual activities
- Threatening and unwanted sexual advances



**One in four women Veterans says she experienced MST when asked by a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) provider.**

Women Veterans of

**ALL BACKGROUNDS**

have experienced MST, independent of factors such as era of service, age, race, rank, or sexual orientation.

There may have been times in life when you were treated badly because you are a woman. Experiencing MST may have felt like one more sign you didn't matter. Because of that, you also may worry that you won't be believed if you speak up. **WE BELIEVE YOU.**

### CONCERNS COMMONLY REPORTED BY WOMEN WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED MST



STRONG EMOTIONS



FAMILY AND RELATIONSHIP PROBLEMS



EATING OR BODY IMAGE ISSUES



DIFFICULTIES WITH TRUST OR COMMUNICATION



PAIN AND PHYSICAL PROBLEMS



SELF-ESTEEM PROBLEMS



SEXUAL CONCERNS



WORK OR SCHOOL PROBLEMS



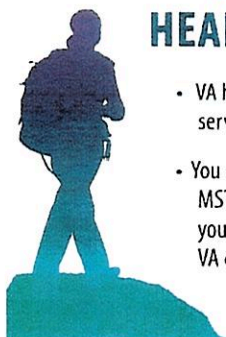
AVOIDANCE OR ISOLATION



RECKLESS BEHAVIOR

**MST IS NEVER YOUR FAULT**

**THERE ARE MANY PATHS TO HEALING FROM MST. VA CAN HELP.**



- VA has free MST-related services for Veterans
- No documentation of the MST experience is needed to get care
- You may be able to receive MST-related services even if you are not eligible for other VA care
- Every VA has an MST Coordinator to help you access services and resources
- Contact your local VA health care facility and ask to speak to the MST Coordinator for more information

Both women and men can experience MST. Visit [www.mentalhealth.va.gov/msthome.asp](http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/msthome.asp) to learn more about the MST-related recovery programs and services for women and men at VA.

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs  
Veterans Health Administration

Questions:  
Kendly Hakeman  
515-699-5677



VA Cares About  
Military Sexual Trauma

July 2017