

Valerie Hellermann
5210 Kerr Drive, Helena MT 59602
406-443-2605

Below is page 19-20 of the 2006 Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans Benefit Manual. It clearly acknowledges the health dangers associated with exposure to ionizing radiation. DEPLETED URANIUM is an ionizing radiation. Chapter 2 addresses the determination for exposure. It would be prudent in light of the necessity of early diagnosis and timely treatment for these disease that the US Military test our returning soldiers and record their radiation level, thus limiting the "proof" of exposure and expediting both treatment and benefits.

Pre deployment education as to the safe handling and risk of exposure surely seems to be a responsible course of action.

VETERANS BENEFIT MANUAL 2006 P19-20

Veterans Exposed to Radiation: For veterans exposed to ionizing radiation while on active duty, the following conditions are presumed to be service-connected: all forms of leukemia (except for chronic lymphocytic leukemia); cancer of the thyroid, breast, pharynx, esophagus, stomach, small intestine, pancreas, bile ducts, gall bladder, salivary gland, urinary tract (renal, pelvis, ureter, urinary bladder and urethra), brain, bone, lung, colon, and ovary, bronchiolo-alveolar carcinoma, multiple myeloma, lymphomas (other than Hodgkin's

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disease), and primary liver cancer (except if cirrhosis or hepatitis B is indicated).

To determine service-connection for other conditions or exposures not eligible for presumptive service-connection, VA considers factors such as the amount of radiation exposure, duration of exposure, elapsed time between exposure and onset of the disease, gender and family history, age at time of exposure, the extent to which a non service-related exposure could contribute to disease, and the relative sensitivity of exposed tissue.

Gulf War Veterans: Gulf War veterans may receive disability compensation for chronic disabilities resulting from undiagnosed illnesses, medically unexplained chronic multi-symptom illnesses defined by a cluster of signs or symptoms such as chronic fatigue syndrome, fibromyalgia or irritable bowel syndrome and any diagnosed illness that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs determines warrants a presumption of service-connection.

A disability is considered chronic if it has existed for at least six months. The undiagnosed illnesses must have appeared either during active service in the Southwest Asia Theater of Operations during the Gulf War or to a degree of at least 10 percent at any time since then through Dec. 31, 2006.

The following are examples of symptoms of an undiagnosed illness: fatigue, skin disorders, headache, muscle pain, joint pain, neurological symptoms, neuropsychological symptoms, symptoms involving the respiratory system, sleep disturbances, gastrointestinal symptoms, cardiovascular symptoms, abnormal weight loss and menstrual disorders. Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) may also be service-connected

Depleted Uranium Fact Sheet compiled by the **Montana Depleted Uranium Education Project**

- 500 to 3000 tons of depleted uranium (DU) bullets and shells shot by US troops, from Balkans to Iraq, during last 15 years
- DU twice as dense as lead, effective as armor plating & as armor piercing rounds • DU may be harming US troops: 1/3 of Gulf War troops disabled
- DU is 99.8% Uranium 238. U238 emits Alpha particles (1 mg DU emits over 1 million Alpha particles a day) has a half-life of 4.5 billion years, & can cause genetic mutations in DNA of cells it contacts, potentially causing cancers, birth defects, and inherited DNA damage
- DU made from reprocessed fuel rods from nuclear reactors is contaminated with plutonium, neptunium, and americium, potentially making the DU more toxic (e.g. plutonium is at least 1000 times as toxic as natural uranium)

- DU burns when penetrating an object, creating micron-sized aerosol particles of DU-oxide that can be inhaled and swallowed, irradiating cells, potentially damaging DNA, which can cause cancer, birth defects, and inheritable DNA damage passed to future generations

- “Use of DU in battle is certainly a major contributor to this medical disaster [Gulf War syndrome] that has affected at least one-third of U.S. Gulf War veterans.”(pp. 516-517). “Depleted Uranium: All the Questions About DU and Gulf War Syndrome Are Not Yet Answered” by Dr. Rosalie Bertell, a paper published in *The International Journal of Health Services* 36(3), 503-520, 2006

- “The use of DU is illegal under existing Humanitarian Law.” “It is not disputable that DU powder produces an invisible metal fume [when ignited on impact]. This alone is a violation of the Geneva Protocol on the Use of Gas (metal fumes constitute a gas) in War (Geneva, 1925), “ (p. 518). The United States and the U.K. are both signatories of this Protocol. Dr. Bertell, *International Journal of Health Services* 36(3), 503-520, 2006

- “I am amazed that fifteen years after was I asked to clean up the initial DU mess from Gulf War I, and over ten years since I finished the depleted-uranium project, US Department of Defense officials and others still attempt to justify the use of uranium munitions while ignoring mandatory requirements. I am dismayed that DOD and Department of Energy officials and representatives continue making personal attacks aimed to silence or discredit those of us who are demanding that medical care be provided to all DU casualties and that environmental remediation is completed in compliance with US Army Regulation 700-48. But beyond the ignored mandatory actions, the willful dispersal of tons of solid radioactive and chemically toxic waste in the form of uranium munitions is illegal and does not even pass the test of common sense.” *Doug Rokke is a Vietnam veteran and the former director of the US Army Depleted Uranium Project. He has a PhD in health physics and was originally trained as a forensic scientist. When the Gulf War started in 1991, he was assigned to prepare soldiers to respond to nuclear, biological, and chemical warfare, and was sent to the Gulf.:: Article nr. 28618 sent on 29-nov-2006 15:36 ECT <http://www.uruknet.info/?p=28618>*