

How the VA Rates Gallbladder Removal (Cholecystectomy)

Regulatory Source: 38 CFR § 4.114 – Diagnostic Code 7318
VA Source: <https://ecfr.gov>

Summary:

The VA rates gallbladder removal based on residual symptoms such as digestive issues, pain, or malabsorption. Ratings depend on whether your symptoms are occasional or continuous and whether they interfere with daily life.

VA Rating Table:

Rating	Explanation
0%	Cholecystectomy performed, but no ongoing symptoms. Digestive function is normal and no medication required.
10%	Mild symptoms post-removal such as occasional abdominal discomfort, bloating, or mild diarrhea managed by diet.
30%	Severe symptoms post-cholecystectomy including continuous abdominal pain, frequent diarrhea, or other digestive dysfunction despite medical management.

Required Evidence:

- Surgical history showing cholecystectomy
- Medical records showing post-op complications (diarrhea, cramping, indigestion)
- Treatment history: diet changes, antacids, bile salt binders
- Personal statements about flare-ups or ongoing pain
- Gastroenterologist or primary care follow-up notes

Pro Tip:

Even if the surgery was successful, document any recurring pain or GI distress. If you take daily antidiarrheals or have food restrictions, this supports a higher rating.