

How the VA Rates Gulf War Illness / Undiagnosed Illness

Regulatory Source: 38 CFR § 3.317 – Undiagnosed Illnesses and Medically Unexplained Chronic Multi-Symptom Illnesses
VA Source: <https://ecfr.gov>

Summary:

Veterans who served in Southwest Asia or certain parts of Africa may qualify for presumptive service connection for chronic, unexplained symptoms. These are rated by how much they impact daily function.

VA Rating Table (Generalized Rating by Impairment):

Rating	Explanation
10%	Symptoms are present but intermittent. May involve fatigue, joint pain, cognitive issues, but do not significantly impair function.
20%–40%	Chronic multi-symptom illness with moderate functional impairment. May involve persistent fatigue, muscle pain, headaches, or sleep disturbances.
60%–100%	Severe fatigue, neurological issues, or multisystem conditions that cause inability to work or interact socially. Often includes overlapping diagnoses like fibromyalgia or IBS.

Required Evidence:

- Deployment records confirming service in Gulf War region
- Documentation of chronic symptoms lasting 6+ months
- Medical records ruling out diagnosed condition
- Functional impact statements: work, cognitive, social issues
- Optional: exam from environmental medicine or Gulf War registry

Pro Tip:

Even if your symptoms don't fit a known diagnosis, you may still qualify under 'undiagnosed illness' or 'MUCMI.' File anyway and push for specialist review.