**What is Secondary condition and how to file**

Many veterans are not aware of secondary conditions and they often go unclaimed! Secondary conditions are often rated higher than the service connected condition. There is no limit to the number of secondary conditions you can claim for any service connected condition. You can also claim secondary conditions of secondary conditions!

**What is Secondary condition and how to file?**

**Secondary**: If you have a diagnosis, and a doctor says that your diagnosis is at least as likely as not a result of your service-connected condition, then you need not establish an in-service event or aggravation.

Before you file a claim or continue with your appeal, please understand what the VA needs to approve any claim.

1. Any condition claimed has to be MEDICALLY documented in your records:
2. Current Diagnosis.   (No diagnosis, no Service Connection.)
3. In Service Event or Aggravation.
4. Nexus is the link (cause and effect) to connect to your service. A diagnosis during active duty and clear continuity of care or complaints since discharge. If you do not have a clear nexus, you may obtain that nexus…a connection… by obtaining a doctor’s written statement that says that your condition is at least as likely as not (50% chance or greater) due to X event in military service or a previously connected condition.

Example: If veteran has Service-connected Diabetics and taking medication it’s rated 20%, if insulin with regulation in daily activities is 40%.

Primary condition: Diabetes can cause below secondary condition:

1.  Numbness/tingling in hand, legs, Feet, Arms etc., this is called peripheral neuropathy. Diagnosed can be done by EMG (Electromyogram)/NCS (Nerve Conduction Study) by requesting your PCM. (can give multiple rating depending on body part from 10 to 40 % range

2.  Frequent Urination à this will affect your sleep and that in turn affects your ability to do jobs (can give 10 to 40% disability range)

3.  Loss of Kidney function – Can be diagnosed through Lab/blood test (Can give 40 to 80% disability range)

4.  Heart Diseases and Attacks – May be result of your diabetic condition

5.  Glaucoma etc.

If you see any secondary condition disability than follow below before filing this will give leg work and great chance:

1.  Have formal diagnosis with doctor? Make sure to link the issue with primary

2.  Get continuity of treatment

3. Get Nexus Letter (IMPORTANT) – It proves the condition caused or aggravated by secondary condition. The letter is needed from medical professional.

    Here is format: <http://www.vcag.info/The_Nexus_Letter>

4.  Your statement explaining, how primary condition caused secondary, impact on life, work, relationship etc.

5.  Statement from your spouse or anyone who can provide (optional)

6.  Than file.

**Other examples:**

1.  Tinnitus can cause secondary conditions like headaches, Insomnia, depression, anxiety etc.

2.  Lower back can cause secondary conditions like Knee pain, Leg pain, Pinched nerve, radiculopathy

3.  Headaches can cause depression, anxiety etc.

4.  OSA, Sleep Apnea can cause Congestive Heart Failure, Stroke, Hypertension, Diabetes Type II, Headaches, Vertigo, Gerd, etc.,

5.  Modified gait due to a hip, knee or foot condition can cause secondary conditions to the connecting joints or opposing joints.

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**[](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/public_indian_housing/post)**