

HOW TO PREPARE FOR YOUR C&P EXAM

What the Compensation & Pension exam actually is, four things to do before you go, and what to write down afterward.

WHAT THE C&P EXAM IS

The Compensation & Pension (C&P) exam is one of the most important steps in your VA disability claim. It helps the VA understand your condition, symptoms, and how your disability affects your daily life. The examiner's findings play a major role in the rating you ultimately receive.

HOW TO PREPARE

1 Be Honest About Your Worst Days

Many veterans downplay their symptoms. Describe how your condition affects you at its worst, not just on a "good day."

2 Bring Notes

Write down your symptoms, limitations, flare-ups, and how your condition impacts work, sleep, mobility, and daily activities. Keep a running log between now and your exam date.

3 Don't Try to "Tough It Out"

This is not the time to act strong or minimize your condition. Be clear and honest about how you're actually doing.

4 Answer Questions Directly

Keep your answers short, factual, and focused on your symptoms and limitations. Avoid guessing if you're unsure — it's okay to say so.

BEFORE YOU WALK IN

BRING WITH YOU

- ☐ Photo ID
- ☐ A written symptom log or notes covering flare-ups and daily impact
- ☐ A list of current medications and dosages
- ☐ Any assistive devices you regularly use (cane, brace, hearing aids)
- ☐ Names/dates of relevant treatment if you don't remember exact details

AFTER THE EXAM

Write down everything that happened — what the examiner asked, how long it lasted, and anything unusual. This can help if you need to appeal later, especially if the exam felt rushed or incomplete.

REMEMBER

The exam is not a test to pass or fail — it's an opportunity to accurately document how your condition affects you. Clear, honest, specific answers serve you better than either exaggeration or minimizing.

YOUR SYMPTOM LOG

Print this page and fill it in for the 1–2 weeks leading up to your exam. A written log makes it far easier to describe your worst days accurately when you're sitting in front of the examiner.

DATE	SYMPTOM / FLARE-UP	SEVERITY (1–10)	WHAT IT KEPT ME FROM DOING

TIP

Note your worst day in the group, not just an average day — that's the version of your condition the exam needs to capture.

READ THE FULL GUIDES ON THESE RELATED TOPICS

- veteran-roadmap.com/blog/how-to-file-a-va-disability-claim
- veteran-roadmap.com/blog/what-to-gather-before-you-file-a-va-claim
- veteran-roadmap.com/blog/how-to-write-a-strong-statement
- veteran-roadmap.com/blog/how-to-read-your-va-decision-letter

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