



## Scars: VA Disability Rating Explained

The VA rates scars based on their size, location, and the impact they have on a veteran's function and appearance. The ratings are determined under 38 CFR § 4.118, using several diagnostic codes. Here's an overview of the rating criteria:

### Diagnostic Codes and Rating Criteria for Scars

#### 1. Diagnostic Code 7800: Scars of the Head, Face, or Neck

- **10%:** One characteristic of disfigurement.
- **30%:** Visible or palpable tissue loss and either gross distortion or asymmetry of one feature (nose, chin, forehead, eyes, ears, cheeks, lips) or two or three characteristics of disfigurement.
- **50%:** Visible or palpable tissue loss and either gross distortion or asymmetry of two features or paired sets of features or four or five characteristics of disfigurement.
- **80%:** Visible or palpable tissue loss and either gross distortion or asymmetry of three or more features or paired sets of features or six or more characteristics of disfigurement.



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### Characteristics of Disfigurement:

- Scar 5 or more inches (13 cm) in length.
- Scar at least one-quarter inch (0.6 cm) wide at its widest part.
- Surface contour of scar elevated or depressed on palpation.
- Scar adherent to underlying tissue.
- Skin hypo- or hyper-pigmented in an area exceeding six square inches (39 sq. cm).
- Skin texture abnormal (irregular, atrophic, shiny, scaly, etc.) in an area exceeding six square inches (39 sq. cm).
- Underlying soft tissue missing in an area exceeding six square inches (39 sq. cm).
- Skin indurated and inflexible in an area exceeding six square inches (39 sq. cm).

### 2. Diagnostic Code 7801: Deep and Nonlinear Scars

- **10%:** Area or areas of 6 square inches (39 sq. cm) but less than 12 square inches (77 sq. cm).
- **20%:** Area or areas of 12 square inches (77 sq. cm) but less than 72 square inches (465 sq. cm).
- **30%:** Area or areas of 72 square inches (465 sq. cm) but less than 144 square inches (929 sq. cm).
- **40%:** Area or areas of 144 square inches (929 sq. cm) or greater.

**Deep Scars:** Scars associated with underlying soft tissue damage.



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### 3. Diagnostic Code 7802: Superficial and Nonlinear Scars

- **10%:** Area or areas of 144 square inches (929 sq. cm) or greater.

**Superficial Scars:** Scars not associated with underlying soft tissue damage.

### 4. Diagnostic Code 7804: Unstable or Painful Scars

- **10%:** One or two scars that are unstable or painful.
- **20%:** Three or four scars that are unstable or painful.
- **30%:** Five or more scars that are unstable or painful.

**Unstable Scars:** Scars where there is frequent loss of covering of skin over the scar.

**5. Diagnostic Code 7805: Other Scars and Effects** - Scars rated under this code are evaluated based on the limitation of function of the affected part, or any other disabling effects not considered in the other diagnostic codes.



## **Scars: VA Disability Rating Explained**

### **Evidence Required To support a claim for scars, veterans typically need:**

- Medical records documenting the size, location, and characteristics of the scars. - Evidence showing how the scars affect their function or appearance.
- Statements regarding any pain, instability, or functional limitations caused by the scars.

### **Additional Considerations:**

- **Combined Ratings:** If a veteran has multiple scars, the VA can assign separate ratings for each one, which are then combined using the VA's Combined Ratings Table.
- **Impact on Employment:** If scars impact a veteran's ability to work, this can also be considered in the rating. By providing detailed medical evidence and documentation, veterans can ensure that their scars are accurately rated based on their severity and impact.