



## **Hiatal Hernia: VA Disability Rating Explained**

The VA rates hiatal hernia under Diagnostic Code 7346, which falls under 38 CFR § 4.114. The rating depends on the severity of the symptoms and any associated complications. Here's an overview of the rating criteria for hiatal hernia:

### **Diagnostic Code 7346: Hiatal Hernia**

- **10%:** Symptomatic, with one or more of the following manifestations: - Anemia; - Mild dysphagia; - Epigastric distress; - Regurgitation.
- **20%:** With two or more of the symptoms described under the 10% rating.
- **30%:** Persistent distress with dysphagia, pyrosis, and regurgitation, accompanied by substernal or arm or shoulder pain, productive cough, or palpitation, or; with dyspnea on moderate exertion, or; liver damage, or; diarrhea, or; arthritis, or; manifested after prolonged recumbency.

### **Rating Criteria Explanation:**

- **10%:** If the hiatal hernia is symptomatic and causes one or more of the listed manifestations such as anemia, mild dysphagia (difficulty swallowing), epigastric distress (upper abdominal discomfort), or regurgitation (backflow of stomach contents into the esophagus), a 10% rating may be assigned.
- **20%:** If the hiatal hernia causes two or more of the symptoms described under the 10% rating, a 20% rating may be warranted.
- **30%:** A 30% rating may be assigned if there are persistent distressing symptoms such as dysphagia, pyrosis (heartburn), regurgitation, accompanied by additional complications such as substernal or arm or shoulder pain, productive cough, palpitations, dyspnea (shortness of breath) on moderate exertion, liver damage, diarrhea, or arthritis. This rating may also apply if symptoms are exacerbated after prolonged recumbency (lying down).



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### Additional Considerations:

- **Functional Impact:** The VA considers how hiatal hernia symptoms affect daily activities, eating, and overall quality of life.
- **Complications:** Any complications associated with hiatal hernia, such as esophagitis, gastrointestinal bleeding, or respiratory symptoms, may influence the rating.

### Evidence Required: To support a claim for hiatal hernia, veterans typically need:

- **Medical Records:** Documentation of diagnosis, symptoms, and treatment history from healthcare providers. -
- **Diagnostic Tests:** Any relevant diagnostic tests such as upper gastrointestinal endoscopy (EGD), barium swallow (esophagram), or imaging studies. -
- **Symptom Documentation:** Statements from healthcare providers or personal statements describing the severity and frequency of symptoms such as dysphagia, heartburn, regurgitation, and associated complications. By providing comprehensive medical evidence and documentation of the functional impact of hiatal hernia, veterans can ensure their condition is accurately rated according to VA criteria.