

Veteran Claims Made Easy™

A Marine's Guide to Filing Correctly & Winning the Benefits You Earned

RESOURCE 18 – C&P EXAM DO'S AND DON'TS CHECKLIST

C&P Exam Do's and Don'ts Checklist

A simple reminder of how to approach your Compensation & Pension exam clearly, calmly, and accurately.

This exam plays a major role in how the VA rates your condition.

Use this checklist to avoid common mistakes and ensure your symptoms are properly documented.



DO THESE THINGS

Before and during your exam:

- ☐ **Be honest and specific** about your symptoms
 - ☐ **Describe your worst days**, not just how you feel that moment
 - ☐ **Explain functional impact** (work, sleep, daily activities)
 - ☐ **Mention flare-ups** and how often they occur
 - ☐ **Explain limitations clearly** (time, distance, frequency)
 - ☐ **Answer questions directly**
 - ☐ **Say “I don’t know”** if you’re unsure
 - ☐ **Stay calm and respectful**
 - ☐ **Take your time answering**
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DON'T DO THESE THINGS

Avoid these common mistakes:

- [] Don't say "I'm fine" if you're not
 - [] Don't minimize symptoms out of habit or pride
 - [] Don't exaggerate or guess
 - [] Don't compare yourself to others
 - [] Don't push through pain to "prove" something
 - [] Don't volunteer unrelated information
 - [] Don't argue with the examiner
 - [] Don't assume the examiner knows your history
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HOW TO DESCRIBE SYMPTOMS PROPERLY

Instead of vague statements like:

✗ "It hurts sometimes"

Use clear descriptions like:

✓ "I have pain daily at a level of 7 out of 10, and I can only stand for about 15 minutes before I need to sit down."



FLARE-UPS MATTER

If you experience flare-ups:

- [] Describe how often they happen

- ☐ Describe how severe they are
 - ☐ Describe how long they last
 - ☐ Explain what you cannot do during a flare
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WHAT TO BRING (IF ALLOWED)

- ☐ Government-issued ID
- ☐ Appointment information
- ☐ Notes from your symptom log
- ☐ Personal reminders of key symptoms

(Do not bring large packets unless instructed.)



AFTER THE EXAM

- ☐ Write down what was asked
 - ☐ Note anything important that was missed
 - ☐ Save your notes in case of appeal
 - ☐ Follow up on exam results
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FINAL REMINDER

This exam is about **documentation**, not toughness.

Be truthful, clear, and consistent — that's how your condition is properly evaluated.
