

# History of the Fleet Marine Force Corpsman

## Hospital Corps Uniform Insignia

Hospital Corpsmen serving with the Marines wear Marine utility uniforms in the field. Through Vietnam, they also wore Marine Corps service uniforms instead of Navy ones (the choice to wear USMC service uniforms is now the individual's option). Through the years, a variety of distinctive insignias have been used to identify these Sailors.

The rating insignia bore a red cross to denote the rating of a *Pharmacist's Mate* (PhM) from 1916 until just after World War II. The rating title changed to the generic term of *Hospital Corpsman* in 1948, and the insignia was changed to the caduceus.



On the field uniforms, rank was drawn on the utility uniform from World War II until the adoption of collar devices in the late 1950s. At that time, a shield bearing the caduceus was introduced for wear on the left collar of E-1 through E-6 uniforms.

### The Fleet Marine Force Combat Operations

Insignia, a 3/16" bronze Eagle, Globe, and Anchor, was authorized for wear on the campaign medals of Sailors who served with the Marines in combat beginning in World War II.



### The Navy Fleet Marine Force Ribbon

was introduced in 1984 to identify Sailors who completed a rigorous qualification process on a variety of Marine Corps subjects. The ribbon was superseded by the Navy FMF Enlisted Warfare Specialist breast insignia in 2000.



The U.S. Navy Hospital Corps is established by all of Congress during the Spanish American War.

June 17, 1898



They individual who was awarded the Medal of Honor for his service during the Spanish American War.



Hospital Corpsman Third Class Robert Ingram earns the Medal of Honor for his service during the Spanish American War.

March 28, 1966



These officers earn the decoration during the war while over 600 are killed in battle with these Marines.



Hospital Corpsmen that awarded Marines in combat in Iraq, Lebanon and during the invasion of Grenada.

1983



Hospital Corpsmen participate in mounted and dismounted patrols as part of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF).

2001



Hospital Corpsmen that awarded Marines in combat in Iraq, Lebanon and during the invasion of Grenada.

2003



Hospital Corpsmen participate in mounted and dismounted patrols as part of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF).



1917-1918

390 Hospital Corpsmen were with 4th Marine Brigade in France. They were 2 Medals of Honor, 46 Navy & Unpublished Service Crosses, and 212 Silver Stars while treating 13,000 casualties.

1945

PHM1 John Bradley helped save the injured Sgt. in two JMCs. Hospital Corpsmen serving with USMC units earn 7 Medals of Honor - half of those awarded to Sailors in World War II - and sustain 188 casualties.

1950-1953

All five enlisted Navy Medals of Honor for the Korean War go to Hospital Corpsmen serving with the Marines.



Hospital Corpsmen accompanying 1st and 2d Marine Divisions into Korea during the Korean War.

"No Marine ever took a full day off the right of a Navy Corpsman."

1st Lt. Robert Smith

## Hospital Corpsmen: The Marines' Docs

On June 17, 1898, the United States Navy Hospital Corps was established. Since then, Hospital Corpsmen have served alongside Marines, bandaging their wounds and saving lives in every war and conflict.

As the Marines' expeditionary role grew out of ships' landing parties in the 20th century, medical support for these forces continued to be the same as it had been for naval infantry - Navy Hospital Corpsmen and doctors. Tables of Organization saw an increasing number of these medical Sailors assigned to Marine units to provide rapid medical support on the battlefield. By World War I, there were two to four Hospital Corpsmen per company. In France, they provided exceptional medical support for Army and Marine casualties and cemented their value in the minds of their Leathernecks.

The Marine Corps increased in size to six divisions in World War II and the need for medical support increased. Hospital Corpsmen were assigned to rifle platoons as well as to battalion aid stations and field surgical units. They hit every beach, ready to dress the wounds that came the moment the bow ramp dropped. In all, they treated almost 87,000 wounded Marines during the war, sustaining a higher ratio of casualties themselves as they did.

Only a few years later, Hospital Corpsmen again joined the Marines in combat, this time in Korea. As before, they conducted sick call and went on patrol, risking their lives when the moment called for it. 108 of them were killed in action in Korea, and all of the Medals of Honor awarded to enlisted Sailors went to Hospital Corpsmen serving with the Marines.

By far the Hospital Corps' largest contribution in Vietnam was with the Marine Corps units. The enlisted medical component would grow to 2,700 Hospital Corpsmen assigned to the 1st and 3d Marine Divisions and other combat support units. At the cost of some 630 of their own, they would treat 70,000 casualties in Southeast Asia.

Hospital Corpsmen would serve with their Marines in large and small conflicts around the globe. In 1983, they served in Beirut, where they would lose 15 Corpsmen in the terrorist attack on the Marine barracks. En route to relieve those in Lebanon, Hospital Corpsmen with another Marine unit invaded Grenada. In 1991, they helped to liberate Kuwait, and later in the decade they would treat casualties in hotspots such as Somalia and Kosovo.

In the 21st Century, Navy Hospital Corpsmen continue to uphold their legacy of valor and sacrifice as they go into battle with their Marines in Afghanistan and Iraq. Throughout the Marines' battle history, many would echo the sentiment of an officer in World War I as he described his medical Sailors: "There were many heroes who wore the insignia of the Navy Hospital Corps."

## Hospital Corps Rates

1916-1948

Post-1948

<b>HASc</b> Hospital Apprentice Second Class	+	<b>HR</b> Hospitalman Recruit
<b>HA1c</b> Hospital Apprentice First Class	+	<b>HA</b> Hospitalman Apprentice
<b>PHM3c</b> Pharmacist's Mate Third Class	+	<b>HN</b> Hospitalman
<b>PHM2c</b> Pharmacist's Mate Second Class	+	<b>HM3</b> Hospital Corpsman Third Class
<b>PHM1c</b> Pharmacist's Mate First Class	+	<b>HM2</b> Hospital Corpsman Second Class
<b>CPHM</b> Chief Pharmacist's Mate	+	<b>HM1</b> Hospital Corpsman First Class
<b>Pharmacist, Chief</b>	+	<b>HMC</b> Hospital Corpsman
<b>Pharmacist (Warrant Officer)</b>	+	<b>HMCS</b> Senior Chief Hospital Corpsman
<b>Hospital Corps Officer</b>	+	<b>HMCM</b> Master Chief Hospital Corpsman