



January 16, 2024

If you see an asterisk (*) by an article heading, there is additional information in the *Timely Resources for Readers* section of the newsletter.

Beers Criteria*

Have you heard of the Beers Criteria? The Beers Criteria is a list of medications referenced by healthcare providers regarding those that are safe for adults over 65. Cleveland Clinic offered a [summary of the Beers Criteria](#) which also lists several of the medication categories and drugs that are often considered for older adults. The American Geriatrics Society updates the Beers list every 3 years, and a faithful reader sent information on the list that was released in 2023. (Thank you, Dr. J!)

Medicare and the Jimmo Settlement: Does it Affect You or a Loved One?

The Jimmo Settlement Agreement in January 2013 clarified that Medicare covers skilled nursing care and skilled therapy under Medicare's skilled nursing facility, home health, and outpatient therapy benefits in order to maintain function or prevent or slow decline providing other coverage criteria are met. Although this agreement was reached over 10 years ago, there are still denials for beneficiaries. Read more about [the Jimmo Settlement](#). Is this affecting you or your loved one?

Medicare Changes in 2024

Premiums are going up. Part A, Part B, and some Part D products are increasing. Insulin prices remain capped and vaccinations are covered for those who receive prescription drug coverage. Also, price negotiations are taking place although changes won't occur until 2026. There are also changes in mental health coverage. Read this [report](#) for details. AARP's article [Big Medicare Changes Coming in 2024](#) goes into more detail.

Signaling for Help

Our world has gotten dangerous. There are instances when people need help but they are unable to reach out. Here are some "signs" to be aware of that signal someone needs assistance.

*A teenager used the "[Signal For Help](#)" hand gesture, tucking her thumb into her palm and then closing her fingers around it. She was able to alert a driver who recognized the signal and called 911.

*Bars and restaurants often have code phrases posted in their restrooms for those in trouble. Ordering an "[angel shot](#)" means someone needs assistance.

*Develop code words or phrases for your friends and family allowing you to signal each other if you need help.

*It also protects in case of a scam call. In this case, the caller / scammer must know the code word for the family.

Artificial Intelligence

"Artificial intelligence or AI refers to software technologies that make a robot or computer act and think like a human" as defined by [Market Business News](#). The technology is not new and we already use AI in several applications. Scammers use AI and the scams are becoming more sophisticated. Romance Scams use AI to create the image of the perfect person and Grandparent Scams use the actual voice (from an audio clip) to fool families into thinking their loved one is in trouble. The [Federal Trade Commission](#) gives tips for dealing with scams. Be cautious. Things may not be as they seem.



Care for Veterans

Caregiving is a difficult job and there are many factors that can make the task more challenging. Caring for a veteran can add to the difficulty due to PTSD, traumatic brain injury, physical injuries, depression, or other factors. The [Family Caregiver Alliance](#) offers information for those caring for veterans – for the care receiver and for the caregiver. Remember your [local veterans outreach center](#) for support. The Veterans Administration offers a [Caregiver Support Program](#).

Crisis Service for Veterans and Families

The [Veterans Crisis Line](#) is available to veterans and their families at times of crisis or suicidal ideation. Dial 988 and press 1. You can also text 838255. VA responders are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

Postage is Going Up Again

The price of First Class mail pieces will go up 2 cents from 66 cents to 68 cents for the first ounce on January 21, 2024. There will be no increase in the additional ounce which will remain at 24 cents. This will be the [fifth price increase](#) under Postmaster General Louis DeJoy.

Is it Time to

Think about what we put in our bodies?

- *Tobacco products, vaping – not healthy
- *Excessive use of alcohol or other substances – not healthy
- *A diet with too much salt, fat, processed foods, sugar and artificial sweeteners, caffeine, and all the other foods that we love that aren't good for us. Alas, not healthy.

Think about self-care?

- *Same as above
- *Pray, meditate, practice yoga or tai chi, journal, do deep breathing, try visual imagery
- *Check out support groups, talk to friends, rely on your support system
- *Have an attitude of gratitude
- *Take care of your health: have check-ups, get vaccinations, get health screens as recommended by your health care provider, and be aware of safety precautions in your home (install grab bars, avoid throw rugs, make sure you have adequate lighting, etc)

Mend relationships or let go?

- *Consider what the result of reaching out may be. It may go well or there may be unintended consequences.
- *Accept that there may not be a mutual desire to mend whatever wrongs or perceived wrongs there are.
- *If forgiveness is needed, do it. It doesn't mean forgetting. It means you can move on and focus on your well-being instead of focusing on anger or hurt. [Forgiveness is healing](#).
- *Accept that some relationships are not good for us and we need to distance ourselves.
- *There is a difference in giving up and letting go. Sometimes we just need to let go.

With Our Thanks

Thank you to our Guest Editor Jeanette Wojcik for the January 8 issue on New Year's Resolutions.

In Memory

It is with great sadness that I announce the death of [Naomi Feil](#) who developed Validation Therapy and contributed so much to the care of those with Alzheimer's and their caregivers. Mrs. Feil died on Christmas Eve at her home in Oregon. It was a privilege to have met her. Rest in peace.



Local Adult Services Coalitions

Adult Services Coalitions offer networking and educational opportunities for professionals who serve older adults. Meeting dates, times, and contacts are listed below.

OHIO

Belmont County: 1st Thursday at 11am at Senior Services of Belmont County, 67650 Oakview Drive, St Clairsville OH akoegler1995@gmail.com

Guernsey County: 3rd Wednesday at 3pm Stacey.clark-frame@altercareonline.net

Jefferson County: 3rd Thursday at 3pm at Prime Time starr.decariarx@gmail.com

Harrison County: 4th Wednesday at 3pm at Cadiz Senior Center tblanchard@theicgroup.com

WEST VIRGINIA:

Hancock County: 3rd Wednesday at 2:00pm at Hancock County Senior Center starr.decariarx@gmail.com or alivingston@change.org

Brooke County: 2nd Monday at 2pm at the Brooke County Senior Center Sandy Kemp at skemp@bccoawv.org

Ohio County Adult Services Coalition: 3rd Tuesday at 1:00 at Vance Memorial Church tblanchard@theicgroup.com

Marshall County Senior Coalition: 2nd Weds at 2:30pm at Marshall County Senior Center corris@valleyhospice.org

Vaccinations, Boosters, Flu Shots

Vaccinations are covered by Medicare for those who have prescription coverage.

- The CDC offers [information on vaccinations](#) which are appropriate to age and health conditions.
- Covid vaccinations, boosters, annual flu shots, RSV vaccinations, shingles vaccines, TDAP (tetanus) vaccinations, and others are available at most pharmacies.
- Vaccinations including the shingles vaccine are now covered by Medicare *for those with prescription coverage*. Check with your physician for any contraindications.

Timely Resources for Readers

***Beers Criteria**

- A [The American Geriatrics Society 2023 updated AGS Beers Criteria® for potentially inappropriate medication use in older adults](#) is available online and includes the medications.

***The Jimmo Settlement**

- A Read more about the [Jimmo vs Sibelius Settlement](#) and the impact on a beneficiary's benefits.
- A The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services offers [a FAQ page](#) on the Jimmo Settlement.

***Is It Time to.....**

Think About What We Put in Our Bodies

- A [Better Nutrition Every Day](#) gives consumers ideas on what we need to fuel our bodies.

Think About Self-Care

- A ["5 Self-Care Practices for Every Area of Your Life"](#) gives you some ideas of how to take care of you.
- A Self-care is not selfish. Check out the [article](#) that will give you some perspective.

Mend Relationships or Let Go

- A There is a difference in letting go and giving up. Read ["The Difference in 'Giving Up' and 'Letting Go'"](#).



Altenheim Retirement Community

Founded 1891

Our cottages are situated adjacent to our Main House at 1387 National Road, Wheeling

Conveniently located close to medical care, churches, shopping, restaurants, recreation

Offering 8 independent cottages for those who are 65 and older

Two bedroom, two bath, living room, kitchen room, dining room

Stove, refrigerator, dishwasher, microwave, washer and dryer are included

Lawn care, snow removal, general maintenance, general repairs included in monthly rent

Utilities are not included

Pets considered ~ call for our pet policy

We are accepting applications!

Contact George A. Dakovic, Executive Director at gam.dakovic@gmail.com or 304 281-8797



Altenheim Resource Services

Altenheim Resource Services, a division of Altenheim Retirement Community for over 25 years

Empowering older adults, caregivers, & advocates with information on aging, services and resources

Free & confidential information and no geographic limitations

Let us be YOUR GATEWAY TO CARE FOR OLDER ADULTS!

Ann Koegler, M.A., L.S.W., Resource Services Coordinator Akoegler1995@gmail.com

<https://www.altenheimcommunity.com>

Information on Altenheim, Resource Services, calendar of events, blog, and a photo gallery

Contact us at 304 280-8701 with questions about resources and issues concerning older adults and caregiving.

