



## NEWSWIRE NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2020

*The Volunteer staff of the Jefferson Barracks Satellite Retiree Activities Office publishes this NEWSWIRE to inform all military retirees, spouses, widows, widowers and their families of changes to their benefits, the status of current legislation impacting their retirement, health related information, defense policies and other matters affecting their military rights, benefits and other obligations. It contains information about Scott AFB; Jefferson Barracks AFS and the local retired community.*

### **From the Director**

The Jefferson Barracks Retiree Office is open and ready to serve you. Our office is open Tuesday through Thursday 0900 – 1200. Our phone number is 314 527 8212.

The DEERS Office is now open on Thursday and Fridays, 0900-1500 Hrs. Call to setup an appointment at 314 416 6619. Your current ID card, if expired, is still authorized until the June 30 2021 due to Covid-19.

Unfortunately, we still have to cancel our monthly luncheons.

Just a reminder that as of January 1 2021 Tri Care Standard (those in the TRICARE system between ages 60 and 65) will have a monthly premium charge of \$ 25.00. **This does not apply to TRICARE For Life or TRICARE Prime participants.** Refer to the article in this newswire.

The office staff would like to wish you and your family HAPPY HOLIDAYS.

Continue to be Safe. Social Distance and Mask Up.

### **New ID Cards being Issued for Military Family Members, Retirees**

Source: David Vergun Department of Defense News / Published August 24, 2020

Defense Department began issuing Next Generation Uniformed Services Identification Cards on July 31, the first time since 1993 that changes to the card have been made.

The complete transition to the new ID card, is targeted for January 2026, said Michael Sorrento, director of the Defense Manpower Data Center. In the meantime, the current cards will continue to work. In an effort to conserve resources and limit the impact on ID card issuance facilities, cards will not be reissued solely for the purpose of obtaining the Next Gen USID card.

Sorrento discussed the new ID cards that are for military family members, retirees and other eligible card holders. The new ID card transitions the current laminated paper card to much more durable plastic material, similar to that used for the common access cards used by military members and DOD civilians, he said. Also, the new ID cards feature enhanced security measures that will reduce the likelihood of them being compromised, Sorrento said.

Although the new ID cards are available now, Sorrento said, only about 20 Real-Time Automated Personnel Identification Card System sites currently offer the card because new equipment is required to produce them, and that takes some time. All RAPIDS sites worldwide likely will have the new equipment by the end of the

year, he said. To reduce foot traffic -- particularly in light of the COVID-19 pandemic -- Sorrento said that unless a card is about to expire, it would be better to wait until next summer to get a new one. Even then, he added, it would be good to call ahead first to schedule an appointment. DOD is looking at future capabilities that can be provided with the new ID cards, Sorrento said. For example, users of the card may eventually be able to go online and order a card through a proper vetting process and have it directly distributed to them by mail, rather than sit in a RAPIDS office and wait for a card to be made. The underlying technology could support greater and greater capabilities for a long time to come, he added. More information can be found at the [DOD Common Access Card website](#).

## **SSA COLA 2020 Medicare B Users Could Effectively See Little to No Increase**

*Source: MoneyTalksNews | Chris Kissell & Karla Bowsher*

Social Security recipients hoping for more cash to spend in 2021 are sure to be disappointed by the 13 OCT announcement from the Social Security Administration. One year after receiving a measly increase in their benefits, recipients now face an even smaller 1.3% cost-of-living adjustment, or COLA, for 2021, the federal agency announced. It is the smallest COLA in four years. As a result, the average retiree payment of \$1,523 per month in Social Security benefits will be \$1,543 after the COLA takes effect next year, according to federal estimates. That's an extra \$20 each month.

The average retired couple's collective payment of \$2,563 per month would be \$2,596. That's an extra \$33 monthly — for two people. The COLA will take effect in January for more than 64 million recipients of Social Security retirement benefits. It will take effect on Dec. 31 for more than 8 million recipients of Supplemental Security Income, or SSI, benefits — income supplements for people who are elderly, blind or disabled and who have little to no income. COLAs for the past several years were:

- 2020 — 1.6%
- 2019 — 2.8%
- 2018 — 2%
- 2017 — 0.3%
- 2016 — 0% (no adjustment)
- 2015 — 1.7%
- 2014 — 1.5%
- 2013 — 1.7%
- 2012 — 3.6%

When Social Security recipients also have Medicare health insurance, their Medicare Part B premium is automatically deducted from their Social Security payments. So, if a small COLA coincides with a big jump in the Part B premium, the premium increase essentially could cancel out part or all of the COLA. The Medicare Part B premium amount for 2021 has yet to be announced officially. But the Senior Citizens League's research shows that this premium is the second-fastest growing cost for retirees, as we detailed in "10 Common Expenses That Have Skyrocketed for Seniors." The average monthly Part B premium has risen from \$45.50 in 2000 to \$144.60 in 2019 — an increase of 218%.

In December, the government will notify Social Security recipients of the exact amount of their 2021 COLA after Part B premiums are deducted. The agency will mail the notice and also post it to the online Message Center that beneficiaries can access through their Social Security account.

## **Possible Military Pharmacy Changes Due to COVID-19**

Source: TRICARE Communications / Published March 31, 2020

Do you use a military pharmacy? If so, there may be temporary limitations that result in a decrease in service or closure at your pharmacy due to COVID-19. To maintain patient and personnel safety, you may have to temporarily switch your prescription to TRICARE Pharmacy Home Delivery or to a TRICARE retail network pharmacy.

“The health and protection of our patients, health care teammates, and the community is essential as we preserve the fighting force,” said Col Markus Gmehlin, Defense Health Agency Pharmacy Operations Division Acting Chief. “We are taking necessary steps to ensure that our teams who are caring for patients and delivering critical medications do so in a safe environment. This may mean temporary limitations to military pharmacy services. We are committed to ensuring that you have access to your prescriptions via home delivery and/or retail network pharmacies in the event that military pharmacy services are temporarily disrupted.”

### **Your pharmacy options**

The best option during this time may be to switch your prescriptions to [TRICARE Pharmacy Home Delivery](#). You can get up to a 90-day supply of most medications. While copayments do apply, home delivery is cheaper than the TRICARE retail network. And you don't have to leave the safety of your own home.

If your medication supply is for 14 days or less, you should consider switching to a [TRICARE retail network pharmacy](#). Copayments apply and you can get up to a 90-day supply of most medications. Check with your network pharmacy provider about medication availability and copayments, or visit the [TRICARE Costs tool](#).

### **What can I do?**

There are several things you can do to make sure you receive your medications.

- **Call Your Military Pharmacy.** Call your [military pharmacy refill line](#) to check for changes to service offerings, closures, and resumption of services.
- **Call Express Scripts, Inc. (Express Scripts) at 877-363-1303.** Or you can visit [Express Scripts](#) to switch your prescription to home delivery.
- **Call Your Retail Network Pharmacy.** Ask them to call your military pharmacy to transfer your medication, or call your provider for a new prescription.
- **Find a Retail Network Pharmacy.** You can also visit the [Express Scripts website](#) to find a retail network pharmacy.

Note: If you don't have any refills remaining, call your provider to send a new prescription to either the TRICARE Pharmacy Home Delivery or your TRICARE retail network pharmacy.

As we continue to take proactive steps to lower the spread of the coronavirus, we appreciate your help. Please stay updated by visiting [www.tricare.mil/coronavirus](http://www.tricare.mil/coronavirus) and [signing up for email updates](#). You can also find additional information at the [Military Health System website](#). Stay safe and take command of your health.

## **Army's COVID-19 Vaccine May Produce a Side Benefit: Cure for the Common Cold**

*Source: Impact 2020 | Tara Copp & Michael Wilner*

Scientists at the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research are advancing a vaccine that may be able to prevent strains of the common cold in the future. But their immediate concern is the imminent flu season because nearly seven months since receiving their first samples of the novel coronavirus from a Washington state patient, they still don't know whether catching the flu could increase the chances of getting COVID-19. "When this virus emerged, it was sort of coming toward the tail end of the flu season. And now we have both, at the same time, and we don't know what that's going to look like," said Dr. Kayvon Modjarrad, director of emerging infectious diseases at Walter Reed in Maryland. "If you get sick with flu, is that going to make you more susceptible of getting COVID or risk of it, or vice versa? We don't know that."

The vaccine that Modjarrad and his team are working on would target not just COVID-19, but also other coronavirus-related illnesses, including several variants of the common cold. "Most children, by age two or three, have been infected with one of these common cold coronaviruses," Modjarrad said. "I don't think people are really focused on trying to prevent the common cold, but that is, I think, an important side benefit of what we are trying to do," he told McClatchy in an interview. While the Walter Reed vaccine candidate is currently focused on COVID-19, the lab has structured the vaccine to be able to target different types of coronavirus. Once they have "proof of concept" that the vaccine is safe and effective, Modjarrad said, the Army lab will decide whether to pivot their efforts to creating the "pan-coronavirus" vaccine that would help prevent the common cold and other potential novel coronaviruses.

Modjarrad said that they are currently testing their vaccine in monkeys, and depending on the results, will enter into human trials toward the end of the year. From preliminary research in mice, the vaccine has generated "extremely high levels of antibodies" that neutralize the coronavirus, and has also demonstrated a strong safety profile, he said. Walter Reed's researchers have also found that there is very little mutation occurring in the virus. That means just one vaccine could work for the entire global population — whether the COVID-19 variant originated in China or whether it was the one that came into the United States from Europe, which is the most common type now, said Dr. Morgane Rolland, chief of viral genetics for the Henry M. Jackson Foundation, which is supporting Walter Reed's research. National Coverage. Local Perspectives.

"There's really one strain, and that's enough to make a vaccine," Rolland said. "In terms of vaccine purposes, the virus is not a moving target." Rolland's team just finished looking at the genetic sequences of 27,000 people who have had COVID. Viruses will mutate when spreading from one human to another, or an animal to human, because of the chance that not all of the tens of thousands of genomes will replicate exactly when they enter a new host, Rolland said. What Rolland's team found is that there were very few mutations. They think that is because COVID-19 spread so rapidly that the virus didn't have a chance to mutate. "At this point the vaccine would cover all the diversities that we are seeing in sequences that are spreading around the world," Rolland said.

Modjarrad said that individuals should not be concerned with receiving a flu vaccine in close proximity to an eventual vaccine for COVID-19, and encouraged all Americans to get vaccinated for the flu early in the season. "I think it's important that we have people understand that we have some of these effective tools in place that could actually indirectly bring down the burden of disease and death for COVID-19 by doing our due diligence in taking care of the flu as well," Modjarrad said. A flu shot does not make the individual more susceptible to getting ill, and it will not interfere with a potential COVID vaccine, as neither contain live virus, Modjarrad said. A flu mist or nose spray that is taken instead of a shot, does use live flu virus. He recommends that any live-virus vaccines be spaced out and not administered at the same time as another live-virus vaccine, such as for measles.

At the outset of flu season, public health experts have grown increasingly concerned that the annual pressures on hospitals and health care workers will be exacerbated by the pandemic coronavirus, which

spreads more easily without heat and humidity and has already led to nearly 200,000 deaths in the United States. The flu kills tens of thousands of Americans each year, and hospitalizes hundreds of thousands, raising concerns about straining the availability of hospital beds and personal protective equipment for frontline workers that may be needed in the event of a coronavirus surge.

## **Honey: More Reasons to Eat It**

*Source: Aging Healthy Today*

Honey has been used for thousands of years for its health benefits. Today, the use of honey is especially important, not only for health but for the conservation of the bee population. By using honey, there are many natural benefits to your body that promote healing, wellness, and enjoyment. Honey can vary in its benefits according to the types of flowers the bees pollinate. However, raw, local honey will have the maximum amount of benefits.

### **1. Gives You Antioxidants**

Antioxidants clear out free radicals from your system. Free radicals cause damage and are one of the main components that cause aging. Antioxidants protect you from this, helping your body to live longer and healthier.

Several studies have shown that high-quality honey holds many important antioxidants, including phenolic compounds and organic acids like flavonoids. There is some speculation that pasteurization may reduce the number of antioxidants. Choosing raw honey can avoid this.

### **2. Boosts Brain Health**

Honey has both an antioxidant and anti-inflammatory power to boost the health of your brain. Research has shown that honey consumption helped to protect the brain against chemical brain damage. Because of the high content of antioxidants, honey removes free radicals that may destroy brain cells. Honey also helps with inflammation in the brain. The hippocampus is an important part of the brain that aids in memory. With inflammation in the hippocampus, quick recollection may be more difficult. Raw honey reduces the amount of inflammation.

### **3. Keeps Your Heart Healthy**

Honey can help your heart health in multiple ways. The antioxidants help to protect your heart and guard you against having a heart attack. It does this by reducing oxidative stress on your heart and preventing clots. Honey may also help your arteries to dilate, increasing your blood flow out of the heart. Honey has also been linked to lower blood pressure. Studies involving both humans and rats saw decent reductions in blood pressure from honey consumption.

### **4. Improve Cholesterol Levels**

Another way that honey can improve heart health is by lowering bad cholesterol and boosting good cholesterol. High bad cholesterol levels are one of the key indicators that you are at high-risk for a heart attack. This type of cholesterol builds up fat in your arteries, leading to eventual strokes or heart attacks. Several studies have shown that honey both reduces bad cholesterol and raises good cholesterol to improve overall health. With the balancing of your cholesterol, you may even see a small amount of weight loss.

### **5. Promotes Wound Healing**

One of the oldest natural benefits of honey is the promotion of wound healing. Since ancient Egypt, honey has been used in the treatment of wounds and burns. Known for its antimicrobial properties, honey helps to kill bacteria, reduce inflammation, and nourish the body's cells. Over 20 studies found honey beneficial to healing wounds, especially those infected after surgery. Some studies reported a 97% success rate of honey to heal diabetic ulcers. Honey is also helpful in healing other skin conditions, including herpes lesions and psoriasis.

### **6. Aid in Cough Suppression**

One of the most well-known benefits is its ability to aid in cough suppression and soothe sore throats. Many singers and actors are known to eat honey when preparing for a large performance to aid their throat. A couple

of studies have shown that honey is even more effective in suppressing coughs than common cough medications. This is especially important for children with upper respiratory infections who may not be able to sleep due to coughing. Honey should only be given to children a year or older.

### **7. Ease Pollen Allergies**

Eating raw, local honey may help your seasonal pollen allergies. Some studies suggest that eating local honey may reduce congestion and ease some allergies. This may be due to the pollen that gets collected by the bees and mixed with honey in small amounts so that your body can train on how to deal with the allergen. The key here is making sure your honey is produced by bees getting nectar from your local plants.

### **8. Allows You to Eat Sweet and Healthy**

The best benefit of honey is that it allows you to continue enjoying sweet food while also eating healthy. Some studies show that honey is a good alternative for diabetics avoiding sugar. You'll encourage brain health, heart health, and overall health while eating sweets. Eating honey is not only good for you but delicious.

## **Keep Those Grey Cells Active (02)**

*Ten (10) Things that are known about you.*

- 1) You are reading this.
- 2) You are human.
- 3) You can't say the letter "P" without separating your lips.
- 4) You just attempted to do it.
- 6) You are laughing at yourself.
- 7) You have a smile on your face and you skipped No. 5.
- 8) You just checked to see if there is a No. 5.
- 9) You laugh at this because you are a fun loving person & everyone does it, too.
- 10) You are probably going to send this to see who else falls for it.

**-o-o-O-o-o-**

*See if you can figure out what these seven words all have in common?*

1. Banana
2. Dresser
3. Grammar
4. Potato
5. Revive
6. Uneven
7. Assess

Give it another try..

Look at each word carefully. You'll kick yourself when you discover the answer.

No, it is not that they all have at least 2 double letters.... Look below IMPOSSIBILITIES IN THE WORLD for the answer.

**-o-o-O-o-o-**

**IMPOSSIBILITIES IN THE WORLD**

- 1) You can't count your hair.
- 2) You can't wash your eyes with soap.
- 3) You can't breathe through your nose when your tongue is out. Put your tongue back in your mouth, you silly person

**Answer: In all of the words listed, if you take the first letter, place it at the end of the word, and then spell the word backwards, it will be the same word**

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