

**CONTACT: Sue Brooks**  
**Communications Manager**  
*Digital photos available*

## **Aging Insights 120 – Prescriptions & Pills: How to be your best advocate**

*Learn ways to manage medications safely and how to save on costs*



**TRENTON, NJ (Oct. 12, 2021)** – Many older adults take multiple medications to treat chronic illnesses. Medical professionals might also prescribe medications to aging adults to prevent certain illnesses. What are the best ways to safely manage all these medications and possibly cut down on costs in the process?

Three pharmacists from hospitals in Livingston, New Brunswick and Jersey City supply these answers and more on “Prescriptions & Pills: How to be your best advocate,” the 120<sup>th</sup> episode of Aging Insights.

Celebrating its 10th year, Aging Insights is produced by NJ Advocates for Aging Well (NJAAW) in conjunction with Piscataway Community Television (PCTV). The half-hour TV program is hosted by NJAAW’s Executive Director, Cathy Rowe, DrPH. The show can be viewed on NJAAW’s [YouTube channel](#), [website](#) and more than 70 public-access TV stations across NJ (check local listings for channels and times).

Joining Dr. Rowe are **Jessica A. Bente**, PharmD, BCPS, BCGP, Geriatrics Clinical Pharmacy Specialist and PGY-2 Geriatric Pharmacy Residency Program Director at Saint Barnabas Medical Center in Livingston; **Mary M. Bridgeman**, PharmD, BCPS, BCGP, Internal Medicine Clinical Pharmacist at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital in New Brunswick and a Clinical Professor at the Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy at Rutgers University; and **Christine Dimaculangan**, PharmD, BCACP, Ambulatory Care Clinical Pharmacist at the Center for Comprehensive Care at Jersey City Medical Center and a Clinical Assistant Professor at the Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy at Rutgers University.

All three guests stress that self-advocacy is the most important factor in medication management and recommend having open dialogues with doctors and pharmacists.

“Learn about your new medications,” says Dr. Bente. “Keep a medication list. Include anything over-the-counter, vitamins and supplements, which can cause interactions.”

Dr. Dimaculangan notes, “Patients may be able to find [drug] manufacturer’s coupons online, through their pharmacists or their doctors. If you don’t have any insurance or have charity care, you can also apply for a patient assistance program. Ask questions of your doctor or pharmacist.”

“Go through your medicine cabinet or wherever you store medicines at least annually and dispose of medicines that are expired or not needed anymore,” reminds Dr. Bridgeman, adding that she’s an advocate of medication take-back programs offered by communities.

For information on NJ's prescription assistance program, visit [the Department of Human Services/Division of Aging Services](#).

## **Bios**

**Jessica A. Bente** earned her Doctor of Pharmacy degree from St. John’s University in NY and completed a PGY-1 pharmacy practice residency at Saint Barnabas Medical Center. She later received board certifications in Pharmacotherapy as well as Geriatric Pharmacy.

**Mary M. Bridgeman** earned her Doctor of Pharmacy degree from the School of Pharmacy at Rutgers University and then completed her pharmacy residency at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital. She holds board certifications in Pharmacotherapy and Geriatric Pharmacy.

**Christine Dimaculangan** earned her Doctor of Pharmacy degree from the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy and completed a PGY-1 Pharmacy Practice Residency at Greater Lawrence Family Health Center in Lawrence, MA. She then completed a PGY-2 Ambulatory Care Pharmacy Practice Residency at the University of Maryland School of Pharmacy in Baltimore. She later received her board certifications in Ambulatory Care Pharmacy.

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## **About NJAAW**

*NJ Advocates for Aging Well (NJAAW, [njaaw.org](http://njaaw.org)), formerly NJ Foundation for Aging, has been at the forefront of revolutionizing the aging experience since 1998. It is the only statewide nonprofit focused solely on providing leadership in public policy and education to enable older adults to live with independence and dignity in their communities. NJAAW’s social action issues include senior housing and hunger, elder economic security, older workers and transportation. The award-winning Aging Insights, a monthly topical TV program produced by NJAAW, connects caregivers, older adults and their families to community-based services and resources. The show is available on NJAAW’s website at [njaaw.org](http://njaaw.org). YouTube channel at [youtube.com/c/njadvocatesforagingwell](https://youtube.com/c/njadvocatesforagingwell) and more than 70 public-access stations across NJ (check local listings for channels and times). NJAAW also presents educational forums and an Annual Conference offering development opportunities and best practices for professionals entrusted with caring for aging adults.*