

BENEFITS & BEYOND

Veterans & Social Security Disability

THE
JAN DILS
FOUNDATION

JULY/AUGUST 2021



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What to Know About Post-COVID Disabilities

Although most people with COVID-19 get better within weeks of illness, some people experience post-COVID conditions. Post-COVID conditions are a wide range of new, returning or ongoing health problems people can experience caused by COVID-19. Even people who did not have symptoms when they were infected can have post-COVID conditions. These conditions can have different types and combinations of health problems for different lengths of time.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and experts around the world are working to learn more about short- and long-term health effects associated with COVID-19, who gets them and why. Antibody test results should not be used to determine if someone can return to work. At Jan Dils, Attorneys at Law,

we will continue to follow the science and legalities.

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Types of Post-COVID Conditions

Multiorgan Effects of COVID-19

Multiorgan effects can affect most, if not all, body systems including heart, lung, kidney, skin and brain functions. Multiorgan effects can also include conditions that occur after COVID-19, like multisystem inflammatory syndrome (MIS) and autoimmune conditions. MIS is a condition where different body parts can become swollen. Autoimmune conditions happen when your immune system attacks healthy cells in your body by mistake, causing painful swelling in the affected parts of the body.

It is unknown how long multiorgan system effects might last and whether the effects could lead to chronic health conditions.

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Letter From Jan

In July we celebrate our country's independence. But did you also know August is National

Immunization Month? While we respect your choices, if you haven't received your COVID vaccine, the number of people who have are increasing. Masks are coming off, businesses are open, and people are getting out.

There is also some good news for Vietnam Veterans who served in the offshore waters of the Republic of Vietnam during the Vietnam War but were denied disability benefits. These Veterans and even their children have faced serious long-term health issues due to exposure to Agent Orange. If you are a Vietnam Veteran, surviving spouse and/or have a child with a birth defect, this first article contains "must read" information. If this applies to

you, call our dedicated Veterans line at **1.877.Veteran**.

Also, if you are worried about the safety of the COVID vaccine, know that we will be following any fallouts. We know the vaccine is new and most immunizations have risks. If you have concerns, talk to your doctor. However, after more than a year of reporting on the pandemic, we are all glad to see the numbers of infected decreasing. Please continue to stay smart and listen to the CDC guidelines.

Sincerely,

Jan Dils

JAN DILS brings her expertise to issues that affect you and millions of other Americans every day. While her knowledge spans the critical areas pertaining to Personal Injury, Veterans benefits, Social Security disability benefits and related appeals and claims, her practice remains focused on people, making sure you get the right answers and, above all, results.

MINDFUL MATTERS

Negative thinking consumes our minds on a daily basis. So how do we fight back on all the unproductive thoughts coursing through our brains? Well thanks to *Feel the Fear and Do It Anyway* by Susan Jeffers, it's actually quite simple. According to Susan, you treat your brain the same way you would treat your muscles when they're out of shape. You create an exercise program – in this case, for your mind.

Some tools to make your plan more enjoyable and efficient:

- An audio player for portable listening
- Index cards or Post-It Notes
- Positive quotes
- Affirmations
- Positive audiotapes, podcasts or CDs
- Books that inspire and motivate

Now take action

- As you awaken, turn on your audio device and immerse yourself in positivity. An affirmation audio offers you a wonderful way to start the day. Examples include meditation, motivational talk, podcast or audio book.
- Write positive quotes on sticky notes and place around the house – on the wall, the refrigerator, your mirror, etc. As you get out of bed, pay attention to those positive quotes you've surrounded yourself with.
- As you dress, play some music that brings joy to your heart. Whatever feels right for you.
- Also, as you dress, repeat affirmations. In front of the mirror

I'm Creating a Beautiful Day

is a great place to practice daily affirmations. Repeat for 10 minutes and continue throughout the day when negativity arises.

- If you exercise daily, this is an opportune time to pump in your positive thinking. Affirmations such as: "I can feel the energy coursing through my body" and "I'm creating a beautiful day" will make your exercise routine far more effective.
- If you drive to work, take advantage of that alone time to listen to positive podcasts, CDs or audiotapes. The car is a great use of time to listen and learn.

If you commit to a program, your whole world will soon turn around. Positive thinking changes everything in your life. Let us know how you handle negativity in your life by tagging us on social media.

Recreational Spotlight

Old Man's Cave

Just a pinch over an hour's drive west from Parkersburg, West Virginia, along US 50 and US 33 you will find a small mecca of outdoor recreation. Rock climbing, hiking, kayaking, zip lining and so much more await you in the Hocking Hills region of Ohio – with the most popular attraction being Old Man's Cave.

Old Man's Cave derives its name from hermit Richard Rowe who moved to the Ohio River Valley in 1796 and lived in the large recess cave of the gorge. Located on State Route 664 you will find the Upper Falls

and the Grandma Gatewood Trail. The trail consists of a six-mile course connecting three of the park's main areas: Old Man's Cave to Cedar Falls to Ash Cave. This trail has also been designated as part of three major trail systems: Ohio's Buckeye Trail, North Country Scenic Trail and the American Discovery Trail.

"My husband and I love to go to Old Man's Cave. It's only about an hour or so from Parkersburg, and the scenery is gorgeous. Walking through the area will give you a great workout as well."

– Megan Campbell, Social Security Leads Specialist

Old Man's Cave is just one of the incredible attractions in Hocking Hills. For a full list of outdoor activities, you can visit hockinghills.com. We'd love to see photos of your trip, so be sure to tag us on social media.





The VA to Readjudicate Veteran and Survivor Claims for Possible Herbicide Exposure

VETERANS – including their children – who were previously denied service connection for an herbicide-related presumptive condition (i.e., Agent Orange) due to lack of in-country Vietnam service will have their claims automatically readjudicated by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

These claims typically had an impact on Veterans who served in the offshore waters of the Republic of Vietnam during the Vietnam War but were denied for one or more herbicide-related conditions on the basis that military service was not performed on the landmass of the Republic of Vietnam or on its inland waterways.

How this readjudication may impact children with disabilities

For spina bifida, your child may be eligible for disability benefits if they meet the requirements listed below: One of these must be true. The child's

biological mother or father served in:

- The Republic of Vietnam or in Thailand for any length of time between January 9, 1962, and May 7, 1975, or
- A unit in or near the DMZ for any length of time between September 1, 1967, and August 31, 1971

Also, both of these must be true. The child was:

- Diagnosed with a form of spina bifida other than spina bifida occulta, and
- Conceived after the parent first entered the Republic of Vietnam, Thailand or the DMZ during the qualifying time periods listed above

Note: *Your character of discharge and length of service don't affect your child's eligibility for disability benefits relating to spina bifida.*

For other birth defects, your child may be eligible for disability benefits if they have a covered birth defect that caused a permanent physical or mental disability (a disability that doesn't go away) and they meet both of the

requirements listed below.

Both of these must be true:

- The child's biological mother served in Vietnam any time from January 9, 1962, through May 7, 1975, and
- The child was conceived after the mother first entered the Republic of Vietnam during the time period listed above.

Covered birth defects include, **but are not limited to**, the following conditions:

- Achondroplasia
- Cleft lip and cleft palate
- Congenital heart disease
- Congenital talipes equinovarus (clubfoot)
- Esophageal and intestinal atresia
- Hip dysplasia

Deceased Veterans and their survivors

The review also applies to eligible survivors of deceased Vietnam-era Veterans. The VA will determine if benefits for qualifying disabilities can now be paid retroactively to the date of previously denied claims. The court's decision requires automatic readjudication in such cases without requiring a new claim, and potentially paying benefits to the survivors or estates of deceased beneficiaries.

For more information about this readjudication or other disability concerns, go to VA.org, talk to your Veterans office or contact the Veterans Disability experts at Jan Dils, Attorneys at Law. Visit Fight4Vets.com or call **1.877.Veteran**. Know that we are here for you.

Sources: www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5672 / www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/agentorange/birth-defects/children-women-vietnam-vets.asp

What's Cooking?

SIMPLE SUMMER FRUIT DIP



Now that we are back out and about joining in small groups, there is nothing better than a backyard potluck. After hamburgers, hotdogs, potato salads and dips, here's a sweet and light treat from the kitchen of VA Case Manager **Josh Jacobsen**.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 block of strawberry cream cheese
- 1 jar of marshmallow fluff
- Fresh fruit
- Toothpicks (optional)

DIRECTIONS: For best results, soften the cream cheese by leaving it out a little beforehand. Combine the entire jar of marshmallow fluff and block of strawberry cream cheese in a bowl. Blend with a hand mixer. Serve immediately or cover and refrigerate to keep cool. Toothpicks make great skewers for serving.



IT'S GAME TIME

COMMONYMS

What's a commonym, you ask?

A commonym is a group of words that have a common trait in the three words/items listed. For example, the words: A car - A tree - An elephant... they all have trunks. These will make you think!

1. Raisin - White - Rye
2. Eiffel - Water - Watch
3. Surfing Waves - TVs - Toothpaste
4. A Popular Girl - The Dried Fruit Aisle - Tombstones
5. The Scale - The Legend - The Key
6. A Shepherd - Sheet Music - The White House
7. Teddy Bear - Turkey - Christmas Stocking
8. Porky - Wilbur - Arnold
9. Volleyball - Office with Computers - Fisherman
10. Tapestry - Braided - Area

Answers: 1 breads 2 towers 3 they have tubes 4 they all have dates 5 parts of a map 6 they have stuffs 7 they are stuffed 8 pigs 9 they have nets 10 rugs

JULY/AUGUST 2021

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PERSONAL INJURY / VETERANS DISABILITY / SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY

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Effects of COVID-19 Treatment or Hospitalization

Post-COVID conditions also can include the longer-term effects of COVID-19 treatment or hospitalization. Some of these longer-term effects are similar to those related to hospitalization for other respiratory infections or other conditions.

Effects of COVID-19 treatment and hospitalization can also include post-intensive care syndrome (PICS), which refers to health effects that remain after a critical illness. These effects can include severe weakness and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). PTSD involves long-term reactions to a very stressful event.

Antibody Testing

The COVID-19 semiquantitative test is for individuals who think they may have had COVID and do not – or did not (asymptomatic) – currently have symptoms. Tests are available and affordable, but note they are not conclusive. However, this test along with your doctor's diagnosis may prove helpful if you develop a disability due to COVID.



Sources: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/long-term-effects.html / www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/lab/resources/antibody-tests.html