

<http://www.dcri.duke.edu/ccge/curtis/beers.html>

#### UPDATING THE BEERS CRITERIA FOR POTENTIALLY INAPPROPRIATE MEDICATION USAGE IN OLDER ADULTS

Medication toxic effects and drug-related problems can have profound medical and safety consequences for older adults and economically affect the health care system. A study was undertaken to determine (1) medications or medication classes that *should generally be avoided* in persons 65 years or older because they are either ineffective or they pose unnecessarily high risk for older persons and a safer alternative is available and (2) medications that should not be used in older persons known to have *specific medical conditions*.

This study identified 48 individual medications or classes of medications to avoid in older adults and their potential concerns and 20 diseases/conditions and medications to be avoided in older adults with these conditions. Of these potentially inappropriate drugs, 66 were considered by the panel to have adverse outcomes of high severity.

The Beers criteria were also adopted by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) in July 1999 for nursing home regulation. These criteria, though controversial at times, have been widely used over the past 10 years for studying prescribing patterns within populations, educating clinicians, and evaluating health outcomes, cost, and utilization data.

To read more go to <http://www.dcri.duke.edu/ccge/curtis/beers.html>