



# Living **Healthy**

A newsletter for the members of Central California Alliance for Health



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## **Get ahead on back-to-school checkups**

With the school year over and summer just starting, it can be easy to feel that the next school year is far away. But have you ever been caught by surprise to learn that your child could not start school without getting certain vaccines? Have you ever tried to schedule appointments right before school started?

You can save yourself a lot of stress. Don't wait until the last minute. Start now and call your child's doctor to see if they are due for a checkup and vaccines.

The Alliance also offers member rewards for taking your child to the doctor and for child vaccinations. Visit our website to learn more:

**[www.thealliance.health/checkups](http://www.thealliance.health/checkups)**.

You can also get more information on which vaccines your child needs for school on the California Department of Public Health website: **[www.morehealth.org/cdph-vaccines](http://www.morehealth.org/cdph-vaccines)**.

HEALTHY PEOPLE. HEALTHY COMMUNITIES.

[www.thealliance.health](http://www.thealliance.health)

## **Benefit spotlight**

### **New Alliance benefit! Cognitive Health Assessment**

Cognitive health means how well you think, learn and remember. Alliance members 65 years of age and older can now get a cognitive health assessment every year. A cognitive health assessment can be done at your doctor's office. During the assessment, the doctor will ask questions about signs or symptoms of memory loss or dementia.

Signs of dementia can include:

- Having trouble naming items or naming close family members.
- Repeating questions or stories.
- Misplacing items often.
- Getting confused or getting lost.

Dementia is not a normal part of aging. People with dementia have brain changes that get in the way of daily life. These can include problems with memory, thinking and reasoning. Alzheimer's disease is the most common type of dementia.

It is important to find early signs of dementia. This allows patients to get treatments and support services.

If you are 65 years of age or older, you can ask your doctor about this assessment. The doctor also might ask you about any signs or symptoms of memory loss during your regular checkups.

## **Community Corner**

### **Summer food resources**

Feeding your family can be more expensive with the kids out of school. You may be able to get help with healthy food for your family from:

- Your local food bank.
- CalFresh.
- Your child's school district.

Local food banks can provide fresh food and help you enroll in CalFresh.

### **Merced County Food Bank**

**209-726-3663**

In Merced County, you can also visit:  
**Merced Lao Family Community, Inc.**  
**209-384-7384**

**Catholic Charities**  
**209-383-2494**

**The People's Pantry**

**209-769-3231**

**Food Bank for Monterey County**

**831-758-1523**

**Second Harvest Food Bank Santa Cruz County**

**Community Food Hotline**

**831-662-0991**

Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**CalFresh**

CalFresh can help with your household food budget. You can find information about how to apply to CalFresh at [www.cdss.ca.gov/food-nutrition/calfresh](http://www.cdss.ca.gov/food-nutrition/calfresh).

**Summer lunches from school districts**

Contact your local school district to learn more about what is available.

**Provider Directory and Member Handbook**

The Provider Directory and Member Handbook have important information about your health plan.

- **Provider Directory:** lists all the primary care doctors in the Alliance network.
- **Member Handbook:** tells you about the coverage that the Alliance provides for you.

You can view the Provider Directory and the Member Handbook on our website at

**[www.thealliance.health/for-members](http://www.thealliance.health/for-members)**. Call Member Services if you want a copy mailed to you, need help finding a provider or have benefits questions.

To talk to our Member Services team, please call **800-700-3874**. For the Hearing or Speech Assistance Line, call **800-735-2929** (TTY: Dial **711**). We are here 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. The call is toll-free. If you speak a language other than English, language assistance services are available to you at no cost.

Important phone numbers to know:

- Alliance Member Services: **800-700-3874** (TTY: Dial **711**)
- 24/7 Alliance Nurse Advice Line: **844-971-8907**
- Alliance Language Assistance Services: **800-700-3874, ext. 5580**
- Mental health services: Carelon Behavioral Health, **855-765-9700**
- Vision Services Plan (for routine vision services): **800-877-7195**
- Medi-Cal Dental Program (for dental services): **800-322-6384**

- 24/7 Medi-Cal Rx (for pharmacy services): **800-977-2273** (TTY: Dial **711**)
- Alliance Care Management Line: **800-700-3874, ext. 5512**
- Alliance Health Education Line: **800-700-3874, ext. 5580**
- Alliance transportation services: **800-700-3874**

### **New name, same mental health services**

Beacon Health Options has changed its name to Carelon Behavioral Health. The services and phone number for your mental health services are the same.

Call Carelon Behavioral Health **at 855-765-9700**. This toll-free number is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

You can also get help by calling Alliance Member Services at **800-700-3874** (TTY: Dial **711**), Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

For more information on mental health support, visit **[www.thealliance.health/mentalhealth](http://www.thealliance.health/mentalhealth)**.

## **Ask the doctor**

Dr. Bishop is the Chief Medical Officer at Central California Alliance for Health, serving Merced, Monterey and Santa Cruz counties.

## **Preventive care is key for men's health**

*With Dr. Dale Bishop*

June is National Men's Health Month. Men's Health Month focuses on why it is important for men to take care of their health. Only half of adult men have seen a doctor for preventive care in the past year. To make things worse, men are likely to delay or avoid getting medical help until a health problem becomes serious. Now is a great time for men to schedule a preventive care exam with their doctor.

## **What is preventive care? Why is it important?**

Preventive care is routine health care. This includes checkups and screenings. These services can help prevent illnesses, find health problems early and promote overall health.

Preventive care visits are a chance for you to get answers to your health questions. Even if you're feeling healthy, regular checkups are a good way to confirm your health or find a problem early.

## **What are some preventive care services for men?**

Common preventive care services for men are:

- **Physical exam.** A yearly exam can help detect any health problems, like high blood pressure, high cholesterol or diabetes.
- **Screenings.** Screenings can help find health conditions early, when they are more treatable. Common serious health conditions in men include prostate cancer, colon cancer and heart disease.
- **Vaccinations.** Vaccines protect against illnesses, such as the flu and pneumonia.
- **Sexual health.** Discuss any sexual health concerns with your doctor. Get tested for sexually transmitted infections as needed.

## **Does the Alliance cover preventive care?**

Yes. You can get preventive care services at no cost to you.

How do I set up a preventive care visit?

Call your doctor to schedule an appointment. Your doctor's number is listed on your Alliance member ID card.

**Alliance member benefit!** We have programs that help manage chronic health conditions, such as asthma,



diabetes or high blood pressure. These are offered at no cost to members. Go to [www.thealliance.health/healthrewards](http://www.thealliance.health/healthrewards) to learn about the programs we offer. Or call the Health Education Line at **800-700-3874, ext. 5580**.

## **More care and support for members**

Enhanced Care Management (ECM) and Community Supports help people who have complex health issues or need help setting up their medical care.

You can get help with:

- Housing.
- Managing your medical needs.
- Getting food and help after leaving the hospital.

## **Enhanced Care Management (ECM)**

ECM services can help guide your medical care. These services can also help you find services related to your care. ECM is open to members who:

- Are experiencing homelessness.
- Have mental health or substance abuse challenges.
- Go to the hospital but could avoid going there.
- Qualify to live in long-term care facilities.

- Live in nursing facilities but want to get back into the community.
- Are pregnant or have given birth in the past 12 months.
- Some children and youth.

## **Community Supports**

Community Supports can help you with housing, getting food and support after leaving the hospital, and more.

Here are some updates to Community Supports:

- Environmental Accessibility and Adaptability (EAA) services are available. EAA helps members who need changes in their home to live on their own. Changes could include grab bars or making doors wider.
- The Medically Tailored Meals program is now offered to members with complex health needs or chronic diseases. Medically tailored meals are made for members based on their medical condition. These meals help people regain and maintain their health.

To learn more about getting these services, visit

**[www.thealliance.health/members/ecm-cs](http://www.thealliance.health/members/ecm-cs)** or call **831-430-5512**.

## **What parents need to know about lead exposure**

Exposure to lead can harm a child's brain, especially those under age 6. This is because these young children are growing quickly and tend to put objects in their mouths. Pregnant people should also avoid being exposed to lead, since their baby can be affected too.

## **Where might my child be exposed to lead?**

Lead is found in older homes, at work and other places. It can be in plumbing fixtures, water, paint, soil, food containers, toys, home remedies and makeup.

## **What does lead poisoning look like?**

Children with lead poisoning often do not look sick. However, some have headaches, feel tired, misbehave or have trouble paying attention or learning.

## **What can I do to protect my family from lead exposure?**

- Ask your child's doctor to give you information on lead exposure.
- Have your child's blood tested at ages 1 and 2 years old. If your child is past this age, they should be tested by the time they are 6.
- Remove harmful items from your home. Keep your space clean and dust-free.

- Wash hands frequently and limit play in soil.
- Feed your child meals high in iron, calcium and vitamin C. Good nutrition can help slow lead absorption.

## **Prescription drugs**

If you are a Medi-Cal member, your prescriptions that are filled at a pharmacy are covered by Medi-Cal Rx, not the Alliance. You can view prescription drugs that are covered by Medi-Cal Rx at [www.medi-calrx.dhcs.ca.gov](http://www.medi-calrx.dhcs.ca.gov), or you can request a printed copy by calling **800-977-2273** (TTY: Dial **711**), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

If you are an IHSS member, pharmacy services are managed by MedImpact. You can view covered prescription drugs on the Alliance website at [www.thealliance.health/prescriptions](http://www.thealliance.health/prescriptions). You can also request a copy by calling Member Services at **800-700-3874** (TTY: Dial **711**), Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. You may also call Member Services if you have questions about a medication.

## Wellness for all

### Get rewards for your family's health care

We have a new reward program for members ages 0–21! With *Healthy Start*, you can get gift cards totaling up to \$250 by making sure your child is up to date with vaccines and checkups.

<b>Who is the reward for?</b>	<b>What is the reward?</b>	<b>What do I have to do to get the reward?</b>
Ages under 15 months	<b>\$50 gift card</b>	Your child must have 6 checkups with their doctor.
Ages 15–30 months	<b>\$25 gift card</b>	Your child must have 2 checkups with their doctor.
Ages 18–21 years	<b>\$25 gift card</b>	Members must have 1 checkup with their doctor between April 1 and December 31, 2023.
2-year-olds	<b>\$100 gift card</b>	Your child must have gotten all needed vaccines from their doctor.

13-year-olds	<b>\$50 gift card</b>	Members must complete 1 checkup with their doctor within 12 months and have gotten all needed vaccines from their doctor.
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We also have a Health Rewards Program that rewards members of all ages! For information, visit [www.thealliance.health/healthrewards](http://www.thealliance.health/healthrewards).

Questions? Call the Alliance Health Education Line: **800-700-3874, ext. 5580.**

### **Update your Medi-Cal!**

If your county needs information to renew your Medi-Cal, they will send you paperwork to fill out and return. Be sure to give them all the information they ask for by the due date. You will keep your Medi-Cal until your renewal is complete.

You can report any changes to your information in person, by phone or by mail. Or you can go online at [www.mybenefitscalwin.org](http://www.mybenefitscalwin.org) or [www.coveredca.com](http://www.coveredca.com) or [www.benefitscal.com](http://www.benefitscal.com).

## **Here is the office to contact for each county:**

Merced County Department of Human Services

Phone: **855-421-6770**

Monterey County Department of Social Services

Phone: **877-410-8823**

Santa Cruz County Human Services Department

Phone: **888-421-8080**

For more information, visit

**[www.thealliance.health/updatemedi-cal](http://www.thealliance.health/updatemedi-cal)**.

## **Committed to your satisfaction**

We want you to be happy with your health care and our service. If you ever are not happy, we want to hear about it.

You may file a **complaint** (also called a **grievance**) if:

- You are not happy with the care your doctor is providing or how you were treated in the office.
- You are not happy with your experience in a hospital or other facility.
- You are getting a bill for services covered by the Alliance.
- You are not able to get the care you need.

- You are not happy with the services you get from the Alliance.

There are other reasons you might file a complaint. These are listed in your Member Handbook.

You may file an appeal if you are not happy with a decision we have made to change or deny services.

### **How to file a complaint or appeal**

You can file a complaint or an appeal by calling Member Services at **800-700-3874**. You can also file a complaint or appeal in writing or through our website at **[www.thealliance.health/file-a-grievance](http://www.thealliance.health/file-a-grievance)**.

### **Next steps**

Once you let us know about your complaint or appeal, we will look into it. We will do all we can to help you.

### **The Alliance is texting members about renewing their Medi-Cal!**

Medi-Cal renewals are coming soon. You might get a text from us about renewing your Medi-Cal.