



Living **Healthy**

A newsletter for the members of Central California Alliance for Health



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You don't have time for the flu!

Flu season is September through May. The best way to protect yourself and your family is to get your flu shot early, before the flu starts to spread in your community.

- People who are at higher risk of having serious flu complications are:
- Young children.
- People who are pregnant.
- People with certain chronic health conditions, like asthma, diabetes, and heart or lung disease.
- People who are ages 65 and older.

Everyone ages 6 months and older can get a yearly flu shot. The flu shot is free and easy to get. Children must get their flu shot from their doctor. Adults have the option to get their flu shot at a pharmacy without a referral.

Alliance members ages 7 to 24 months who get their two flu shot doses between September 2023 and May 2024

HEALTHY PEOPLE. HEALTHY COMMUNITIES.

www.thealliance.health

will be entered into a monthly raffle for a chance to win a \$100 Target gift card!

For more information, visit www.thealliance.health/flu.

September is National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month

Help your child have a healthy weight

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1 in 5 children in the United States is obese. Childhood obesity puts kids at risk for health problems like type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease.

The good news is that childhood obesity can be prevented. In honor of National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month, the Alliance encourages your family to make healthy changes together.

- **Get active.** Walk around the neighborhood, go on a bike ride or play outside.
- **Limit screen time.** Keep extra screen time (such as playing video games or watching TV) to two hours a day or less.
- **Make healthy meals.** Buy and serve more vegetables, fruits and whole-grain foods.

Taking small steps as a family can help your child stay at a healthy weight.

The Alliance offers the *Healthy Weight for Life* program. This program is for children and teens ages 2 to 18 who want to reach a healthy weight. The *Healthy Weight for Life* program can help your child learn how to eat healthy and be more active. You can also learn tools to support your child with lifestyle changes.

Talk to your child's doctor about this program. The doctor can refer your child to the program if they think your child needs it. You can call the Alliance Health Education Line at **800-700-3874, ext. 5580** for more information.

When you attend a 10-week workshop, you can receive a Target gift card for up to \$100! You will also be entered into a raffle for the chance to win a bike.

Wellness for all

Talking with your doctor

When it comes to health care, patients play a major role. Practicing good communication with your doctor (primary care provider, or PCP) is an important way to take part in your health care journey. Clear and honest communication between you and your doctor can help

you build a safe connection. This means you can talk about your concerns and make informed choices about your health care. Below are some questions to think about before your visit with your doctor.

Questions to ask yourself	Examples
What am I seeing or feeling that I want my doctor to check?	My left ear aches each time I blow my nose.
When did it begin?	It started about a week ago when I first caught a cold.
What makes it better or worse?	It feels worse when I blow my nose and feels better in the morning after I shower.
What questions do I have, and what worries me?	When will I start to feel better? Does the medicine have side effects?

Other tips for your visit to the doctor:

- Bring a list of all the medications you are taking.
- If you have any medical needs, such as wheelchair access, or require language assistance or

interpreting services, let the doctor's office staff know so they can help you.

- Ask what the office policy is for missed appointments. The office can help to reschedule appointments or provide other options, such as phone appointments if it is hard to go to the doctor in person.

Ask the doctor

Keeping healthy during and after pregnancy

Dr. Diallo is a Medical Director for Central California Alliance for Health with over 15 years of pediatric experience.

With Dr. Dianna Diallo

Seeing your doctor during and after pregnancy is important to your health and your baby's health. Sometimes there are signs or symptoms that happen after having a baby that you need to share with your doctor. These are called urgent maternal warning signs. They can happen soon after giving birth or up to 12 months after giving birth.

What are urgent maternal warning signs?

Get care right away if you are having:

- Headache that does not go away or gets worse.

- Fever of 100.4° F (38° C) or higher.
- Trouble breathing.
- Chest pain or fast heart rate.
- Extreme swelling of your hands or face.
- Vaginal bleeding during or after pregnancy.
- Severe belly pain that does not go away.
- Overwhelming tiredness.
- Dizziness or fainting.

This list does not cover every symptom. If you are feeling sick or have urgent questions outside of your doctor's office hours, call the Alliance Nurse Advice Line at **844-971-8907** (TTY: Dial **711**) to talk to a nurse. Tell them if you are pregnant or were pregnant within the last year.

What can I do for my health and my baby's health?

Keep up with your doctor visits before, during and after pregnancy. These visits can help make sure you and your baby are safe and getting the care you need.

Tell your doctor if anything does not feel right. You know your body!

How can I get support during and after my pregnancy?

Our *Healthy Moms and Healthy Babies* program can help support you and your baby. You can also get rewards for keeping up with your doctor visits.

You can also get rewards for keeping your baby up to date with checkups and vaccinations! This is through our *Healthy Start* program.

For more information about pregnancy health, read our blog post: www.thealliance.health/healthypregnancy.

Teens and depression

Depression affects a lot of teens and is more common than we realize. Many teens with depression do not get the help they need. Your child's doctor can screen for depression and work with you to get help.

Teens going through depression may:

- Feel tired.
- Get into trouble at school.
- Feel sad or negative, become easily upset, or have anxiety.
- Not be interested in things.
- Have physical symptoms like headaches or stomachaches.

- Have trouble concentrating, remembering or making decisions.

Depression can come from a family history of depression, stress, body image issues, abuse or neglect, adverse childhood experiences, relationship or family problems, or losing a loved one.

Depression can look different for everyone. It is important for your teen to have a yearly screening with their doctor during checkups, even if you do not see signs of depression. Screening for depression takes just a few minutes. The doctor may ask your teen to fill out a questionnaire about symptoms of depression. They may also ask to speak to your teen alone.

If the screening shows that your child may be going through depression, the doctor may refer your child to a therapist or medical provider who works with teens. They may talk about different ways to treat depression, like talk therapy, medication, support programs, changes to diet, exercise, meditation or a combination of these. Not treating depression may lead to a higher risk of depression in adulthood. Getting treatment sooner may help your teen develop coping skills to use throughout their life.

Struggling or in crisis? Call or text **988** anytime to talk with a crisis counselor.

Need mental health services? Call Carelon Behavioral Health 24/7 at **855-765-9700**.

What you need to know about other health coverage

If you have health insurance aside from Medi-Cal, that is called other health coverage (OHC). You may have OHC if:

- You have health insurance through your job, spouse or partner, or Covered California.
- You bought insurance on your own.
- You became eligible because of a new life event—getting married, for example.

If you have more than one health insurance plan, your other insurance is the primary insurance and Medi-Cal is secondary. Follow the rules for your primary insurance. If you don't follow the rules, your primary insurance may not pay for your care, and the Alliance will not pay for it either.

Your OHC may have ended if:

- Your health coverage switched from Covered California to Medi-Cal.
- Your job ended or you were laid off.
- You did not work enough hours to qualify for insurance through your job.
- You stopped paying your insurance premiums.
- You canceled your insurance for any reason.

Who to contact if your OHC information changed:

Call your local Medi-Cal enrollment agency.

Merced County: **855-421-6770**

Monterey County: **877-410-8823**

Santa Cruz County: **888-421-8080**

If you have Medi-Cal because you are receiving SSI benefits, call your local Social Security Administration (SSA) office.

Merced SSA office: **888-632-7069**

Monterey SSA office: **877-696-9397**

Santa Cruz SSA office: **800-780-1106**

You can also update your information online at

www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/Pages/TPLRD_OCU_cont.aspx.

Let us know about the updates to your information too. Call the Alliance's Member Services Department at **800-700-3874**, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

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, 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. 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.

Let your voice be heard!

We have many ways for you to let us know how we are doing and how we can improve. One of them is through our Member Services Advisory Group (MSAG).

Through the MSAG, we can hear from our members and people who serve our members. We use this information to help us better understand what our members think, want and need. This group is made up of Alliance members and representatives of county and community agencies.

Meetings are held four times per year. Alliance members or parents of an Alliance member can get \$50 for going to each meeting.

If you would like to know more about how to join the MSAG, please email **MSAG@ccah-alliance.org**, call the Alliance at **800-700-3874** or visit us online at **www.thealliance.health/msag**.

Protecting your privacy

Details about your health care are personal. That is why we do all we can to protect your privacy.

There are times when we may share your information without asking for your permission. This is for:

- Treatment.
- Payment.
- Health care operations.

An example would be to tell a provider you are eligible as an Alliance member so that they can treat you. There are other times determined by law where we may share information without your permission.

If other people ask us for your information, you must say it is OK before we can give it to them. You must also say it is OK for us to share your personal health information with smartphone or desktop applications so that you can access your health information online. We often review the way we keep your information safe.

To learn more, see the Notice of Privacy Practices at the back of your Member Handbook/Evidence of Coverage. You can also visit our website at www.thealliance.health/notice-of-privacy-practices.

Living healthy with diabetes

Diabetes is a chronic health condition that affects how well your body turns food into energy. With diabetes, your body either does not make enough insulin or cannot use it as well as it should.

Diabetes is not something that goes away by itself. You can live a healthy life with diabetes. Here are some things you can do.

See your doctor regularly

You will need to have checkups with your doctor on a regular basis. Your doctor will monitor your progress and adjust your care if needed. Make sure to keep your appointments.

We have transportation services for you to use if you need help getting to your doctor visits. Call us at **800-700-3874, ext. 5577** Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., at least 5 business days before your appointment.

Follow the instructions your doctor gives you to manage diabetes

This includes taking medicine your doctor prescribes for your diabetes care.

Adopt a healthy lifestyle

These habits can help you live a healthy lifestyle:

- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Eat healthy food.
- Be active.

Learn about how to manage your diabetes and get support

Our Case Management services can help you make sure you understand your diagnosis and have everything you need to start managing it. Call **800-700-3874, ext. 5512**.

We offer the *Healthier Living* program, where you will learn about healthy eating, staying active, building relationships and improving your quality of life. You can also get a Target gift card for up to \$50 when you attend the six-week workshop. To join or learn more, call our Health Education Line at **800-700-3874, ext. 5580**.

The Alliance is texting members when it is time to renew your Medi-Cal! You might get a text message from us.