



Living Healthy

A newsletter for the members of
Central California Alliance for Health



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Listen to your body before and after pregnancy

If you are pregnant or had a baby within the last year, it is important to talk to your doctor about anything that doesn't feel right with your body or your mental health. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) started the **Hear Her Campaign** to encourage pregnant and postpartum women to talk to their doctor right away if any unusual symptoms start. As the campaign states, "You know your body best. If you experience something that seems unusual or is worrying you, don't ignore it."

Unusual symptoms can happen during pregnancy or up to a year after pregnancy. These symptoms are called urgent maternal warning signs. It is

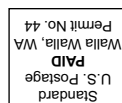
important for you to talk to your doctor immediately if you experience any of these symptoms:

- Severe headache.
- Dizziness or fainting.
- Changes in vision/eyesight.
- Fever.

- Trouble breathing.
- Overwhelming tiredness.
- Chest pain.
- Severe belly pain.
- Severe nausea and throwing up.
- Severe swelling.
- Vaginal bleeding or fluid leaking during pregnancy.
- Heavy vaginal bleeding or discharge after pregnancy.
- Baby's movement stopping or slowing during pregnancy.
- Thoughts about harming yourself or your baby.

For more information, visit [cdc.gov/hearher/pregnant-postpartum-women/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/hearher/pregnant-postpartum-women/index.html).

If you are pregnant or had a baby in the last year, the Alliance's *Healthy Moms and Healthy Babies* (HMHB) program can help you with information and resources to support a healthy pregnancy and postpartum care. Call the Alliance's Health Education Line at **800-700-3874, ext. 5580** to sign up. For the Hearing or Speech Assistance Line, call **800-735-2929** (TTY: Dial **7-1-1**).



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What is the Nurse Advice Line?

The Nurse Advice Line is a service available to all Alliance members. If you or your child is sick or has health-related questions, you can call the Nurse Advice Line. This service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at no cost to you.

When do I call the Nurse Advice Line?

Call the Nurse Advice Line when:

- You or your child is sick and you cannot reach or get an appointment with your doctor—for example, if your child has a fever or rash, is vomiting, or your baby's crying is unusual.
- You are not sure if you should go to the emergency room.
- You have questions about your health or your child's health.
- You are under 18 years old and want to talk in private about your health concerns.

A registered nurse will give you advice on what to do next. The nurse can also help you:

- Make an appointment with your primary care provider.



REMEMBER: If you are having a medical emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.

- Make decisions on when and how to seek medical care for an urgent need. Depending on your health needs, a nurse might also help you in providing at-home advice. Call **844-971-8907** (TTY: Dial **7-1-1**) to talk to a nurse.

When you call

If you have your Alliance Member ID card with you, have it ready to tell the nurse your ID number. Members who provide their ID number will be entered into a monthly raffle. You could win a **\$50 Target gift card**.



The flu shot: Why timing matters

When it comes to getting your yearly flu shot, it pays to be an early bird.

Here's why:














It takes about two weeks after the shot for your body to build immunity and start protecting against the flu. So it's a good idea to get yours before the flu starts going around.

When is the best time? As soon as the shot is available in the fall. It's good to have it done by the end of October. But even in January or later, a flu shot is worth it. The flu is still active well into the spring.

Yearly flu shots are a good idea for everyone in your family 6 months and older.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

WHICH IS IT: COVID-19, COLD OR FLU?

SYMPTOMS	COVID-19	COLD	FLU
 Cough	Common	Common	Common
 Shortness of breath	Common	No (unless it triggers asthma)	No (unless it triggers asthma)
 Sneezing	No	Common	No
 Runny or stuffy nose	Common	Common	Sometimes
 Sore throat	Common	Common	Sometimes
 Fever	Common	Sometimes	Common
 Chills	Common	No	Sometimes
 Fatigue	Common	Sometimes	Common
 Headache	Common	Rare	Common
 Body aches	Common	Sometimes (usually mild)	Common
 Diarrhea	Common	Rare	Sometimes (in children)
 Nausea or vomiting	Common	No	Sometimes (in children)
 Loss of taste or smell	Common	Rare	Rare



Take action! Call 911 if you or a loved one has emergency warning signs for COVID-19. These include trouble breathing, lasting pain or pressure in the chest, new confusion, trouble waking up or staying awake, and bluish lips or face.

Your symptoms may differ. Call your doctor if you're concerned about any unusual or severe symptoms.

Sources: American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology; Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; World Health Organization



Tell us how
we are doing!

The Alliance is conducting member surveys. We want to hear how we can better serve you! You might get a survey in the mail or a phone call. If you get a survey in the mail, we ask you to take a few moments to fill it out and return it using the mailing envelope included.

The survey is called the Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (also known as CAHPS) and asks members:

- How happy they are with their doctors.
- How happy they are with their care.
- How happy they are with their health plan.

This survey is mailed to a random group of Alliance members each year. The Alliance uses the results of the survey to improve the services and programs we provide to you. This survey is anonymous and will not affect your care.

We value your opinion!



Housing is key to your health

Lack of stable housing and homelessness can negatively impact your physical and mental health.


Are you having trouble paying rent and utilities? Did you receive a warning or eviction notice from your landlord?

Resources are available to help.

Financial assistance is available to income-eligible renters and their landlords who have been impacted by COVID-19. You may be able to get help with unpaid rent and utilities dating back to April 1, 2020, as well as future rent payments. Renters and landlords are encouraged to apply. Learn more about resources that may be available to you by calling or visiting the websites below:

- **Santa Cruz and Merced counties**, call **833-430-2122** or visit **housing.ca.gov**.
- **Monterey County**, call **211** or visit **unitedwaymcca.org/county-rent-and-utility**.

Message brought to you by the Housing for Health Division of Santa Cruz County, homelessactionpartnership.org.



Confused by referrals and authorizations?

There are many terms used in health care, and sometimes it can be confusing to understand them all. Here is some information that should help.

- **Referral.** If you are assigned to an Alliance primary care provider, you must have a referral to see another doctor. There are some exceptions to this. See your Evidence of Coverage or Member Handbook for a complete list. If your primary care provider thinks you need to see another doctor, he or she will fill out a Referral Consultation Form. Your primary care provider sends a copy to the doctor you are being referred to and to the Alliance. The referral is how the other doctor and the Alliance know your primary care provider has approved the visit. If we do not have a referral, we will not pay the claim from the other doctor.
- **Authorized referral.** Our service areas include Santa Cruz, Monterey and Merced counties. If your primary care provider refers you to a doctor out of our service area, he or she will need to get approval from us in advance.

This is called an authorized referral. This means that we have to authorize (approve) the referral before you can see the other doctor. If you are an Alliance Care In-Home Supportive Services member, you will also need an authorized referral if your primary care provider is referring you to a doctor that is not contracted with the Alliance—even if the doctor is in our service area. Alliance members who are enrolled in the California Children’s Services program will also need an authorized referral for specialty care.

- **Prior authorization.** The Alliance must approve some services, procedures, medications and equipment before you get them. This is called prior authorization. The provider who is going to perform the service must send us a request for

prior authorization, letting us know what you need and the reason why. The provider can send it electronically, by fax or mail. We will review the request and any medical records the provider sends. If the service, procedure, medication or equipment is medically necessary and a covered benefit, we will approve the request. We will let the provider know, and then you can get the service. If we deny a request, we will let you and the provider know. You will be able to file an appeal if you disagree with our decision.

- **More information.** For a complete list of services that do not require a referral, see your Evidence of Coverage or Member Handbook. The Member Handbook is available to view on our website, www.thealliance.health.

WE WANT TO MAKE SURE you know how to get services that are covered by your health plan. View the Member Handbook at www.thealliance.health.



American Sign Language interpretation services available at no charge

Did you know the Alliance offers American Sign Language interpretation services at no cost for members who are deaf or hard of hearing? We work hard to make sure that all members can talk to their primary care provider about their

health care needs. To learn about these services, please call the Health Education Line at **800-700-3874, ext. 5580**. You can also use the California Relay Service's service to contact us at **800-735-2929** (TTY: Dial 7-1-1).



Have you visited our new website?

Now it's easier than ever to:

- Replace your ID card, update your information or request to change your primary doctor.
- Get information about member services.
- Find a health education or disease management program to sign up for.

Visit us at www.thealliance.health.

MEDI-CAL Rx

Important update for your Medi-Cal prescription drug benefit

As of Jan. 1, 2022, your prescriptions that are filled at a pharmacy are now covered by Medi-Cal Rx, not the Alliance. Medi-Cal Rx is a new program provided by the Department of Health Care Services to help you with your pharmacy needs.

When filling a prescription at the pharmacy, you will need to present your Medi-Cal Benefits Identification Card (BIC).

You should have received your BIC when you first became a Medi-Cal member. If you did not receive your card or it is lost or stolen, you may ask for a replacement BIC for free. Please contact your local county Medi-Cal office.

- Merced County
Human Services Agency
209-385-3000
- Monterey County
Department of Social Services
877-410-8823
- Santa Cruz County
Human Services Department
888-421-8080

If you have questions about your pharmacy benefits, need help finding a pharmacy or are not happy with the services Medi-Cal Rx provides and would like to file a complaint, call Medi-Cal Rx at **800-977-2273** (TTY: Dial **7-1-1**) or go to **Medi-CalRx.dhcs.ca.gov**. They are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Additional information about Medi-Cal Rx is available on our website at **www.thealliance.health/medi-calrx**.



Alliance drug formulary changes third quarter 2021

Effective Sept. 1, 2021

Additions to formulary

Note: the following additions to the formulary are only for IHSS members. Naloxone is carved out to state Medi-Cal for non-IHSS members.

- Narcan (naloxone 4 mg nasal spray)
- Kloxxado (naloxone 8 mg nasal spray)
- Naloxone carpject (cartridge-type syringe)
- Naloxone syringe

New Member Advisory Committee

Beacon Health Options (also known as Beacon) manages the Alliance's behavioral health services. Beacon is looking for Alliance members to join its new Member Advisory Committee. The purpose of the committee is to better understand the needs of our members who receive Beacon services.

The committee will meet once every three months for one hour. Meetings will be held by video or calling in by phone. Interpreting services will be available during meetings if you speak a language other than English.

Committee members will have these qualities:

- Be an Alliance member, or be a parent of an Alliance member, who receives Beacon services.
- Be over 18 years of age.
- Be willing to share your ideas and experiences that could help improve Beacon services for others.
- Have the ability to listen well and respect the viewpoints of others.



IF YOU WOULD LIKE to join the committee, please call Beacon's Compliance Department at **657-465-9162** or email **ComplianceWest@beaconhealthoptions.com**.



Follow us on Facebook! Find us at [facebook.com/TheAllianceForHealth](https://www.facebook.com/TheAllianceForHealth).

Stay up-to-date with:

- Programs and services available through your health plan.
- Tips to help you stay healthy.
- Public health updates in your community.



LIVING HEALTHY is published for the members and community partners of CENTRAL CALIFORNIA ALLIANCE FOR HEALTH, 1600 Green Hills Road, Suite 101, Scotts Valley, CA 95066, telephone 831-430-5500 or 800-700-3874, ext. 5505, website www.thealliance.health.

Information in LIVING HEALTHY comes from a wide range of medical experts. If you have any concerns or questions about specific content that may affect your health, please contact your health care provider.

Models may be used in photos and illustrations.

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