



# Living Healthy



A newsletter for the members of Central California Alliance for Health

**September 2022** | Volume 28, Issue 3

September is National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month

## **Help your child have a healthy weight**

One in five children in the United States is obese. Childhood obesity puts kids at risk for health problems that were once seen only in adults, 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 outside.** Walk around the neighborhood, go on a bike ride or play basketball at the park.

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- **Encourage breaks from screen time.** During the COVID-19 pandemic, the amount of time children spent on electronic devices significantly increased. Encourage breaks in between the times children have to be online for school, and keep additional screen time (time spent 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 must refer your child to the program if they think your child needs it. You

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can call the **Alliance Health Education Line at 800-700-3874, ext. 5580** for more information.

Source: [cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/features/childhood-obesity/index.html](http://cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/features/childhood-obesity/index.html)

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## **COVID-19 treatments: What they are and when to use them**

A new program is available called Test to Treat. The COVID-19 treatments help people recover faster or protect certain people who have a weakened immune system. COVID-19 medications are now available through your doctor, local pharmacies and health clinics. If you have COVID-19 symptoms and test positive, you can get medication treatment right away.

If you are having symptoms of COVID-19, get tested as soon as you can. If you are an older adult or if you have certain medical conditions, you have a higher risk of getting very sick from COVID-19. Tell your doctor right away after a positive test to see if you are eligible for treatment, even if your symptoms are mild.

COVID-19 treatments are not a replacement for COVID-19 vaccines. To learn more about COVID-19 treatments, including how to find Test to Treat locations, visit the COVID-19 Test to Treat Locator

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at <https://covid-19-test-to-treat-locator-dhhs.hub.arcgis.com/>.

## How can I learn more?

Our “COVID-19 Information for Members” page on our website has resources for where to get tested for COVID-19, how to make a vaccine or booster appointment, and more: [www.thealliance.health/for-members/member-services/covid-19-information-for-members](http://www.thealliance.health/for-members/member-services/covid-19-information-for-members).

## Who can get the COVID-19 vaccines?

Everyone 6 months and older can get the COVID-19 vaccine. If you have questions about the COVID-19 vaccine for yourself or for your child, talk to your doctor or visit the CDC website: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).

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## 2022 Population Needs Assessment

### **How we are meeting your health care needs**

The Alliance does an annual member Population Needs Assessment (PNA) survey. This survey gives us a chance to hear what you think about the care and service you receive. Thank you to those of you who participated in our 2022 survey! This is a summary of what we heard. Members said that they:

- Really like that their health beliefs do not go against the advice they get from their primary care provider.
- Appreciate the Alliance and the service they receive from us.

We're pleased to hear it! We will share this feedback with our providers.

Although we love hearing where we succeed, we also like to hear where we can improve. Members shared that they would be most interested in

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receiving information or help from the Alliance on the following topics:

- Alliance Nurse Advice Line.
- Alliance transportation benefit.

We are working hard to create the best health care experience for you. Watch for other new ways the Alliance is working to help get you the right care, in the right place at the right time. We will share our action plan and strategies to address member needs using health education, cultural and linguistic services, and quality improvement programs.

If you have questions about the Alliance 2022 PNA, please call the **Alliance Health Education Line at 800-700-3874, ext. 5580**. If you need language assistance, we have a special telephone line to get an interpreter who speaks your language, available to you at no cost. For the Hearing or Speech Assistance Line, call **800-735-2929** (TTY: Dial **7-1-1**).

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## **Doctors recommend second COVID-19 vaccine booster dose**

In March 2022, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued new guidelines for COVID-19 vaccine booster doses. A booster dose is an extra dose of vaccine after the primary dose or doses have been given. The booster dose works to remind our bodies to recognize the virus and make antibodies against the virus.

Data shows that people with booster doses were 21 times less likely to die from COVID-19, when compared to people who were unvaccinated, and 7 times less likely to be hospitalized. People who are immunocompromised and over 50 years of age are encouraged to get a second booster dose at least four months after the first booster dose was given. This additional dose is safe and important for people at risk for severe disease, who may need more protection from COVID-19 infection.

Talk to your doctor if you have questions about whether a second booster dose is right for you.

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## **What you need to know about other health coverage**

### **You may have other health coverage (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, there are rules that say which plan pays first and which pays second. If you have other insurance and Medi-Cal, your other insurance is the primary insurance and Medi-Cal is secondary. If the primary insurance has special rules, you must follow them. If you don't follow its 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. It is important that you give them this information so they can update your case.

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

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

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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 on the California DHCS website: **[www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/Pages/TPLRD\\_OCU\\_cont.aspx](http://www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/Pages/TPLRD_OCU_cont.aspx)**.

Please 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.

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## **Did you know that the Alliance offers Language Assistance Services?**

The Alliance provides both telephonic and face-to-face interpreting services, translation of written member information, and written information in other formats at no cost to you.

If you need to reach the Alliance's Language Assistance Services or have questions, please call the Alliance Member Services Department at **800-700-3874**. For the Hearing or Speech Assistance Line, call **800-735-2929** (TTY: Dial 7-1-1).

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## **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 are able to 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.

The MSAG's goal is to help support friendly, effective and high-quality medical care for members of the Alliance.

MSAG members fill many roles, including:

- Advising the Commission on issues and concerns of members and the community as they relate to the Alliance.

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- Speaking on behalf of Alliance members and bringing their concerns and ideas to MSAG meetings for discussion and possible action.
- Being ready to hear and collect the voices of Alliance members who might not be heard otherwise.

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

If you would like more information about the MSAG, please email **[MSAG@ccah-alliance.org](mailto:MSAG@ccah-alliance.org)**, call the Alliance at **800-700-3874** or visit us at **[www.thealliance.health](http://www.thealliance.health)**.

## **Protecting your privacy**

Details about your health care are personal. You deserve to have them kept that way. That is why we do all we can to protect your privacy.

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We may disclose your information for treatment, payment and health care operations without having to ask your permission. An example would be to tell a provider you were eligible as an Alliance member so the provider could treat you. There are other situations in which we may also disclose information without your permission. These are determined by law.

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. We want you to have good care and peace of mind.

For more information about our privacy practices, see the Notice of Privacy Practices at the back of your Member Handbook/Evidence of Coverage. It is also available on our website, **[www.thealliance.health](http://www.thealliance.health)**.

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## **Keep your Medi-Cal insurance**

During the COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE), you have been able to keep your coverage regardless of any changes in your circumstances. However, once the COVID-19 PHE ends, your county will check to see if you still qualify for free or low-cost Medi-Cal. If you or someone in your household receives a letter from the county asking for information about your Medi-Cal coverage, please provide the requested information.

### **Change in circumstances**

Please continue to report any changes in your household to your local county office. This includes changes to your income, disability status, phone number or mailing address. You should also report if someone in your household becomes pregnant, if someone moves in or anything else that may affect your Medi-Cal eligibility. Reporting these changes may help you continue to receive Medi-Cal coverage after the end of the COVID-19 PHE.

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## Reporting contact information

It is important for the county to have your current contact information. Please report any changes in your contact information so you don't miss important information about your Medi-Cal coverage. Please report all updated contact information—such as your phone number, email address or home address—to your local county office online or by phone, email, fax or in person. You can find a listing of county offices at [dhcs.ca.gov/COL](https://dhcs.ca.gov/COL). You can also update your contact information online at [CoveredCA.com](https://CoveredCA.com) or [BenefitsCal.org](https://BenefitsCal.org).

## Requests for information

If you or someone in your household receives a letter from the county asking for information about your Medi-Cal coverage, please provide it. This will help the county ensure that your Medi-Cal coverage remains active.

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## Questions?

If you have any questions or need help with accessing your Medi-Cal coverage, or if your Medi-Cal was discontinued, please contact your local county office.

### **Merced County**

Merced County Human  
Services Agency  
2115 W. Wardrobe Ave.,  
Merced, CA 95341

**855-421-6770**

**[www.co.merced.ca.us/458/Medi-Cal](http://www.co.merced.ca.us/458/Medi-Cal)**

### **Monterey County**

Monterey County Department of Social Services  
1000 S. Main St., Salinas, CA 93901

**866-323-1953**

**[www.co.monterey.ca.us/government/  
departments-i-z/social-services](http://www.co.monterey.ca.us/government/departments-i-z/social-services)**

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## **Santa Cruz County**

County of Santa Cruz Human Services Department  
1020 Emeline Ave., Santa Cruz, CA 95060  
18 W. Beach St., Watsonville, CA 95076  
**888-421-8080**  
**[www.santacruzhumanservices.org](http://www.santacruzhumanservices.org)**

### **Formulary updates**

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 the formulary for Medi-Cal Rx at **[medi-calrx.dhcs.ca.gov](http://medi-calrx.dhcs.ca.gov)**, or you can request a copy by calling **800-977-2273** (TTY: Dial **7-1-1**), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

If you are an IHSS member, pharmacy services are managed by MedImpact. You can view the formulary on the Alliance website at **[www.thealliance.health/for-providers/manage-care/pharmacy-services/pharmacy-formulary](http://www.thealliance.health/for-providers/manage-care/pharmacy-services/pharmacy-formulary)**. You can request a copy by calling Member Services at **800-700-3874**

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(TTY: Dial 7-1-1), Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. If you have questions about a medication, call MedImpact at **800-788-2949**.

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## **Protect yourself and your loved ones this flu season**

The beginning of fall means that flu season is right around the corner. Flu season is September through May, and 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 age 65 and older.

Everyone ages 6 months and older should get their annual flu shot. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that children

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6 months to 8 years old who receive the flu shot for the first time should receive **two doses** four weeks apart.

Pregnant people are encouraged to get the flu shot as part of their prenatal care. Pregnant people have a higher chance of having severe flu illness than those who are not pregnant and are the same age. The flu shot can be given at any time during pregnancy, and it gives the baby antibodies against the flu. For added protection, it is also recommended that the entire family get their flu shots.

The flu shot is free and easy to get. We recommend that you get your flu shot with your primary care doctor, since you will have the chance to talk to your doctor and ask questions. Children must get their flu shot from their primary care provider. Adult Alliance members have the option to get their flu shot at a pharmacy without a referral.

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**Alliance members ages 7 to 24 months who get their two flu shot doses between September 2022 and May 2023 will be entered into a monthly raffle for a chance to win a \$100 Target gift card!**

**For more information, you can visit the Alliance website at [www.thealliance.health](http://www.thealliance.health) or CDC at [www.cdc.gov/flu](http://www.cdc.gov/flu).**

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