



LIVING HEALTHY

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A newsletter for the members of Central California Alliance for Health

Get a head start on the school year

 Add vaccines to your checklist

The school year has now ended, but think back to last year. Do you remember the weeks leading up to the start of the school year? Were you caught by surprise to learn that your child could not start school without certain vaccines? Were you stuck on your child's doctor's phone line the week—or day!—before school, waiting to get an appointment to get your child vaccinated? Or maybe your doctor ran out of appointment slots and your child had to miss the first day of school?

Don't repeat last year's experience. Get a head start on the school year. If you are unsure whether your child needs vaccines, or if you have not received notice from your child's school, it is best to call your child's doctor to schedule an appointment. Your child will need vaccinations, starting as early as preschool, throughout their educational journey.

As of 2016, parents are not able to file an immunization exemption for their child to enter school.



FOR MORE INFORMATION,
visit shotsforschool.org.

New school requirements started in 2019!

● **Kindergarten:** In addition to polio, DTap, Hep B and MMR, an extra varicella (chickenpox) vaccine is

needed for starting kindergarten.

● **Seventh grade:** In addition to all vaccines above, Tdap and proof of varicella (chickenpox) will be required to start seventh grade.

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EPSDT services

As your child grows, it is important that they receive their **Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) services**. With EPSDT services, your child will have regular checkups, also known as **well-child visits**, at least once a year, even when your child is not sick.

You may have received a letter from the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) reminding you of your next well-child visit. You may have also received a phone call reminder. The Alliance is partnering with DHCS to make sure your child gets the best care possible at the right time. The Alliance will send a reminder letter to you later this year if your child has not yet seen a doctor and is due for a visit.



Who can get EPSDT services?

Alliance Medi-Cal members from birth through age 21.



What are Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) services?

These services will:

- Help prevent your child from getting sick
- Find health problems early
- Keep track of your child's development
- Make sure your child receives vaccines and screenings at the right time



First tooth or first birthday = first visit with the dentist

You don't have to wait for all of your baby's teeth to arrive to get started on healthy oral habits. Tooth decay—the disease that causes cavities—is caused by germs in the mouth, but cavities are preventable. To help prevent cavities, keep your baby's mouth clean. This will help teeth stay strong and healthy. Just like in adults, healthy teeth help babies chew, talk, smile and feel good. Healthy baby teeth save room for grown-up teeth, too.

A first birthday gives you and your baby a lot to celebrate. Here are

some tips to help your baby have a healthy mouth and teeth starting at an early age:

- Take your baby to the dentist by his or her first birthday or when a first tooth appears—whichever comes first.
- Keep sugary drinks, such as juice, out of your baby's bottle.
- Don't let your baby fall asleep with a bottle or sippy cup in his or her mouth or sip from it all day. At about 6 months, start using a real cup so that a bottle won't be needed by the baby's first birthday.

- As your baby's teeth begin to show through the gums, start brushing twice a day with a little dab of fluoride toothpaste (about the size of a grain of rice) to help protect the new teeth.
- Ask your baby's pediatrician or dentist about fluoride varnish. This is a Medi-Cal covered benefit for children 0 to 5 years. Three varnishes are allowed in a 12-month period. Fluoride will help protect the baby's teeth from tooth decay.
- Ask your baby's pediatrician for a dentist referral. Dental visits for children are covered by Medi-Cal.



How can I get help with EPSDT services?

Call your primary care provider, who can help you make an appointment for your child. If you need transportation to get to and from an appointment, the Alliance can help. Call the Alliance Member Services Department at **800-700-3874** (TTY: Dial 7-1-1). Member Services can answer questions about your child's doctor and transportation services. If you are interested in health education materials or brochures about health topics for your child, call the Health Education Line at **800-700-3874, ext. 5580**.

Need help finding a dentist for your baby?

Alliance Medi-Cal members can:

1. Call Medi-Cal Dental Program at **800-322-6384**.
2. Visit www.denti-cal.ca.gov.
3. Ask for a referral from your baby's doctor.

Like other healthy habits, caring for your mouth and teeth starts early and lasts a lifetime. Help your baby have a healthy start, and take care of your own teeth too! Don't forget to brush!

DO'S & DON'TS

of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19)



Do:

Wash your hands often with soap and water or use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.



Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, or use the inside of your elbow. Throw tissues in the trash.



Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily, including tables, doorknobs, countertops, desks, phones and keyboards.



Call your health care provider if you have symptoms. Let them know you may have the virus.



Wear a cloth face mask in public.



Don't:

To uch your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.



Spend time with people who are sick.



Go out in public if you're sick unless it's to get medical care.



Share household items, like dishes, drinking glasses, eating utensils, towels or bedding, with other people if you're sick.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

What is a primary care provider?

Think of your primary care provider as your gateway to good health.

A primary care provider can be a general practice or family medicine doctor, pediatrician or internal medicine doctor. Your primary care provider may be a clinic or medical group. Your primary care provider will see you for checkups and immunizations and will help you manage any chronic conditions you might have, like diabetes. He or she can do many things for you, such as:

- Guide all of your health care
- Be the one you go to for regular care and when you're sick



TO FIND A primary care provider near you, call Member Services at **800-700-3874**. Or you can use the online Provider Directory on our website at [morehealth.org/providerdirectory](https://www.morehealth.org/providerdirectory) (URL has been shortened for convenience).

- Help prevent health problems
 - Refer you to other doctors, as needed
- Over time, your primary care provider will get to know your health

history and help you make good choices so you can stay well.

We can help you find a primary care provider if you don't already have one.

Service with a smile!

Have you ever wondered who is on the other end of the phone when you call Member Services?

Our representatives are caring, dedicated professionals. They are here to answer your calls Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Our representatives are ready to:

- Help you understand how your health plan works
- Answer questions about your benefits
- Explain how you can get medical care and services

- Let you know which doctors and clinics you can go to
- Help you choose or change your primary care provider
- Offer interpreter services if you do not speak English
- Help arrange transportation if you don't have ways to get to your doctor appointment

- Send you a new Alliance ID card if you lose yours
- Assist you with concerns or complaints

We have representatives in Merced, Monterey and Santa Cruz counties. They live and work in the communities we serve. They care about you and are here to help.

YOU AND YOUR HEALTH are important to us. Please call us at **800-700-3874** (TTY: **800-735-2929** or **7-1-1**) if you have questions, need help or have concerns about your care as an Alliance member. We're here to help!

Did you know you have these health benefits?



Acupuncture and chiropractic services

● **Medi-Cal:** Members can get a total of two services per calendar month. For example, you can get one acupuncture visit and one

chiropractic visit within a month, or you can choose to get two chiropractic visits within a month. No referral is required, but you must go to a contracted provider in our service area. If your provider feels you may benefit from having more acupuncture visits or chiropractic services for pain management, he or she may send us an authorization request.

● **In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS):** Members can get up to 20 visits per benefit year (July 1 to June 30) for each service. There is a co-payment of \$10 per visit. You will need a referral from your primary care provider to get these services, and you must go to a contracted provider in our service area.

For more information or to find a provider near you, call Member Services at **800-700-3874** (TTY: Dial 7-1-1) or visit us online at www.ccah-alliance.org.



Routine vision care

● **Medi-Cal:** Members can get an eye exam and a pair of eye glasses every 24 months. To learn more about your vision benefits or to find a provider near

you, call Vision Services Plan (VSP) at **800-877-7195**.

The online VSP Provider Directory can be found at morehealth.org/providerdirectory (URL has been shortened for convenience).

● **IHSS:** Routine eye exams and glasses are not covered benefits. There are some medical vision services that are benefits, such as specialty care from an ophthalmologist (an eye doctor). For more information, please see your IHSS Evidence of Coverage (EOC) or call Member Services at **800-700-3874** (TTY: Dial 7-1-1).



Mental health services

● **Medi-Cal:** Members can access outpatient mental health services through Beacon Health Options (Beacon).

For more information or to find a provider near you, call Beacon at **855-765-9700** or visit their website at beaconhealthoptions.com/members/login. Inpatient and specialty mental health services for Medi-Cal members are covered through your county's Mental Health Department. If you're not sure what type of care you need, you can call Beacon and they can connect you with the right type of care.

The numbers to call for the county mental health departments are:

■ Santa Cruz County: **831-454-4170** or **800-952-2335**

■ Monterey County: **888-258-6029**

■ Merced County: **209-381-6819** or **888-334-0163**

● **IHSS:** Members can access both inpatient and outpatient mental health services through Beacon. Members can call Beacon at **855-765-9700** or visit their website at beaconhealthoptions.com/members/login.



Medi-Cal services covered by the state (not the Alliance)

Did you know Medi-Cal offers comprehensive dental benefits to both children and adults? The

services are provided through the Medi-Cal Dental Program, not through the Alliance.

For more information or to find a dentist near you, call Medi-Cal Dental Program at **800-322-6384**, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (PST), or visit their website at www.denti-cal.ca.gov.

We're committed to your satisfaction

We want you to be happy with your health care and our service. But sometimes you might not be. When that's the case, we want to hear about it.

You can also file a complaint or appeal in writing or through our website, www.ccah-alliance.org/complaints.html.

You may file a complaint with us if you are not happy with:

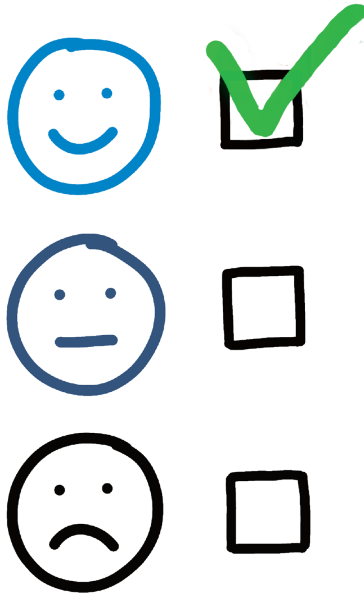
- The care your doctor is providing or how you were treated in the office
- Being able to get the care you need
- The services you get from the Alliance

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

You may file an appeal with us if you are not happy with:

- A decision we have made to change or deny services

Once you let us know about your complaint or appeal, we will look into it. We'll do all we can to help you. If you are still unhappy after we try to resolve your case, we will tell you what steps you can take next.



If you are not happy with a provider or the provider's office, it's best to talk to them first. Let someone in the office know what happened. Ask him or her for help fixing the problem.

The same goes if you are not happy with your experience in a hospital or other facility. Ask to speak with a nurse, social worker or patient advocate.

If you are getting a bill for services covered by the Alliance, call the billing department at the number on your statement. Let them know what insurance you have. Ask them to bill your insurance.

If you would rather talk to us about the problem, we're here to help. You can file a complaint or an appeal with us by calling Member Services at **800-700-3874**.

Alliance drug formulary changes

EFFECTIVE MARCH 1, 2020

Additions to formulary	
High blood pressure	Katerzia—for age <12
Antibiotic	Cefadroxil
Parathyroid disease	Cinacalcet—with prior authorization required
Menopause	Fyavolv Lopreeza Estradiol/norethindrone
Overactive bladder	Solifenacin

American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation services at no charge to you

Did you know the Alliance offers American Sign Language (ASL) 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).

Member Rewards Program winners

We have announced a few of the 2019 winners of the Alliance's Immunization Member Reward—part of the Member Rewards Program. Congratulations to Johnny, Zoey and Scarlett! In 2019, the Alliance rolled out a new Immunization Member Reward, part of the Alliance's Member Rewards Program. Children who were missing vaccines and were turning 2 years old or 13 years old in 2019 were sent a letter letting them know they had a chance to be entered into a raffle. These members received the necessary vaccines they needed by their 2nd or 13th birthdays and were entered into the reward raffle.



Johnny turned 2 years old in 2019 and is from **Santa Cruz County**. Johnny's parents take him and their older children to Salud Para La Gente in Watsonville. The clinic helps remind the family about their appointments through phone call reminders. Their doctor really helps to educate them about needed vaccines and how to stay healthy.



Zoey is from **Merced County** and turned 2 years old in 2019. Her parents say that Zoey and her older sister are always up-to-

date with their vaccines. The Target gift card reminded them that staying healthy is important. Zoey's parents call the doctor to find out what vaccines she needs. They are thankful that their doctor gives them information about vaccines at their visits.



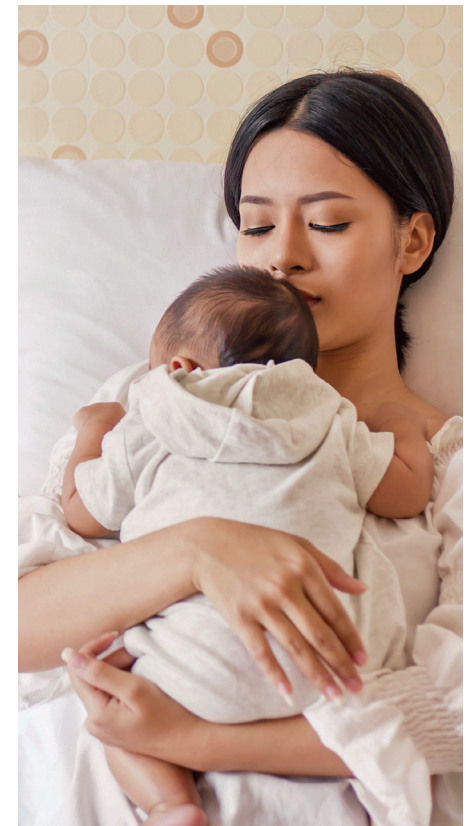
Scarlett turned 12 years old in 2019 and lives in **Monterey County**. She hopes to attend Stanford University after high school and to be a cardiovascular surgeon or a jazz musician one day. Scarlett is supported by her family, who knows how important vaccines are for staying healthy. To keep their children on track, the parents use their children's vaccine yellow card and always plan visits ahead of time to make sure their children get vaccines on time. They thank Scarlett's doctor with Stanford Children's Health for doing a great job of explaining the vaccines.

The goal of the Alliance's Member Rewards Program is to support our members in staying healthy. The Alliance is happy to announce that the Immunization Reward will continue to be available for Alliance members turning 2 years old and 13 years old in 2020!

A message from your local Women, Infants & Children (WIC) Program

California Department of Public Health announced that all Women, Infants & Children (WIC) Programs are now providing a WIC card to purchase WIC foods. The card works similar to a debit card. WIC offices are open, but services are being provided by phone. Contact your local WIC office to make an appointment or for any questions about WIC services:

- Santa Cruz County: **831-722-7121**
- Monterey County: **831-796-2888**
- Merced County: **209-383-4859**



Important reminder: Census 2020

By now your household has received a mailed envelope that says "United States Census 2020." It is the law that one person from your address respond to it! You can answer by mail, by phone or online. For more information, visit [2020census.gov](https://www.census.gov). This website is also translated into 59 non-English languages.

June is National Men's Health Month!

Time to take control of your health

June is Men's Health Month, a good reminder for men and their families to learn about health care for men. Sometimes men might pay less attention to their own health and focus more on their job, home and family. Where do you start? First, choose a primary care provider and make your first appointment. The Alliance can help you find one.

Your primary care provider can give you regular medical checkups and help make sure you get the care you need, including:

- **Health screenings.** You may feel fine, and you may be healthy. Or you could have a silent health problem, like high blood pressure, and not even know it. Your primary care provider can use screening tests to detect some diseases before they cause symptoms, when they're often easier to control or treat.
- **Vaccines.** Are you due for a tetanus booster? A shingles shot? Do you get a flu vaccine every year? Getting recommended vaccinations can help you avoid painful and serious diseases.
- **Advice for a healthy life.** Your primary care provider can help with goals like eating right, exercising regularly, losing weight and quitting tobacco.

Ask for help

Your primary care provider is there to help you be healthy and stay healthy. You can ask about topics that may be keeping you from a healthier life, such as:

- **Your mental health.** Do you feel sad, hopeless or disinterested in activities you once enjoyed? These can be signs of depression, which is a serious illness. Treatment helps most people with depression enjoy life again.
- **Your drinking or smoking habits.** Your primary care



FOR MORE INFORMATION on Men's Health Month and tips for healthy living, visit [cdc.gov/features/healthymen/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/features/healthymen/index.html).

provider can discuss the health risks of drinking alcohol, smoking tobacco or using other substances. Your primary care provider can help you with finding options to help you reduce or quit.

- **Your energy level.** If you're tired a lot or your desire for sex has plummeted, there may be a reason, such as a low testosterone level, that can be treated.

Sources: American Heart Association; Hormone Health Network; National Institutes of Health; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

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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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