



LIVING HEALTHY

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A newsletter for the members of Central California Alliance for Health



September is National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month

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, such as 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 lifestyle changes together.

● **Get active outside.** Walk around the neighborhood, go on a bike ride

or play basketball at the park.

● **Limit screen time.** Keep screen time (time spent on the computer, cellphone, watching TV or playing video games) to two hours a day or less.

● **Make healthy meals.** Buy and serve more vegetables, fruits and whole-grain foods.

Making small changes as a family can help your child stay at a healthy weight.

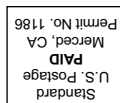
The Alliance offers the *Healthy Weight for Life* program. This program is for children and teens ages 2 to 18

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 new ways to support your child and make healthy lifestyle changes. Talk to your child's doctor about this program. The doctor must refer your child to the program if he or she thinks your child needs it. You can call the Alliance Health Education Line at **(800) 700-3874, ext. 5580** for more information.

Source: healthfinder.gov/NHO/SeptemberToolkit.aspx

Are you prepared for a public safety power outage?

During the California wildfire season, all electric lines that pass through high fire-threat areas could be turned off to help reduce wildfires. To learn more and make sure you are well-prepared for a power outage, visit www.pge.com or call PG&E toll-free at **(866) 743-6589**.



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Let your voice be heard!

The Alliance offers several different ways for members like you to let us know how we are doing and how we can improve. One of them is through our Member Services Advisory Group meetings.

Some of the people who go to this meeting are Alliance members. Others are people who work in agencies and programs that provide services to Alliance members. Through the advisory group, we are able to hear from our members and people who serve our members. The Alliance will use this information to help us better understand what our members think, want and need.

Any Alliance member, or parent of a child who is an Alliance member, can join the advisory group. There are four (4) meetings a year. The meetings are in our offices in Santa Cruz, Merced and Monterey counties. As an advisory group participant, you can get \$50 for attending each meeting.

If you would like more information or an application to join, please call (800) 700-3874, ext. 5567 or visit our website at www.ccah-alliance.org/boardmeeting.html.



Did you know?

Almost **40%** of medications sold to patients end up not being used.

More than **70%** of people who take pain medications that they did not get from a doctor got them from family or friends.



Drug overdose is the top cause of accidental deaths in the United States.



Human medications are the number one cause of pet poisoning.

How to keep your medications safe

What can you do?

- Keep all medications in the original containers in which you received them.
- Store medications in a **locked** box, **locked** pouch or **locked** drawer, safely away from children and pets. Containers that lock can be purchased from your local pharmacy, retail stores or online.
- **Never** share prescriptions with anyone. This is illegal and may be deadly.
- When medications are

no longer needed or wanted or if they expire, **get rid of them** as soon as possible.

- Do not get rid of medications in the sink or toilet.

How to dispose of medications safely

First choice: Locate a medication drop-off location near you. We can help! Visit www.ccah-alliance.org/drugs.html and look under “Quick Reference Guides.”

Second choice: Ask for a free, prepaid envelope from National Safety Council to put your medications in and mail it at any post office. Visit: safety.nsc.org/stop-everyday-killers-supplies.

Third choice: Throw away your medications at home by using a no-cost disposal kit from a pharmacy or follow the instructions on this website: epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-06/documents/how-to-dispose-medicines.pdf.

The Alliance's Language Assistance Services

To help members communicate better with their doctors and the Alliance, we offer interpreting services by phone and in person, as well as translation of written member information, at no cost.

Members can ask for:

- A trained American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter
- A trained language interpreter
- Alliance-written information in braille, large print or audio format
- Alliance-written information in a language they can understand

If you need to reach the Alliance's Language Assistance Services or have questions, please call the Alliance Health Education Line at **(800) 700-3874, ext. 5580**. For the Hearing or Speech Assistance Line, call **(800) 735-2929** (TTY: Dial 7-1-1).



Formulary changes

DRUG NAME	USED FOR	ACTION
Oxycodone 5mg/5mL solution—with quantity limit 30mL/day	Pain	Added
Atropine sulfate 1% eye ointment	Pupil dilation	Added
Peridex mouthwash	Gingivitis or periodontitis	Added
Calcipotriene 0.005% cream—quantity limit of 60g/month	Psoriasis	Added
Betamethasone dipropionate 0.05% (Diprosone) ointment	Skin disorders	Added
Anoro Ellipta	COPD	Added

What you need to know about other health coverage



If you have more than one health insurance plan, it is important to understand the rules that say which plan pays first and which pays second. The health plan that pays first is called **primary insurance**. The health plan that gets billed next is called **secondary insurance**.

If you have other insurance plus Medi-Cal, your other insurance is the primary insurance. If the primary insurance has special rules, you must follow them. You must see special doctors and go to certain hospitals. If you don't follow the rules of your primary insurance and use its provider network, it may not pay for your care and the Alliance will not pay for it either.

Who do I contact if my insurance changes?

If you have Medi-Cal, call your county Medi-Cal office. It is important that you give them this information so they

can update your case. You should also call the Alliance's Member Services Department. We will have to verify that your other insurance has changed before we update your information.

- Merced County: (209) 385-3000
- Monterey County: (877) 410-8823
- Santa Cruz County: (888) 421-8080

Why is it important that I update my primary insurance information?

- To make sure there are no problems with being seen at your doctor's office or getting prescriptions at the pharmacy
- So you won't get a bill from your doctor's office

If you have Medicare Parts A, B and D with Medi-Cal:

Your Medicare is always your primary insurance.

● **Medicare Part A pays for hospital stays.** You don't need authorization

from the Alliance for hospital care.

● **Medicare Part B pays for doctor visits.** You can go to any provider that takes Medicare, unless you are in a Medicare Advantage Plan.

● **Medicare Part D pays for prescription medicines that are covered by your Medicare drug plan.** You will have to pay a small co-pay for each prescription.

● Medicare has an annual deductible and co-insurance.

Your Medi-Cal health plan is always secondary.

- You will not pick an Alliance primary care provider. You can go to any doctor that takes Medicare.
- If your doctor accepts Medi-Cal as your secondary insurance, he or she will bill the Alliance for the deductible and co-insurance.
- You should not receive a bill. You will only pay prescription co-pays.
- The Alliance will cover a small

number of medications that are not covered by Medicare.

If you only have Medicare Parts A and D with Medi-Cal:

Your Medicare insurance is always primary.

- **Medicare Part A** pays for hospital stays. You don't need authorization from the Alliance for hospital care.
- **Medicare Part D** pays for prescription medicines that are covered by your Medicare drug plan. You will have to pay a small co-pay for each prescription.

Your Medi-Cal is secondary.

- You will need to pick an Alliance primary care provider. You must go to your Alliance primary care provider and get a referral from your primary care provider to see a specialist.
- If your hospital accepts Medi-Cal as your secondary insurance, it will bill the Alliance for the deductible and co-insurance. You should not receive a bill.
- The Alliance will cover a small number of medications that are not covered by Medicare.

If you only have Medicare Parts B and D with Medi-Cal:

Your Medicare is always primary.

- **Medicare Part B** pays for doctor visits. You can go to any doctor that takes Medicare. You will not pick an

Alliance primary care provider. You don't need authorization from the Alliance for specialist care.

- **Medicare Part D** pays for prescription medicines that are covered by your Medicare drug plan. You will have to pay a small co-pay for each prescription.

Your Medi-Cal is secondary.

- You need authorization from the Alliance to stay overnight in the hospital, unless it is an emergency.
- If your hospital accepts Medi-Cal, it will bill the Alliance. You should not receive a bill for the deductible or co-insurance.
- The Alliance will cover a small number of medications that are not covered by Medicare.

Medicare Advantage plans with Medi-Cal

This type of Medicare means you sign up with a Medicare health plan. In some Medicare Advantage plans, you pick a primary care provider. If you need to see a specialist, your primary care provider will refer you. In other plans, you can see any doctor who works within the plan.

This kind of Medicare has rules:

- You pay a certain amount every month for both hospital and doctor care.
- You pay a little every time you see the doctor.
- You pick a provider from that plan's provider directory.

New Medicare cards and ID numbers

If you have Medicare, you should have received a new ID card with a new ID number to use. The new card does not change any of your coverage or benefits.

Medicare cards no longer display Social Security numbers. New Medicare cards show an 11-character combination of numbers and letters that has been assigned to uniquely identify your personal account. You should destroy your old card when your new card arrives.

If you did not receive a replacement card, you should contact Medicare at **(800) MEDICARE (633-4227)** or TTY **(877) 486-2048**.

If you have Medicare:

You should always show your doctor both your Medicare and Alliance ID cards when you receive care. There are three parts to Medicare:

A Medicare Part A pays for stays in the hospital.

B Medicare Part B pays for doctor visits, lab work and X-rays.

D Medicare Part D pays for prescription medicines.

Diabetes: Savor the holidays

Parties, big meals and goodies—oh my! The holidays can be a tricky time of year to manage for those with diabetes. Tricky, but not impossible. These seven tips can help keep blood sugar under control while keeping you feeling merry.

1 Taste your favorites, but don't overindulge. Spend time on each bite. Savor foods you only have once a year. But at holiday meals and buffets, try to eat the same amount of bread, potatoes, and other starchy or sweet foods as you normally would. For example, if you want pumpkin pie, make it a small serving and pass on dinner rolls or sweet potatoes during the main course.

2 Take the edge off your appetite. Headed to a celebration with lots of tempting food? Before you leave home, eat a small, balanced meal or a healthy snack. You'll be less likely to overeat.

3 Don't arrive empty-handed. Show up at celebrations with a diabetes-friendly dish to share.

4 Revise recipes. You can reduce the amount of sugar in most baked goods by about one-fourth—without tasting any difference.

5 Stay active. Sign up for a local holiday walk or run. End your meals with a family walk instead of a sugary dessert. Walk laps around the mall when you shop.

6 Focus on what matters most. The holidays are a special time to catch up with your loved ones. Do things together that you all enjoy, such as volunteering, admiring neighborhood lights or playing games. Let family and friends—not food—take center stage.

7 Get back on track. Did you help yourself to too many treats or too much food? Don't beat yourself up about it. You haven't failed. Tomorrow is another day—and another chance to eat smart again.

The Alliance covers diabetes education classes for all ages. You can learn tools to keep diabetes under control. You will learn how to eat the right foods, be more active and lower stress. You will also learn how to test your blood sugar and use medicine, if needed. Education can be provided through individual and group settings. Members with other

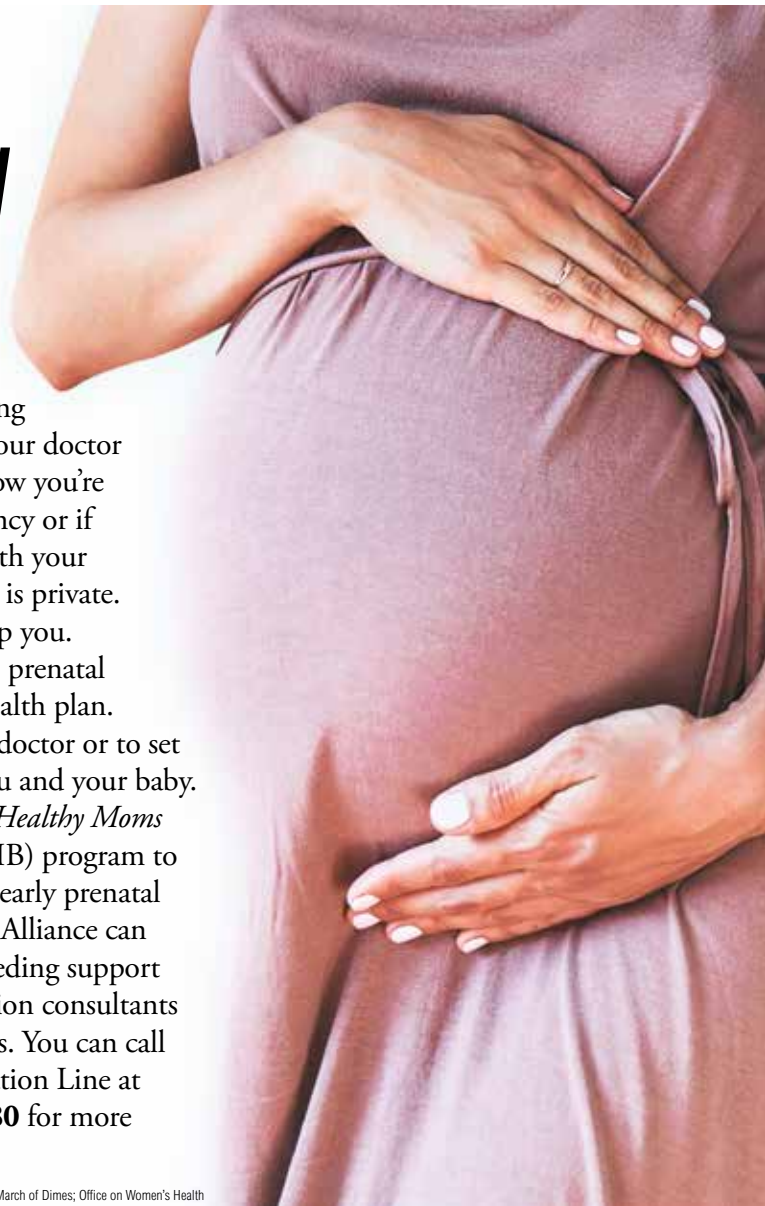
health coverage must use all benefits provided through their primary insurer before using Alliance benefits. Members with diabetes under the age of 21 years will be referred to a California Children's Services (CCS) approved Special Care Center (SCC) for coordination of diabetes care by a CCS paneled provider, as appropriate.

To find out more about these programs, you can call the Health Education Line at **(800) 700-3874, ext. 5580**.

Sources: American Association of Diabetes Educators; American Diabetes Association



Prenatal care: The right call for you and your baby



Babies bring lots of firsts: first kicks, first steps, first words.

But before all of that can happen, you'll need another first: your first prenatal checkup.

It's best to get in touch with your doctor as soon as you think you might be pregnant. That way your doctor can help guide you with your pregnancy and spot—and treat—any problems quickly. But even if you've waited to see your doctor, prenatal care is still important. Regular visits can help you have a healthier baby and safer pregnancy.

Regular visits are also a chance for you to:

- Find out how to ease pregnancy discomforts like morning sickness or heartburn
- Ask questions about how to stay healthy
- Learn about your baby's due date and growth
- Get a peek at your baby during an ultrasound exam
- Get tips on coping with stress

- Learn how to stay safe at home and work
- Get help kicking habits such as smoking or drinking

Don't be afraid to tell your doctor personal things, such as how you're feeling about your pregnancy or if you're having problems with your partner. Whatever you say is private. Your doctor is there to help you.

As an Alliance member, prenatal care is included in your health plan. Call us to help you find a doctor or to set up an appointment for you and your baby.

The Alliance offers the *Healthy Moms and Healthy Babies* (HMHB) program to help pregnant women get early prenatal and postpartum care. The Alliance can connect you with breastfeeding support resources, including lactation consultants and access to breast pumps. You can call the Alliance Health Education Line at **(800) 700-3874, ext. 5580** for more information.

Sources: American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists; March of Dimes; Office on Women's Health

How the flu vaccine protects you during pregnancy

With the flu season just around the corner, the time to get your flu vaccine is now, especially if you are pregnant. Pregnant women can become more sick from the flu than women who are not pregnant and are the same age. This is because changes to your immune system during pregnancy increase the risk of flu complications. There is also a higher risk of early labor (early birth) if you get the flu.

The flu vaccine not only protects you but your baby too. How? The mother passes antibodies to the baby during

pregnancy that continue to protect the baby after birth. It is safe to get the vaccine at any time during pregnancy. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that pregnant women receive the flu shot instead of the flu nasal spray, as the nasal spray has the live virus.

Talk with your doctor for additional information. Adult Alliance members can get the flu vaccine at most pharmacies for free with their member ID card.

Sources: cdc.gov/flu/highrisk/pregnant.htm; acog.org/Patients/FAQs/The-Flu-Vaccine-and-Pregnancy?IsMobileSet=false



Protecting your privacy

Details about your health care are personal and private. You deserve to have them kept that way. That's why we at the Alliance do all we can to protect your privacy.

There are times when we may disclose your information for treatment, payment or health care operations without having to ask your permission. An example would be to tell a provider you are covered as an Alliance member so the provider could treat you. If other people ask us for your information, outside of what the law allows, you must tell us it is OK before we can give it to them. We often review the way we keep your information safe, and we will continue to do so. 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.ccah-alliance.org/pdfs/MemberHandbooks/MemberHandbookMedi-Cal.pdf



TO VIEW the calendar, visit: www.ccah-alliance.org/Health-and-Wellness-Calendar.html

The Alliance online member Health and Wellness Resources calendar is here!

The Alliance offers its members information on a variety of programs and resources to help you manage your health. The calendar is a great place to find information about a variety of resources, such as behavioral health, nutrition and fitness, pain management and alternative treatment, social support services, domestic violence services, and substance use/tobacco cessation. To view the calendar, visit: www.ccah-alliance.org/Health-and-Wellness-Calendar.html.

Click on your county to find resources near you. Classes or programs are offered at no cost, low cost or on a sliding scale to help you and your family live a healthier life. You can also call the Alliance Health Education Line at **(800) 700-3874, ext. 5580** for more information.



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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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