



# Living **Healthy**

A newsletter for the members of Central California Alliance for Health



**June 2026 | VOLUME 32, ISSUE 2**

## **Care can't wait**

Life gets busy. Between work, family and daily stress, it is easy to put your health on hold. Taking care of your health now can help prevent bigger issues in the future.

## **Why this matters now**

Putting your health on hold can make small health issues turn into bigger ones. Skipping checkups, vaccines or screenings can make it harder to stay healthy over time. You are not alone. We're here to help you stay healthy. Getting care when you need it is one of the best ways to protect your health and your family's health.

## **Small steps can go a long way**

**HEALTHY PEOPLE. HEALTHY COMMUNITIES.**

[www.thealliance.health](http://www.thealliance.health)

You do not need to do everything at once. Taking small steps can help make it easier. During a checkup, you can:

- Get vaccines that can help protect you from serious illness.
- Get tests to find problems early.
- Ask questions and talk about your medicines.
- Learn ways to stay healthy.

Appointments can fill up fast. Call your doctor to schedule your visit.

If you have any questions, please call Alliance Member Services at **800-700-3874** (TTY: Dial **711**), 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

## **Ask the doctor: Why it's time to schedule back-to-school checkups**

Dr. Mai Bui-Duy is a Medical Director at Central California Alliance for Health. She practiced internal medicine primary care in Santa Cruz County for seven years and has 15 years of experience in the medical field.

You may be thinking, “Summer just started. Isn't it too soon for a back-to-school checkup?” It can feel early, but this is the best time to schedule! Making appointments now helps you avoid the rush later in the summer.

**Appointments can fill up fast, especially for vaccines and sports physicals.**

### **Why are back-to-school checkups important?**

Back-to-school checkups are a chance to:

- Ask questions and talk about your child's growth, sleep, learning and behavior.
- Find concerns early before the school year starts.
- Make sure vaccines are up-to-date so your child can start school on time.

Remember, checkups are offered at **no cost to Alliance members.**

What your child can get at a back-to-school checkup:

- A sports physical to be able to play in school sports.  
Contact your child's school to see if they need a physical before starting sports.
- The vaccines they need for the school year and updates for any missed doses.
- A referral if they need dental or vision care.

Tip: Bring your child's vaccine record and any school forms to the checkup.

### **Which vaccines does my child need for school?**

The schools in California check vaccine records for new students in transitional kindergarten (TK) or kindergarten through 12th grade and for students starting seventh grade.

- TK/kindergarten through 12th grade need:
- DTaP (diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis): 5 doses.
- Polio: 4 doses.

- Hepatitis B: 3 doses.
- MMR (measles, mumps, rubella): 2 doses.
- Chickenpox (varicella): 2 doses.

Seventh grade entry needs:

- Tdap booster: 1 dose (on or after the 7th birthday).

**Next step:** Call your child's doctor today to schedule a checkup and ask what vaccines your child needs to start school. Learn more at

**[www.thealliance.health/vaccinesforschool](http://www.thealliance.health/vaccinesforschool)**.

## **Community Corner**

**Celebrate Pride Month: Find resources and support for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer + persons**

June is Pride Month. It's a time to celebrate identity, community and kindness. This is also a good time to talk about mental health.

Many LGBTQ+ people face stress because of getting bullied, unfair treatment or not feeling accepted. LGBTQ+

adults are 2.5 times more likely to deal with depression, anxiety and substance misuse compared to heterosexuals, says the American Psychiatric Association. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 41% of LGBTQ+ youth say they have thought about suicide in the past year. These challenges can be hard, but resources are always available.

### **What parents and allies can do:**

- Listen kindly.
- Use language that is well-mannered.
- Help your loved one find safe resources.

### **Support makes a big difference!**

### **Resources for members, parents and allies**

- Call Member Services at **800-700-3874** or go to **[www.thealliance.health/provider-directory](http://www.thealliance.health/provider-directory)** to find a behavioral health provider.
- Call or text **988** or visit **[www.988lifeline.org](http://www.988lifeline.org)** for the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline.

- Chat with a counselor at The Trevor Project. Visit [www.thetrevorproject.org](http://www.thetrevorproject.org) or [www.thetrevorproject.mx](http://www.thetrevorproject.mx).

## **Reward yourself with healthier living**

Living with a chronic condition can be hard, but the Alliance can help! You can join a Healthier Living Program (HLP) workshop and learn the skills to better manage your health. The Alliance HLP is a six-week workshop that focuses on health and wellness. Adult members can learn how to manage pain, fatigue, stress, anxiety and sleep loss. Members can also learn about healthy eating, staying active, building relationships and improving quality of life.

Alliance members who attend a six-week workshop can get up to a **\$50 Target gift card**.

If you would like to sign up for the program, you can call the Alliance Health Education Line at **800-700-3874**,

**ext. 5580** or complete the sign-up form online at **[www.thealliance.health/health-programs-sign-up](http://www.thealliance.health/health-programs-sign-up)**.

## **We are 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 is the case, we want to hear about it.

If you would like to talk to the Alliance about a problem, we are here to help.

You may file a **complaint** (also called a **grievance**) if:

- You are not happy with the care you received from your doctor or how you were treated in the office.
- You are not happy with your experience in a hospital or other facility.
- You received a bill for services covered by the Alliance.
- You are not able to get the care you need.
- You are not happy with the services you get from the Alliance.

- You feel a health care provider or the Alliance failed to give trans-inclusive health care.

There are other reasons you might file a complaint with us. These are listed in your Member Handbook, which you can find online at

**[www.thealliance.health/memberhandbook](http://www.thealliance.health/memberhandbook)**.

If you are not happy with a decision we made, you can file an **appeal**. An appeal is a request for us to review and change a decision we made about your services.

### **How to file a complaint or appeal**

You can file a complaint or an appeal by calling Member Services at **800-700-3874**, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. You can also file a complaint or appeal in writing or through our website at

**[www.thealliance.health/file-a-grievance](http://www.thealliance.health/file-a-grievance)**.

### **Next steps**

Once you let us know about your complaint or appeal, we will look into your concern. We will do all we can to help you. The information you share also helps us improve as

an organization and helps our health partners. If you are still unhappy after we try to resolve your case, we will tell you what steps you can take next.

## **Wellness for all**

### **Talking with your primary care provider**

Practicing good communication with your primary care provider (PCP) is an important way to embrace your personal health care journey. Clear and honest communication between you and your PCP can help you both build a safe connection. Talking about your concerns can help you make informed choices about your health care.

### **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, let the doctor's office staff know so they can help you.

If you need language assistance, let your doctor's office know which language you need when you call to make an appointment.

The Alliance can help with setting up language assistance services for your doctor visit. 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 **711**).

We know that talking with your PCP is not always easy. Here are some examples of what to talk about with your PCP during your visit if you have health concerns.

<b>Question</b>	<b>Example</b>
What am I feeling that I want the PCP to check?	My left ear aches each time I blow my nose.
When did it begin?	It started 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?

## **You have prescription benefits!**

If you are a Medi-Cal member, your prescription drugs that are filled at a pharmacy are covered by Medi-Cal Rx and not the Alliance.

If you are an IHSS member or a TotalCare member, pharmacy services are managed by MedImpact.

If you have questions about prescription drugs or need to find out if a prescription is covered by your health plan:

- Medi-Cal members can call Medi-Cal Rx at **800-977-2273** (TTY: Dial **711**).
- IHSS members can call Member Services at **800-700-3874** (TTY: Dial **711**).
- TotalCare members can call MedImpact at **800-347-5841** (TTY: Dial **711**).

### **Drugs given in a doctor's office or clinic**

These are considered physician-administered drugs (PAD). You can view coverage information in the Member Handbook and at

**[www.thealliance.health/prescriptions](http://www.thealliance.health/prescriptions)**. If you would like a mailed copy, please call Member Services at **800-700-3874** (TTY: Dial **711**).

## **Keep track of your blood pressure**

Keeping your blood pressure at a healthy level helps protect your heart. It lowers your risk of stroke, heart failure and other serious conditions. High blood pressure sometimes has no signs. Checking it often can help find issues early and make sure you get the right care.

Correct readings matter. They help your doctor decide if you need medicine or other changes. When checking your blood pressure at home, sit quietly for a few minutes first. Keep both feet flat on the floor, and rest your arm at heart level. Use the right cuff size so your reading is correct.

Blood pressure monitors are covered for Alliance members. Eligible Medi-Cal members can get a monitor at no cost through AllCare Pharmacy, and it can be mailed to your home. Talk to your doctor to learn more.

## **Getting an appointment: How long should you have to wait?**

As an Alliance member, it is your right to have timely access to network providers, but sometimes a provider can't see you right away. Some appointments might take longer to schedule than others.

We work with the providers and clinics in our network to make sure you can get care when you need it.

Health plans in California must follow rules to make sure you can get care when you need it. These rules are called the Timely Access to Non-emergency Health Care Services standards.

The chart below shows the waiting times for different types of appointments. If the provider thinks that waiting longer will not harm your health, the wait time might be longer, and they must note it in your medical record.

<b>Appointment type</b>	<b>You should be able to get an appointment within:</b>
Urgent care appointments that do <b>not</b> require pre-approval (prior authorization)	48 hours
Urgent care appointments that <b>do</b> require pre-approval (prior authorization)	96 hours
Non-urgent (routine) primary care appointments	10 business days
Non-urgent (routine) specialist care appointments	15 business days
Non-urgent (routine) mental health provider (non-doctor) care appointments	10 business days

Non-urgent (routine) mental health provider (non-doctor) follow-up care appointments	10 business days of last appointment
--	--------------------------------------

Non-urgent (routine) appointments for ancillary (supporting) services for the diagnosis or treatment of injury, illness or other health condition	15 business days
---	------------------

<b>Other wait time standards</b>	<b>You should be able to get connected within:</b>
Member Services telephone wait times during normal business hours	10 minutes
Telephone wait times for Nurse Advice Line	30 minutes (connected to nurse)

If you feel you are not getting care when you need it, call Member Services at **800-700-3874** (TTY: Dial **800-735-2929** or **711**).

### **Feel your best with the Silver&Fit<sup>®</sup> program**

One of the best ways to protect your health as you get older is to stay active. It can help with balance, energy and heart health. TotalCare members can use their no-cost Silver&Fit Healthy Aging and Exercise program benefit to get and stay active.

With the Silver&Fit program, you can:

- Join a fitness center.
- Stream workout videos from home.
- Get live, one-on-one coaching from a well-being coach.
- Get a home fitness kit sent to you.

Small steps can lead to big results! TotalCare and the Silver&Fit program are here to help you stay active and feel your best.

To learn more, visit [www.thealliance.health/totalcare](http://www.thealliance.health/totalcare) or call **833-530-9015** (TTY: Dial **800-735-2929** or **711**), 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., seven days a week.

*The Silver&Fit program is provided by American Specialty Health Fitness, Inc., a subsidiary of American Specialty Health Incorporated. Persons shown are not Silver&Fit members. Fitness center participation may vary by location and is subject to change. Kits are based on availability and subject to change. The Silver&Fit program is not a medical provider or pharmacist, and its coaches do not offer medical or pharmaceutical advice. They cannot and do not diagnose or treat medical, mental health or other health conditions. Coaches provide general information for educational purposes only. For any medical or health concerns, consult a qualified health care professional.*

## **We are texting members!**

The Alliance texts members to help them keep up-to-date on Alliance benefits and services. Alliance texts are from the short code **59849**. To learn more, visit our website at **[www.thealliance.health/member-texting](http://www.thealliance.health/member-texting)**.