



# POSITIVE OUTLOOK

Health and Wellness Information for Members

Fall 2017



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## Colorectal Cancer Screening Saves Lives

Colorectal cancer is also known as colon cancer. It is the second leading cause of cancer death that affects both men and women combined. And it is also one of the most preventable.

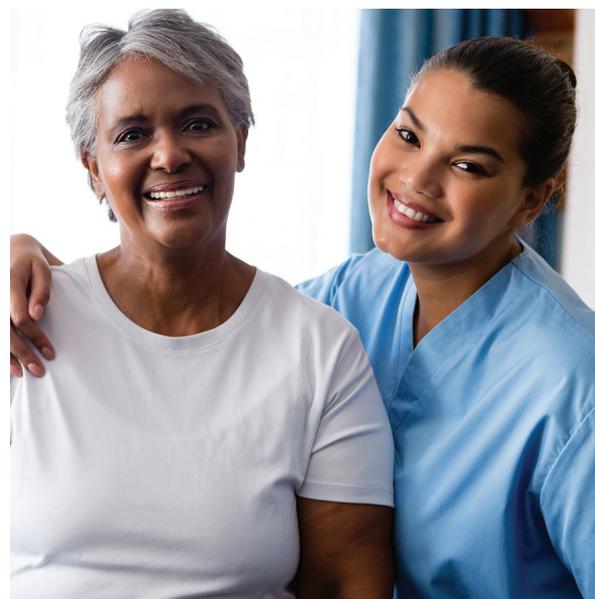
Screening tests can help prevent colorectal cancer and look for problems early, when they are easier to treat. PHP/PHC and your doctor want to help you stay healthy.

Make sure that you get screened regularly.

- If you are 50 or older, you need to get screened.
- Don't wait, take action today for a healthy life.
- Screening tests are at no cost to you.

Ask your doctor about choosing one of these 4 tests:

- Colonoscopy-Every 10 years
- Flexible Sigmoidoscopy-Every 5 years
- CT Colonography- Every 5 years
- Fecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT) - Each year



Call your doctor and get screened for colon cancer today! It could save your life!

### Did you know?

PHP/PHC is offering gift cards to members for taking care of themselves!

Did you receive a letter in the mail to complete the following preventive screenings?

- Colonoscopies for members age 50-75
- Retinal eye exams for diabetic members
- Cervical cancer screenings for women age 21-69

If so, schedule your appointments to complete the exam today! Remember to mail back the completed forms by the deadline!

PHP/PHC may also be following up with a reminder call about the importance of getting screened. If you have any questions about this contact the Health Education Program at (323) 436-5027.



P.O. Box 46160  
Los Angeles, CA 90046  
www.phc-ca.org

Member Services  
Mon - Fri, 8:00am to 8:00pm  
Tel (800) 263-0067  
TTY/TDD: 711

## Stress Management

Stress is the body's physical and emotional response to a demand, change, or challenge. A little bit of stress may be healthy and normal. Stress sometimes helps us stay motivated. It can be caused by work, family or health situations – good or bad. Long-term stress can be harmful to your health and relationships. Symptoms may include emotional outbursts or shortness of temper. Others may be headaches, muscle tension, sleep problems, and upset stomach. Know your symptoms of stress and trigger situations that cause you to feel anxious.

### How to Manage Stress

Recognizing your symptoms and its triggers are the first steps in managing stress. Here are some ways to help you cope with stress:

- **Plan and Prepare** Planning and preparing ahead of time will help you be ready to handle tasks and stay relaxed. Give yourself enough time and arrive early to appointments.
- **Live Healthy** Eat vegetables, fruits, whole grains, low-fat dairy, and lean protein. Drink water. Get moderate exercise daily and 7-8 hours of sleep nightly. Avoid drinking too much alcohol or using illegal drugs.
- **Relaxation Activities** Do relaxing activities that you enjoy such as walking, reading, playing an instrument, or gardening.

### Seek Support and Help

Behavioral health services are included as part of your PHP/PHC benefits. If your stress is unmanageable, schedule an appointment to talk to your primary care physician (PCP). He or she may refer you to the PHP/PHC Behavioral Health Services for additional help. You can also contact member services at

(PHC CA (800) 263-0067 TTY/TTD: 711)  
(PHP CA (800) 263-0067 TTY/TTD: 711)



## Steps to Fight the Flu

Flu season is here! Get a FREE flu shot to prevent getting sick. It's simple. Go to your doctor and show your PHP/PHC member ID card.

### Tips to staying healthy this flu season:

Get your flu shot!	Wash your hands	Avoid touching your face	Cough/sneeze into your sleeve	Eat healthy	Get plenty of sleep	Exercise	Avoid contact with sick people
							

See your Doctor for a flu shot today to protect yourself and your family!

## Basic Facts on Discharge Plans

Even when we take good care of our health, most of us will need to stay in a hospital at some point in our lives. A hospital stay often includes a number of things you must do to follow-up on your care at home. This could involve new medications, wound care, a special diet or things the doctor needs you to track.

When you check out of the hospital, a nurse will give you a discharge plan. This is a list of things the doctor needs you to know about your follow-up care. This plan helps make sure you will not need to go back into the hospital. The discharge plan is your guide to a good recovery. Make sure to ask questions and have the doctor and nurse explain just what the discharge plan means for you.

Make sure that your doctor and RNCM know when you had a hospital stay. They need to know the reason for the stay and what new meds you need to take. Always call your doctor's office, RNTCM or the Nurse Advice Line first if you think you need to go to the ER. The hospital is not always the best choice for some types of health issues.



Ask Me 3 is a registered trademark licensed to the National Patient Safety Foundation®

## Communication with your Providers

It is a good idea to ask questions during your visit. Ask about your tests, prescriptions, and other treatments. To make sure you understand everything for your appointment, ask these 3 questions:

- 1. What is my main problem?**
- 2. What do I need to do about it?**
- 3. Why is it important for me to do this?**

**Write any questions you have for your provider here:**

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Asking questions can help you be an active member of your health care team.



## Retinal Eye Exams for Diabetes

Diabetes can harm your eyes. It can damage the small blood vessels in your retina, or the back of your eye. This condition is called diabetic retinopathy. Diabetes also increases your risk of glaucoma and other eye problems.

You may not know your eyes are harmed until the problem is very bad. Your doctor can catch problems early if you get regular eye exams. This is very important. The early stages of diabetic retinopathy may not cause changes in vision and you won't have symptoms. Only an eye exam can detect the problem. Take the steps to prevent the retinopathy from getting worse.

### You Need Regular Retinal Eye Exams

Even if the doctor who takes care of your diabetes checks your eyes, you need a retinal eye exam every year by an eye doctor who takes care of people with diabetes. An eye doctor has equipment that can check the back of your eye much better than your regular doctor can.

If you have eye problems because of diabetes, you will probably see your eye doctor more often. You may need special treatment to prevent your eye problems from getting worse.

### You may see two different types of eye doctors:

- An optometrist is a health care provider trained to diagnose and treat problems with your vision. Many can do screening exams for damage from diabetes. Once you have eye disease caused by diabetes, you need to see an ophthalmologist.
- An ophthalmologist is a medical doctor who is an eye specialist trained to diagnose and treat eye problems.

If you are diabetic and have any questions about your retinal eye exam please contact your PCP or RNCM.

## Retention in Care

### Why is Retention to Care so important?

After an HIV diagnosis, timely entry into HIV medical care and retention is important. Retention is the continued use of something, and in HIV care, it can make a big difference in your health. Following the antiretroviral therapy (ART) is among the key factors of successful HIV treatment outcome. This also means keeping up with all of your clinic visits and labs. Your doctor's care plan for you will help improve this retention.

Retention in care is strongly linked with health outcomes.

### Patients who are retained in care are:

- More likely to have reduced risk of drug resistance
- More likely to have improved overall health
- More likely to have improved quality of life
- Less likely to transmit HIV to someone else
- At higher risk of survival

### Patients who are not retained in care are:

- More likely to have detectable viremia.
- More likely to have prolonged viral burden.
- Less likely to maintain access to ART.
- More likely to have AIDS-defining CD4 count.
- At higher risk of death.

Keeping up with your regular clinic visits and medications will help to improve your health. Your clinic visits may also provide services to receive counseling regarding HIV risks. This can also be opportunities to get other preventive health services you need such as vaccinations and screenings.



## Controlling High Blood Pressure

High blood pressure is also called hypertension. Blood pressure is the force of blood pushing against the walls of the arteries as the heart pumps blood. If this pressure stays high over time, it can damage the body. This raises the risk of heart disease, stroke and other serious conditions.

### What are the causes of high blood pressure?

The causes of high blood pressure and risk factors can vary. Some you can control and some you cannot.

### Risk factors you can control include:

- Being overweight
- Eating too much salt
- Drinking too much alcohol
- Not being physically active
- Smoking
- Too little potassium
- Diabetes
- Stress

### Risk factors you cannot control include:

- **Age:** Blood pressure tends to rise as we age
- **Race/ethnicity:** High blood pressure is more common among African Americans
- **Gender:** More men than women have high blood pressure
- **Family history:** You are more likely to have high blood pressure if someone in your family does

Lifestyle changes can help lower and maintain a healthy blood pressure. Staying on a healthy diet, being physically active, keeping a healthy weight, and not smoking can help you stop or delay problems. Some people may need to take medicine to control their blood pressure. If your doctor gives you medicine as part of a treatment plan, take it as directed. Work with your pharmacist and doctor to follow a plan that works for you.

Some medicines for your heart and blood pressure, need a lab test done each year. Please talk to your doctor about whether you need lab tests.

### Labs tests can:

- Help your doctor know how well the medicine is working for you
- Tell your doctor if you are having certain side effects

### What Do My Numbers Tell Me?

Your blood pressure numbers give you the force of your blood against the walls of your heart. There are two numbers. The top number shows the force as your heart beats (systolic). The bottom number shows the force as your heart rests (diastolic).

**The goal for a normal blood pressure is 120/80**



## Pneumococcal Vaccination

Vaccines are especially important for people with HIV. That's because people with HIV are at higher risk of infections than other people, and vaccines help prevent infections. But only some vaccines are safe and appropriate for people with HIV.

In general, people with HIV can get "inactivated vaccines," which are vaccines that contain dead copies of a virus. People with HIV usually should not get "live attenuated vaccines," which are vaccines that contain live but weakened copies of a virus.

One vaccine that Adults with HIV usually need in the Pneumococcal vaccine. Pneumococcus is a germ that can cause an infection of the lungs, ears, blood, or tissues around the brain. The bacteria enters the body through the nose and mouth, directly; when an infected person sneezes or coughs, or through close contact such as kissing. Also indirectly when infected fluid is transferred to a hard surface; someone touches that surface, then touches their nose or mouth.

Symptoms of pneumococcal disease include fever, chills and sweats, headache, cough and a general feeling of being unwell. Mild cases of pneumococcal disease are likely to go away after a few days, without the need for any special treatment.

However, because of your HIV status – and especially if you have symptoms that don't improve after a few days – it is wise to seek medical advice. This is particularly important if you:

- Have a constant high temperature
- Cough up yellow or green mucus, particularly streaked with blood
- Have chest pains or are breathing very fast
- Become drowsy or confused
- Experience breathing difficulties.



The "pneumococcal vaccine" is sometimes called the pneumonia vaccine. There are 2 types of the pneumococcal vaccine. People with HIV should get one of each type of vaccine between the ages of 19 and 64. Once they turn 65, they should get another dose of one of them if it has been more than 5 years since their last dose. The vaccine is about 50 to 70% effective in preventing pneumococcal disease.

Clinical Practice Guidelines: <https://aidsinfo.nih.gov>.

## You can also see the newsletter online @:

PHP Florida: <http://positivehealthcare.net/florida/php/for-members/newsletter>

PHC Florida: <http://positivehealthcare.net/florida/phc/members/materials/newsletters>

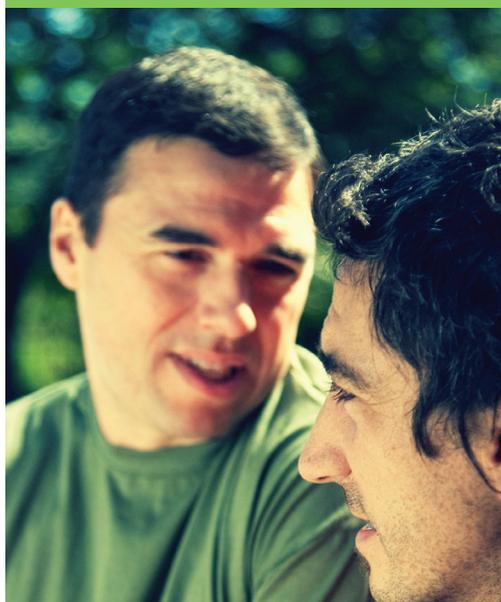
PHP California: <http://positivehealthcare.net/california/php/for-members/newsletter>

PHC California: <http://positivehealthcare.net/california/phc/members/materials/newsletters>



## Special Needs

We know many of our members have special needs that make it hard to communicate with their healthcare team or Health Plan. Tell the doctor, nurse care manager or other member of your health home team if English is the not language you speak. We can call an interpreter who speaks your language. If you are deaf, hard-of-hearing or have other special needs, we can arrange a service to help us communicate with you. For your health, it is vital that you and your doctor or healthcare team understand each other. This service is free to you.



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for AMBULATORY HEALTH CARE, INC.

**ATTENTION:** This information is available for free in other languages. Please contact our customer service number at (800) 263-0067, 8:00 am -8:00 pm, seven days a week. (TTY: 711)

**ATENCIÓN:** Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-800-263-0067, 8:00 am -8:00 pm, los siete días de la semana. (TTY: 711)

## A Message from Your Health Plan

### Your Contact Information

PHC California cares about you and your health. We need to know if you moved or got a new phone number. Please call Member Services to update your record any time you make a change.

### Member Services

Monday-Friday 8:00am-8:00pm • (800) 263-0067 TTY/TTD: 711

### Medication Therapy Management Program (MTMP)

As part of PHC California, you are enrolled in the MTMP. This Program helps people who take many prescribed meds. The Program lowers the chance of mistakes and reactions with your meds.

Your health care team will be in touch with you and your doctor. They will explain the drugs that you take. Your doctor will know of safety issues with your meds. Any other health issues will also be handled. Your RN Care Manager will contact you to make an action plan for your meds. An action plan with your nurse care manager will help with any problems you may have. The action plan will let you know just how and when to take your meds.

### Compliance Hotline

Help us look out for Medi-Cal fraud and abuse. For example, if your Explanation of Benefits lists charges that are wrong, call Member Services. Call our Compliance Hotline if you suspect fraud or abuse.

**Compliance Hotline:** (800) AIDS-HIV • (800) 243-7448

## We want to hear from you!

**The Client Advisory Committee is a great way to tell us what you think about your Health Plan! We welcome all health plan members and AHF Healthcare Center clients. You can share your questions, concerns and comments with our Health Plan leaders. We use your concerns to make your Plan better. Come to the next meeting to find out what your Health Plan can do for you!**

### California - Los Angeles

6255 W. Sunset Blvd, 21st Floor

To RSVP, call **Santiago at (800) 243-2101**

**Food and drinks will be served.**

## Questions?

### Contact Your RN Care Manager

Mon-Fri, 8:30am-5:30pm

Tel: (800) 474-1434

### Urgent After-Hours Nurse Advice Line

Mon-Fri, 5:30pm-8:30am and 24 hours on Weekends. Available 365 days a year.

Tel: (800) 797-1717