



# POSITIVE OUTLOOK

Health and Wellness Information for Members

Winter 2014



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## When You Go to the Hospital

Health problems or a sudden crisis can lead to a stay in the hospital or skilled nursing facility (SNF). You may only be there a few days, even for very severe problems. Doctors may expect you to finish much of your treatment from home.

Your discharge (release) from a hospital or SNF stay may leave you confused about what to do next. You can have many pages of complex advice and new meds to take. Here are 4 things you can do to avoid problems when you leave a hospital or SNF.

### 1. Know Your Meds

Many of the problems around your discharge may have to do with changes in your meds. Your doctors need to know all the meds you take to make sure they mix well with your new treatments. Keep a list of all your current meds and carry it with you in your wallet, backpack or purse. Ask your doctor questions about all new meds:

- What is it?
- Why do I need to take it?
- How should I take it? Food or no food? Crush or take whole?
- How long will I need to take these meds?

You may have side effects from a new treatment. Talk to your doctor before you stop any med you are prescribed. A simple change may help with side effects.

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P.O. Box 46160, Los Angeles, CA 90046

Visit us 24/7 on the web

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Member Services

Mon - Fri, 8:00am to 8:00pm

California (800) 263-0067

Florida (888) 456-4715

TTY/TDD: 711



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## 2. Watch for Warning Signs

Warning signs tell you there might be a problem with your treatment. These let you know if you are in danger or you are not healing as you should be. Be sure to ask your doctor what signs to look out for. Write down the signs before you go home. Tell someone or call your doctor right away if you think there is a problem with your treatment.

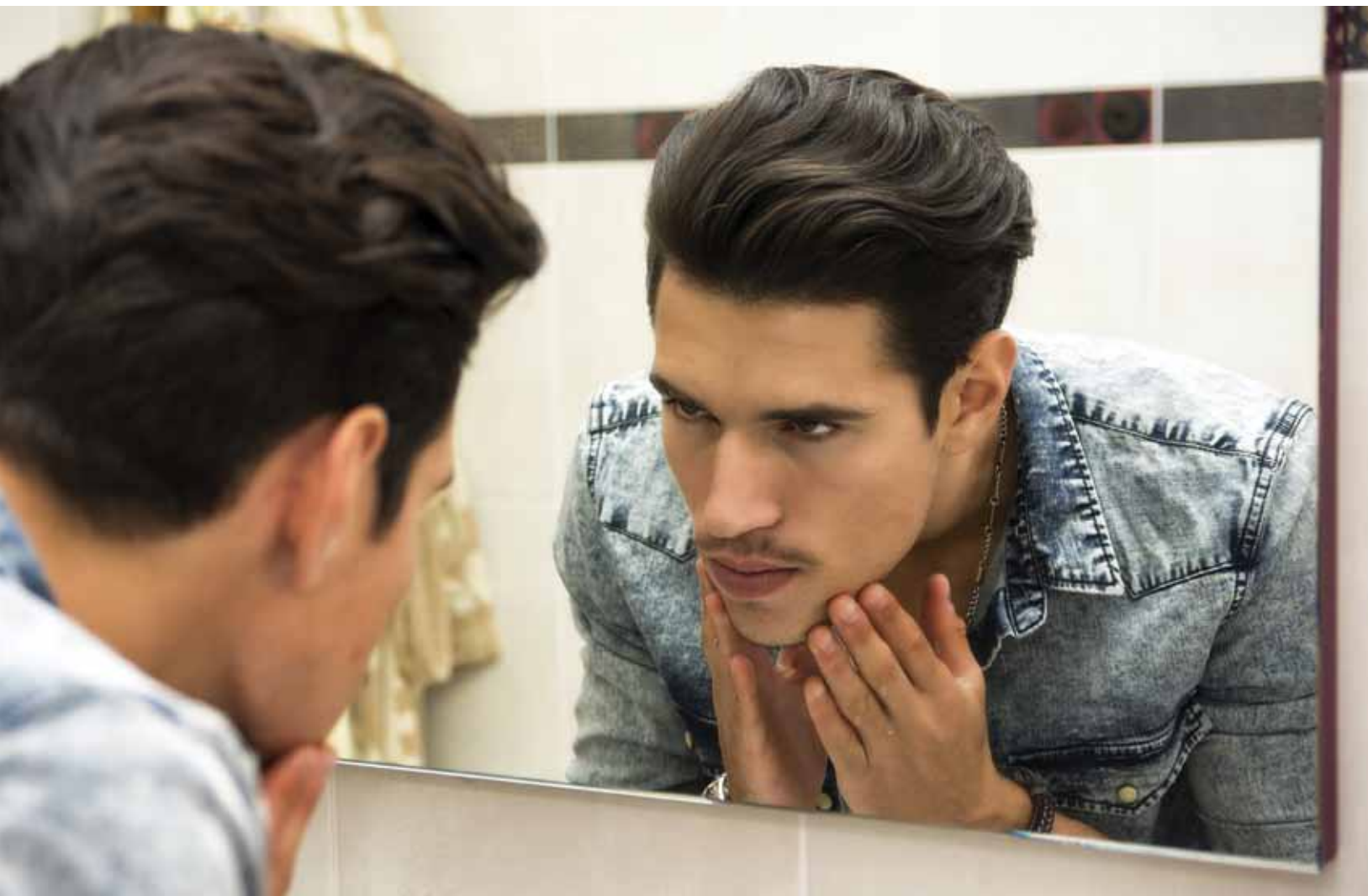
## 3. See your Doctor

Your regular doctor needs to know when you have been in a hospital or SNF. The hospital may not tell your regular doctor about your stay with them. Arrange to visit your doctor the week after you come home. Tell them the reason for your stay and any new meds you were prescribed. Let your nurse care manager know the name of the hospital and the reason for your stay. They can help manage your care after you go home.

## 4. Keep Good Records

You are in charge of your health. A good health record helps you keep track of your doctor visits, lab results, meds and hospital stays. It will give you and your doctor a "whole picture" view of your health over time. Write these down in a notebook or journal. Update the record when there are changes to your health or healthcare. Positive Healthcare gives you **Passport To Health** journals that are small enough to carry with you.

You are more likely to heal well at home when you follow these helpful hints. It is helpful to work with your nurse care manager. The RNCM can help you get the services you need as you go from home to hospital and hospital to home.



## Make Way for Mental Health

It is common for people with a chronic health problem to feel anxious or depressed. These can be worse in PLWHA due to the social stigma and lack of good information about the disease. There are many good treatments for mental health problems. The key is to ask for help when you feel out of sorts.

### What are anxiety disorders?

For some people anxiety gets in the way of normal life. This is a problem called an anxiety disorder. You may feel changes in your body:

- Fast heartbeat or chest pain
- Shortness of breath
- Dizzy or shaky
- Break out in a rash
- Sweats and chills
- Flashbacks or nightmares

When you are anxious, you might feel nervous or like something bad will happen. Things you enjoy, like food, sleep, or sex may not sound good to you.

### What can you do?

There are things you can do to help prevent anxiety:

- Stay active
- Get good sleep
- Meditate
- Avoid caffeine. Do not drink coffee, tea or soda.
- Do not use alcohol and street drugs to cope

A trained person can talk through fears and worries with you. Tell your doctor or RN Care Manager if you feel worried or anxious.

### If You Feel Depressed

Lots of people with HIV feel sad, lonely or depressed. Winter can be a tough time of year. The weather gets some people down. For others, the holidays are hard. The good news is there are things you can do to help you feel better!



### Steps You Can Take

- 1. Stay positive.** Focus on the things that are right in your life.
- 2. Connect with others.** Friends and loved ones can be a good source of support. Join a group or club that interests you. Spend time around other people in a mall or movie theatre.
- 3. Stay Active.** Even something simple like taking a walk around the block can help lift your blue feelings.
- 4. Help others.** You can volunteer or help someone with a project. This adds value to your life and makes you feel good.
- 5. Create joy in your life.** Find a hobby or fun things to do. Laugh! Watch funny movies or hang out with friends.
- 6. Take care of your spirit.** Some people go to church or temple. Others meditate, do yoga or read. Find what speaks to you and practice it in your life.
- 7. Deal better with hard times.** Avoid drugs and limit alcohol. They do not help you cope. Talk to your nurse care manager or doctor if you need help to stop using.
- 8. Get enough sleep.** When you are rested and healthy, your body and mind work better.
- 9. Eat well.** The food you eat can keep you healthy or make you sick. Pick the right food! Be sure to drink lots of water to help with your HIV medications.
- 10. Take your HIV medications.** Your meds help you feel better and live healthier.
- 11. Get help if you need it.** You are not alone! If you feel down or sad, talk to your nurse care manager and doctor. They can help!

## Just Say No to Stress

In this day and age, stress is something that no one can avoid. Stress can come from worries about your health, money problems, family issues and many other sources. Stress not only makes us feel bad in the short-term, it can also have some long-term health effects. Since no one can avoid stress, it is helpful to know how to manage it.

### Relax Your Mind and Body

There are many benefits to your quality of life and your health when you focus on relaxing your mind and body. When you practice relaxation, you can:

- Slow your heart rate
- Lower your blood pressure
- Increase blood flow to your muscles
- Reduce tension and anger
- Lessen fatigue (low energy)
- Improve your outlook on life

There are many ways to relax your mind and body. You can find one that works best for you. Most involve a focus on your breath and images in your mind.

- Hold a picture of a peaceful setting in your mind
- Slow your breath and heart beat
- Repeat a word or phrase in your mind
- Relax one muscle group at a time from your toes to your head

Some people like to meditate, do yoga or Tai Chi (a series of slow, graceful poses) to relax. However you manage stress, remember that it takes practice. It will be easier to manage things that come your way if you make relaxation a habit.

### The Value of Sleep

Proper rest is a great way to relieve stress. When you get at least 7-8 hours of sleep per night, you are much better prepared to deal with the stress of your day. Talk to your doctor or nurse care manager if you have trouble sleeping.



There are many ways to get the rest your body needs without any kind of medication. You can get a good night's sleep when you follow these healthy sleep habits:

- **Have a set routine.** Go to bed at the same time each night and wake up at the same time each morning. Set an alarm to wake you up.
- **Create a good sleep space.** Try to make your bedroom dark and quiet. If you can, use your bedroom only for sleep. Avoid TV and other things that can distract you in your sleep space.
- **Prepare for sleep.** Late night snacks or exercise can keep you up. Set aside at least an hour before you turn in to relax your body and mind.
- **Avoid alcohol.** Your sleep can be fitful when you drink too much. You may wake up during the night and feel groggy in the morning.
- **Relax your mind.** Focus on your breath and try to relax one part of your body at a time. This will calm your mind as well.
- **Keep a journal.** Write down when you wake at night and why. Describe your dreams while they are fresh in your mind. This can help reveal the cause of troubled sleep.

## Referrals Basics

Sometimes you need to see a doctor other than your primary care provider (PCP) for special health problems or tests. Your PCP will refer you to other doctors for special care. The doctors will need to be in your health plan's provider network.

Some referrals for tests and treatments must be approved by your health plan. These are prior-authorization referrals. There are set amounts of time the plan has to approve your doctor's referrals.

### Step-by-Step Referral Process

- **Step 1:** Your doctor refers you to another doctor for a test or treatment
- **Step 2:** A Referral Coordinator at your clinic finds out if the service needs to be approved by your health plan first
- **Step 3:** The clinic sends the referral to your health plan for approval (if needed)
- **Step 4:** Your health plan has a set amount of time to approve or deny the service. This depends on the type of plan you have
  - Medicare: 14 days
  - Medi-Cal: 5 days
  - Medicaid: Varies by state

- **Step 5:** If it is the first time you will visit the new doctor (specialist), the plan will send you a letter and call to let you know if your referral was approved
- **Step 6:** Call the specialist's office and schedule a visit. Arrange all follow-up visits with the specialist's office.
- Remind the specialist to forward your records to your PCP
- Always check with your doctor to see how many follow-up visits are approved for that referral.

Only contact your health plan or your doctor's office if you think that the referral has passed the set amount of time allowed for your health plan.

Find doctors in your plan's network on the plan website:

PHP CA: <http://positivehealthcare.net/california/php/>

PHP FL: <http://positivehealthcare.net/florida/php/>



## Member Survey Results

Thank you for filling out the CAHPS Member Survey! Here is how you rated PHP for 2014:

Please share your feedback in these surveys and at the Client Advisory Committee meetings. When you let us know what you think of the Health Plan, we can work to make changes to serve you better. Your voice counts!

CAHPS Results	California	Florida
Getting Needed Care	★★	★★★★★
Getting Care and Appointments Quickly	★★★★★	★★★★
Customer Service	★	★★
Getting Needed Prescription Drugs	★★	★★
Care Coordination	★	★★★★★★
Rating of Healthcare Quality	★★★★★	★★★★★★
Rating of Health Plan	★★★★	★★★★
Rating of Drug Plan	★★★★★	★★★★★★

## Think About Joining a Trial!

New drug trials and treatment studies start all the time. These help create better treatment for all people living with HIV/AIDS. There are many types of clinical trials. One may be perfect for you. Your doctor may ask you to join a trial. Think about it!

For more info call:

California: (323) 913-1033

NorthPoint Healthcare Center,  
Ft. Lauderdale, FL: (954) 772-2411

Kinder Healthcare Center,  
Miami, FL: (786) 497-4000 ext. 232



## Talk to Your Doctor about Aspirin

Heart disease is the #1 cause of death in the USA. Heart disease kills 1 out of every 6 people each year, or 1 death every 40 seconds. Heart attacks and strokes happen when blood cannot travel to your heart or brain.

People use aspirin for many different reasons. It works to reduce fever, treat headaches and other types of pain. It can also help reduce your risk of a heart attack or stroke when taken in a low dose each day. Baby aspirin or other special pills prescribed by your doctor are low dose aspirin.

Daily aspirin treatment is not for everyone. It does carry some risk of internal bleeding. Talk to your doctor to see if daily aspirin treatment will help reduce your risk of heart attack or stroke.



## Puntos de prevención

**Prevention is key to a healthy life. Be sure to:**

- ✓ Stay in touch with your doctor, nurse care manager and social worker
- ✓ Get labs to check your viral load and CD4 count often
- ✓ Take your HIV medications as prescribed
- ✓ Talk to your doctor about an Advance Directive (Five Wishes Guide)
- ✓ Get a glaucoma test for your eyes
- ✓ Talk to your doctor about tests to check for colon, prostate and rectal cancer
- ✓ Get an anal pap test each year
- ✓ Get a pap test of the cervix (women only)
- ✓ Ask for routine STD screening
- ✓ Work out 30 to 60 minutes, 5 days a week
- ✓ Eat 5 to 9 servings of fruits and veggies daily
- ✓ Practice safer sex
- ✓ Stop smoking
- ✓ Limit alcohol use
- ✓ Stop illegal drug use
- ✓ See friends and be social for mental health and well-being



## 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.



## *A Message from Your Health Plan*

### **Your Contact Information**

PHP 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 • California: (800) 263-0067  
Florida: (888) 456-4715 TTY/TTD: 711

### **Medication Therapy Management Program (MTMP)**

As part of PHP, 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.

### **Drug Safety**

Certain meds can be risky for older people. Find a list of high-risk meds and safe treatment options on our website.

PHP CA: [positivehealthcare.net/california/php/for-providers/consumer-safety/](http://positivehealthcare.net/california/php/for-providers/consumer-safety/)

PHP FL: [positivehealthcare.net/florida/php/for-providers/consumer-safety/](http://positivehealthcare.net/florida/php/for-providers/consumer-safety/)

### **Compliance Hotline**

Help us look out for Medicare 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 possible 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** • Tue., January 27, 2015 • Tue., March 31, 2015  
6255 W. Sunset Blvd, 21st Floor • To RSVP, call **Santiago at (800) 243-2101**

**Florida - Broward, Dade and Monroe Counties** • Tue., Jan. 27, 2015 • Tue., Mar. 31, 2015  
700 SE 3rd Avenue, 4th Floor, Fort Lauderdale 33316 • To RSVP, call: **(888) 456-4715**

**Food and drinks will be served.**

## *Questions?*

### **Contact Your RN Care Manager**

Mon-Fri, 8:30am-5:30pm • California: (800) 474-1434 • Florida: (800) 832-0778

### **Urgent After-Hours Nurse Advice Line**

Mon-Fri, 5:30pm-8:30am and 24 hours on Weekends. Available 365 days a year.  
California: (800) 797-1717 • Florida: (866) 228-8714

### **In Florida, contact Psychcare for Behavioral Health Needs**

24 hours a day/7 days a week • (855) 765-9698