

POSITIVE OUTLOOK

Health and Wellness Information for Members

Summer 2023



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Urgent Care

What is Urgent Care? When Should I Use It?

Get the right kind of medical care when you need it. Some problems can wait until you see your regular doctor. Other problems need to be taken care of right away. If your regular doctor does not have same-day visits and you have an urgent health problem after hours or on a holiday, you can use an Urgent Care Center. Urgent care is care that you need soon, usually within 24- 48 hours.

Urgent Care Centers often have later hours and are open on the weekend. Urgent Care Centers do not take the place of your regular doctor for things like check-ups and medication refills.

You should go to the emergency room (ER) for any illness or injury so severe, it could threaten your life or lead to long-term health problems or disability. Here are some reasons when you should use your regular doctor, an Urgent Care Center, or ER:



Regular Doctor	Urgent Care	Emergency Care
Refills on your meds	Throw up or loose stool or low grade fever	Chest pain
Concerns about pain	Minor sprains or strained muscles	Signs of stroke (vision loss, confusion, slurred speech, sudden weakness)
Fever or cough	Injured in a minor accident or fall	Broken bones
Labs (blood work)	Earache	Want to hurt yourself or someone else
Sexual health concerns	Minor cuts that may need stitches	Major cuts that won't stop bleeding
Painful skin rashes	Hurts to pee	Hard to breathe

Unsure if you should go to urgent care or the ER? Call your doctor or the 24-hour Nurse Advice Line. A nurse can let you know the best thing to do. If you think you have a medical or psychiatric emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest hospital.

Nurse Advice Line:

Call for help from a Registered Nurse. Call this line when your primary care provider's (PCP) office is closed. If you do go to Urgent Care, make sure to go to your primary care doctor for follow-up care.

PHC California Call: (800) 797-1717, Monday through Friday, 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 a.m., and all day weekends and holidays. TTY 711



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

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



MAY 2023 Wellness Focus:

Women's Health

2023 will be an exciting year for women's health. We will be focusing on preventative care, to include:

- Cervical Cancer screenings (pap smears)
- Breast Cancer screenings (Mammography) and
- Colorectal cancer screenings (Colo Guard or Colonoscopy)

The National Women's Health Month is May with breast cancer awareness running in October. Ladies, pink is our color! Women's Health month started with the National Cervical Cancer Coalition and has grown from this first initiative. The goal of this health celebration is to empower you with the knowledge of the needed preventative screenings and the ability to take charge of your preventative health.

Many women are caught up in the daily demands of work, family and taking care of others. Women tend to put their health needs last. The reality is, if you are not healthy, it is difficult to care for others.

Get the screenings you need:

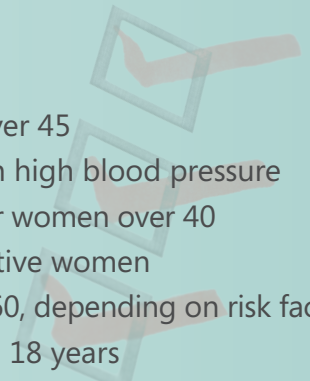
Screenings are tests that look for diseases before you have symptoms. Blood pressure checks and mammograms are examples of screenings. You can get some screenings in your doctor's office. Others, such as mammograms, need special equipment, so you may need to go to a different office.

After a screening test, ask when you will see the results and who to talk to about them.

Prevention Points

At AIDS Healthcare Foundation, preventive care has always been an essential part of your health plan. Preventive services include immunizations and screenings to detect possible diseases and help you stay well. Prevention is about staying healthy and preventing or delaying disease. **Some key preventative screenings include:**

- ✓ Blood pressure screening for all adults
- ✓ Cholesterol screening
- ✓ Colorectal cancer screening for adults over 45
- ✓ Type 2 diabetes screening for adults with high blood pressure
- ✓ Mammograms every one to two years for women over 40
- ✓ Cervical cancer screening for sexually active women
- ✓ Osteoporosis screening for women over 60, depending on risk factors
- ✓ Immunizations for children from birth to 18 years
- ✓ Obesity screening and counseling for children



Screening	Ages and Frequency	Major risk factors
Breast Cancer	Age 40 to 50 years until at least 74 years; at least biennially and as frequently as annually Clinical Practice These recommendations are for women at average risk for breast cancer. The decision to screen women prior to age 50 and after age 74 should be an individual one.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increasing age; • family history of breast or ovarian cancer (especially among first-degree relatives and onset before age 50 years); • history of atypical hyperplasia or other nonmalignant high-risk breast lesions; previous breast biopsy; and extremely dense breast tissue. • Women considered at high risk for breast cancer (previous breast or ovarian cancer; BRCA1/2 mutation carrier; previous high-dose radiation to the chest) should also undergo periodic mammography screening and may require additional follow-up beyond the scope of this recommendation.
BRCA 1 and 2 Genes	Women with a strong family history of certain cancers may benefit from genetic counseling and BRCA genetic testing.	If you have a family member with breast, ovarian, or peritoneal cancer, talk with your doctor or nurse about your family history.
Cervical Cancer	Starting at age 21, get a Pap smear every 3 years until you are 65 years old. Current guidelines recommend that HIV-positive women* receive a combination Pap smear and human papillomavirus (HPV) at the time of diagnosis, 6 months thereafter, or yearly for those with normal results	<p>If you are older than 65 or have had a hysterectomy, talk with your doctor or nurse about whether you still need to be screened. There is also a vaccine available to help prevent certain strains of HPV, genital warts and cervical cancer. This recommendation applies to women who have a cervix, regardless of sexual history or HPV vaccination status.</p> <p>*If you are a trans woman who has had gender affirming surgery to create a vagina (vaginoplasty) and possibly a cervix, there's a very small risk that you can develop cancer in the tissues of your neo-vagina or neo-cervix. The risk depends on the type of surgery you had, the type of tissue used to create your vagina and cervix and your personal health history. Talk to your healthcare provider to figure out your specific cancer-screening needs as part of your overall pelvic health following surgery. If you are trans man and have not had gender affirmation surgery, you may still need screened. Please talk with your healthcare provider.</p>
Colon Cancer	Between the ages of 45 and 75, get a screening test for colorectal cancer. Several tests—for example, a stool test (Colo Guard) or a colonoscopy—can detect this cancer. Your health care team can help you decide which is best for you. If you are between the ages of 76 and 85, talk with your doctor or nurse about whether you should continue to be screened.	<p>Colorectal cancer is most common among adults over age 45 years and early detection with screening can reduce mortality.</p> <p>So, women from all walks of life, take charge and take care. If your healthcare provider does not mention your preventative exams, ask for them. If your provider does mention your preventative care, take the opportunity to stay healthy.</p>

References: Women's Preventive Services Initiative. Recommendations for Preventive Services for Women: Final Report to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources & Services Administration. Washington,

DC: 2016. <https://www.womenspreventivehealth.org>
Ref: US Preventive Services Task Force. Screening for cervical cancer: US Preventive Services Task Force recommendation statement. JAMA. 2018;320(7):674-686. doi:

10.1001/jama.2018.10897. PMID: 30140884.
National LGBT Health Education Center If You Have It, Check It: Overcoming Barriers to Cervical Cancer Screening with Patients on the Female-to-Male Transgender Spectrum.



Member Survey

We are Listening!
Positive Outlook Member Newsletter Survey

Your input helps PHC California to continue improving services and providing access to health care that meets our members' needs. Please see the survey included with this newsletter. We would appreciate you filling it out and mailing it back to us. Your voice and input are very valuable to us. It helps us plan and develop programs and services that will help members, like you, lead a healthier and, hopefully, happier life!



To fill out the survey on-line,
scan this code with your
smartphone camera!

<https://positivehealthcare.net/member-newsletter-survey>

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT OPIOIDS & BENZODIAZEPINES

Using opioids and benzodiazepines can be risky. Combining opioids and benzodiazepines can increase the risk of overdose because both types of drugs can cause sedation and suppress breathing. This can increase the risk of overdose fatality and impair your cognitive functions. From 1999 to 2018, more than 232,000 people in the United States died from overdoses involving prescription opioids and benzodiazepines.

What are opioids?

Opioids are powerful medicines that help you manage your pain. Common opioid pain medicines are Oxycontin®, Vicodin®, and Percocet®. **Check with your provider to find out if you have an opioid prescription.*

What are benzodiazepines?

Benzodiazepines (benzos) are also powerful medicines that help manage insomnia, seizures, and anxiety. Common benzos are Xanax®, Klonopin®, Ativan®, and Valium®. **Check with your doctor to find out if you have a benzo prescription.*

What are the risks of taking both?

Taking opioids and benzos together even for a short time can be dangerous because both medications can slow down the central nervous system. This controls the functions of the brain and spinal cord. This combination can lead to extreme sleepiness, slow or difficulty breathing, coma, or death.

What if i am taking both?

Your provider may decide to limit prescribing both at the same time or recommend alternatives. They will help make a plan that effectively manages your pain AND your condition treated by the benzo.

What if i have to take both?

Your provider may have you take both if other options for managing pain and/or anxiety/depression are not a good fit for you. Your provider will adjust the dosage and monitor you closely.

If you are taking both you should know:

Tell your provider all the medicines you are taking, including other prescriptions or over-the-counter medicines. Take the dose as instructed by your provider. Do not use alcohol with medications, as this can triple their effects.

Be aware of symptoms!

Call your provider if you experience any of these:

- Drowsiness
- Dizziness
- Slow or difficult breathing
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Constipation
- Weakness

If you don't know whether you are taking medicines that may interact, ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist.



COVID-19- Vaccine, Testing & Treatment

Staying Up to Date with COVID-19 Vaccines

COVID-19 vaccines help your body develop protection from the virus that causes COVID-19. Although vaccinated people sometimes get infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, staying up to date on COVID-19 vaccines significantly lowers the risk of getting very sick, being hospitalized, or dying from COVID-19. CDC recommends that everyone who is eligible get a booster and stay up to date on their COVID-19 vaccines, especially people with weakened immune systems.

Act fast if you have COVID Symptoms

Do you feel sick? If you have any COVID-19 symptoms, act fast! COVID-19 antiviral treatments can help reduce your symptoms and keep you out of the hospital, but you must take them as soon as possible.

Follow these steps to reduce your chances of severe illness:

1. Get tested as soon as possible.
 - o Medicare covers up to 8 over-the-counter COVID-19 tests each calendar month, at no cost to you.
 - o You can also search for no-cost COVID-19 testing locations near you.
2. If you test positive, and are more likely to get very sick, talk to your doctor or healthcare provider right away to find out if treatment is right for you.
3. If you're eligible for treatment, start as soon as possible. Treatment must be started within days after you first develop symptoms to be effective. Online

COVID-19 Treatments

Low- or no-cost COVID-19 tests are available to everyone at select health centers and pharmacies. Contact your HCC and provider for more information.



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 (323) 913-1033





Member Rights and Responsibilities

As a reminder, you are a valued part of this health plan. We want to ensure that you are also aware of rights and responsibilities you have with the plan.

As a member of PHC California, you have the right to:

- Be treated with respect, with PHC California giving due consideration to your right to privacy and the need to maintain confidentiality of your medical information
- Be provided with information about PHC California and its services
- Be able to choose a primary care provider (PCP) within PHC California's provider network
- Participate in decision making regarding your own health care, including the right to refuse treatment
- Voice grievances, either verbally or in writing, about the organization or the care received
- Receive oral interpretation services for your language of choice
- To formulate advance directives
- Have access to family planning services, Federally Qualified Health Centers, Indian Health Service Facilities, sexually transmitted disease services and emergency services outside PHC California's provider network pursuant to the Federal law

Patient Portal

We are happy to announce that our Enhanced Patient Portal has gone live on February 7, 2023.

Please keep an eye out for the message to the right. We kindly ask that you please complete the one-time registration process. Once complete, you are all set!

Once you are registered, you can continue to access the patient portal by visiting AHFportal.org

Thank you!

Manage your health online. Anywhere. Anytime.

Mike,

We would hate for you to miss out on our great online tool. Many patients like you are benefiting from our patient portal even when they are between visits.

[Register Now](#)

Our patient portal offers an easy way to:

- Connect with your care team by sending a secure message, anytime 24/7
- Access your health information, test results and appointment details
- Conveniently schedule or request visits online whenever it's best for you
- Stay in control of your finances by viewing your bills online

In just a few minutes, you can create an account and have all of this, whenever you need it.

- Request a state Medi-Cal fair hearing, including information on the circumstances under which an expedited fair hearing is possible
- Have access to, and where legally appropriate, receive copies of, amend or correct your Medical Record
- Disenroll upon request
- Access minor consent services
- Receive written member informing materials in alternative formats, including Braille and large size print upon request
- Be free from any form of restraint or seclusion used as a means of coercion, discipline, convenience, or retaliation
- Receive information on available treatment options and alternatives, presented in a manner appropriate to your condition and ability to understand
- Freedom to exercise these rights without adversely affecting how you are treated by PHC California, your provider, or the State

As a member of PHC California, you are responsible to:

- Participate in your health care and the health care of your family. This means taking care of medical problems before they become more serious.
- Keep in touch with and regularly visit your PHC California primary care provider (PCP)
- Cooperate with your PCP, follow his or her instructions regarding your care and take all of your prescribed medications as directed
- Arrive on time for your doctor visits. Call if you will be late or need to cancel or reschedule your appointment.
- Be courteous and cooperative with people who provide you or your family with health care services
- Not let anyone else use your PHC California member identification/pharmacy card or Medi-Cal beneficiary identification card or pretend to be you
- Not participate in Medi-Cal fraud or any inappropriate use of your Medi-Cal coverage through PHC California or the Medi-Cal fee-for-service system
- Be proactive in your health care. Let us know how you like PHC California and how we can improve our services.

Our Promise to Provide Quality Care

Your health plan is accredited by Accreditation Association of Ambulatory Health Care (AAAHC). This means the Plan meets a set of national standards for quality care and service. AAAHC's goal is to help us improve the quality of health care we provide. In 2023 we will renew our accreditation with a survey. You can share facts about your health plan with AAAHC either at the time of the survey or before it takes place in June. You can write or call AAAHC if you have questions or something to share.

Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care, Inc.
 Health Plan Program
 5250 Old Orchard Road, Suite 200
 Skokie, IL 60077
 Telephone: (847) 853-6060
 Fax: (847) 853-9028
 Email: info@aaahc.org
www.aaahc.org



You can also see the newsletter online @:

PHC California: www.positivehealthcare.net/california/phc/members/newsletters



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 8:00 am-8:00 pm • (800) 263-0067 TTY: 711

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.

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 care team if English is not the 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.



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)

We want to hear from you!

The Public Policy Client Advisory Committee (PPCAC) is a great way to tell us what you think about your Health Plan! We welcome all PHC California health plan members. 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!

PHC California, via ZOOM

To RSVP, call Member Services (800) 263-0067

Gift cards for attendance.



Questions?

Contact Your RN Care Manager

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

Tel: (800) 474-1434

Urgent After-Hours Nurse Advice Line

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

Tel: (800) 797-1717