

POSITIVE OUTLOOK

Health and Wellness Information for Members

Winter 2024



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A Message from PHC California Member Services: Understanding Your Healthcare Coverage

When you become a member of PHC California, you'll receive a Member Handbook every year. This handbook is a helpful guide that explains everything about your health coverage for the year. We encourage you to read it so you can make the most of your benefits. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to reach out to our Member Services team.




You can contact us by calling our toll-free number or visiting our website. Check out our detailed online resources by scanning the QR code.

Here's what you'll find in the Member Handbook:


1. **Covered Benefits:** Learn about the services and treatments that PHC California covers.
2. **Non-Covered Benefits:** Understand what isn't covered and why.
3. **Accessing Care:** How to get care, especially when you're out of town.
4. **Changing Your Primary Care Physician (PCP):** If you need a new PCP, we'll show you how to make the switch.
5. **Specialty Care:** How to get a referral if you need to see a specialist or go to the hospital.
6. **Emergency Care:** What to do if you're in an emergency situation.
7. **Pharmacy Information:** How to get prescriptions filled and any updates on pharmacy benefits.
8. **Cost Details:** Information on co-payments, extra charges, and what to do if you get a bill.
9. **Transportation Assistance:** How to request transportation for doctor visits.
10. **Health Tips:** Tips for keeping you and your family healthy throughout the year.

If you ever need more help, our **Member Services** team is ready to assist you at (800) 263-0067 (TTY 711). We're here to make your healthcare experience easier!

Your Health
Our Mission



Member Handbook



What you need to know about your benefits

PHC California Combined Evidence of Coverage (EOC) and Disclosure Form

2025

Los Angeles County

DHCS 100424 PHC FR Form 2.6



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



December is Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) Awareness Month

Did you know that some people feel sad or depressed when the seasons change? This condition is called Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). It can happen in the winter months when daylight hours are shorter, or in rare cases, during the summer. SAD is a form of depression that can affect your mood, thoughts, and daily activities.

What are the symptoms of SAD?

- 1. Winter-pattern SAD:** Oversleeping, overeating (especially carbs), weight gain, social withdrawal, and low energy.
- 2. Summer-pattern SAD:** Insomnia, loss of appetite, weight loss, anxiety, and restlessness.

SAD can be serious. It's more than just the "winter blues." If you feel like your sadness is interfering with your daily life, talk to a healthcare provider.

How is SAD treated?

- 1. Light Therapy:** Special light boxes can help mimic natural sunlight and improve mood.
- 2. Medication:** Antidepressants may help if your doctor prescribes them.
- 3. Psychotherapy:** Talking to a counselor can help you manage your emotions.
- 4. Vitamin D:** A lack of vitamin D in winter months might contribute to SAD. Your doctor might suggest supplements.

Can SAD be prevented?

Some people benefit from starting treatment before the seasons change. If you think you might be at risk for SAD, talk to your doctor about a plan that works for you.

Learn more: NIMH SAD Guide

You can also see the newsletter online @:

www.php-ca.org/newsletter

6 Tips to Stay Active During Winter

Winter weather can make it hard to stay active, but physical activity is so important for your health. Here are six tips to help you stay active, even in cold or snowy weather:

- 1. Take Nature Walks:** If the weather is mild, take a walk outside. It's a great way to get some fresh air and enjoy nature.
- 2. Monitor the Weather:** Check the forecast to plan your activity and dress accordingly.
- 3. Wear Layers:** Wear several layers of clothes that you can remove as you warm up. This helps keep you comfortable while staying active.
- 4. Workout Online:** Find free online workout videos or join virtual classes. There are plenty of options to help you stay fit from home.
- 5. Do Household Chores:** Vacuuming, sweeping, or even cleaning can count as exercise. Plus, you'll get some work done around the house.
- 6. Volunteer in Active Ways:** Look for volunteer opportunities that involve physical movement, like helping out at community events or assisting with gardening.

How much activity do you need?

Experts recommend at least **150 minutes** of moderate-intensity activity per week. You can break this into smaller chunks, like 30 minutes, 5 days a week. All movement counts, so find what works for you!

For more ideas, visit: [CDC Stay Active This Winter](#)



Think About Joining a Trial!

New drug trials and treatment studies start all the time. This helps to 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 AHF Research at 1-323-913-1033.



Holiday Healthy Habits: Staying Healthy During the Holidays

The holidays are a time for celebration, family gatherings, and plenty of food. But for many people, the festive season can also bring added stress, overeating, and disruptions to daily routines. Whether you're enjoying a holiday dinner, traveling to visit loved ones, or just trying to keep up with your usual schedule, it's important to take care of your physical and mental health.

Tips for staying healthy during the holidays

1. Balance Your Meals: Eat Wisely at Holiday Gatherings

The holidays often bring rich, calorie-packed meals that can be tempting. But it's easy to overeat if you're not careful. To keep your body healthy, try these simple strategies:

1. Fill half your plate with vegetables: Start your meal with healthy veggies and salads. This will help you feel full and satisfied without overindulging in higher-calorie dishes like mashed potatoes or dessert.
2. Mind your sugar intake: Holiday desserts like pies, cookies, and cakes can be full of sugar. Try to enjoy them in moderation. If you're craving something sweet, opt for fruit-based desserts or smaller portions.

2. Stay Active: Keep Moving During the Holiday Season

The holidays often come with a lot of sitting—whether it's watching movies, attending parties, or enjoying meals with family and friends. But staying active is important to keep your body feeling good and your energy up. Here are a few ideas to stay moving during the holidays:

1. Go for a walk: After a big meal, take a walk around the block or in a local park. This helps with digestion, keeps your energy levels up, and allows you to get outside and enjoy the winter weather.
2. Get creative with exercise: If you can't make it to the gym, get creative with your workouts at home. Yoga, stretching, or even a short home workout video can help keep you active and energized.



3. Get Enough Sleep: Rest and Recharge

With all the excitement of the holidays, it can be easy to lose track of your sleep routine. But getting enough sleep is crucial for your overall health, especially if you're dealing with the stresses of travel or family gatherings. Here's how to prioritize sleep during the busy season:

1. Stick to a sleep schedule: Try to go to bed and wake up at the same time each day, even if your routine is disrupted by holiday activities. A regular sleep schedule helps your body maintain a healthy circadian rhythm.
2. Limit caffeine and alcohol: While it's tempting to sip on festive cocktails or coffee during holiday gatherings, too much caffeine or alcohol can interfere with your sleep. Try to avoid these drinks in the hours leading up to bedtime.

4. Manage Holiday Stress: Protect Your Mental Health

The holidays can be a stressful time for many people. Between planning meals, traveling, and managing family dynamics, it's easy to feel overwhelmed. Taking care of your mental health is just as important as taking care of your physical health. Here are some tips for managing stress during the holidays:

1. Set realistic expectations: The holidays don't have to be perfect. Set realistic expectations for yourself and your family. Focus on the moments that matter most and try to let go of perfectionism.
2. Ask for help: If you're feeling overwhelmed by cooking, cleaning, or planning, don't hesitate to ask for help. Delegate tasks to others, and remember, it's okay to accept help or take shortcuts when necessary.



5. Stay Hydrated: Drink Water, Not Just Holiday Beverages

The holidays are full of sugary drinks like soda, eggnog, and cocktails, which can leave you feeling sluggish or dehydrated. Make sure to drink plenty of water to stay hydrated and maintain your energy levels. Carry a reusable water bottle with you and sip on water throughout the day. You can also drink herbal teas or sparkling water for some variety.

6. Travel Smart: Tips for Healthy Holiday Travels

Holiday travel can be stressful, especially if you're flying or driving long distances. Here are a few tips to stay healthy while traveling:

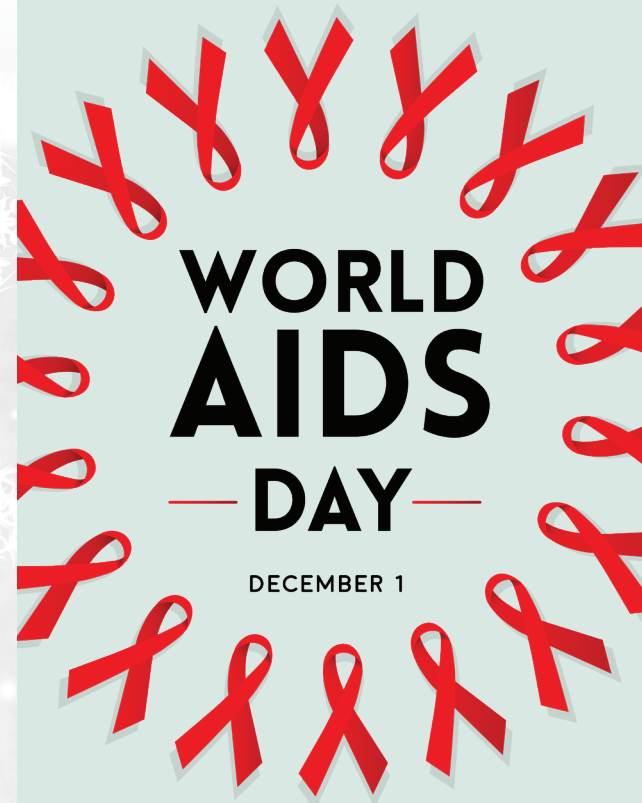
1. Stay active during travel: If you're flying, take short walks around the airport to stretch your legs. If you're driving, stop every couple of hours to stretch and move around.
2. Practice good hygiene: Airports, train stations, and bus terminals can be filled with germs. Wash your hands frequently, use hand sanitizer, and avoid touching your face to reduce the risk of illness.

7. Practice Gratitude: Focus on the Positive

The holidays are also a time to reflect on what you're grateful for. Practicing gratitude can help reduce stress and improve your mental health. Take a moment each day to think about what you're thankful for, whether it's your family, good health, or the little things that bring you joy.

Remember, the holidays are about balance—enjoy the special moments and take time for yourself. Your health is the best gift you can give yourself this season.

Happy holidays from PHC California!



World AIDS Day

World AIDS Day is observed every year on December 1st. It's a day to remember those who have lost their lives to HIV/AIDS, raise awareness, and show support for those living with the disease.

Why is World AIDS Day important?

1. **Global Awareness:** The day highlights the ongoing fight against HIV and the need for continued education and prevention.
2. **Remembering Lives Lost:** Since the start of the AIDS epidemic in the 1980s, more than 32 million people have died from HIV-related causes.
3. **Support for Those Affected:** The day brings communities together to show solidarity and encourage people to get tested, know their status, and protect themselves.

To learn more, visit: [CDC World AIDS Day](#)

Member Communication Survey

We want to hear from you! How can we improve our communication and translation services to better meet your needs? We recently mailed out our Member Communication Survey our PHC CA members to get your help and make improvements. Your feedback helps us provide better care and communication for you.

PHC California is committed to meeting your language needs through our communication support. Your feedback will help us improve our services. Please complete this survey. It should take about 5-10 minutes.

Confidentiality Notice: Your responses will be kept confidential and will only be used to improve our services.

If you have any questions about this survey or need further assistance, please contact us at Member Services. (800) 263-0067 or email at php@positivehealthcare.org



Use your smartphone to scan the code and complete the survey. Thank you.



CalAIM Supports

California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM) is an initiative for PHC California members to improve the quality of life and health outcomes. Its California's new program that provides support for those who need extra help with their health care needs.

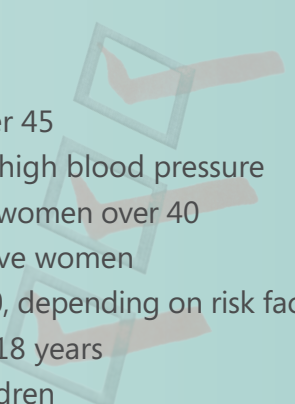
One way this is done is with a new menu of In Lieu of Services (ILOS). These services are provided to support members with additional covered services.

Contact your RN Care Manager to find out about CalAIM.

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



Shingles: Risks, Prevention, and Protection

Shingles is a painful and often debilitating condition caused by the same virus that causes chickenpox. While most people recover from shingles, the pain and discomfort can be severe, and in some cases, it can lead to long-term complications. Fortunately, there is a vaccine that can help protect you from this condition.

What is Shingles?

Shingles, also known as herpes zoster, is a reactivation of the varicella-zoster virus, the same virus that causes chickenpox. After you recover from chickenpox, the virus stays dormant in your body. Years later, it can reactivate, usually when your immune system is weakened, leading to shingles.

Shingles typically appear as a painful rash on one side of your body, often in a band-like pattern. The rash is accompanied by burning, tingling, or itching sensations. The rash usually develops into blisters that eventually crust over. The pain can last for several weeks, but in some cases, it can continue long after the rash has healed, a condition called postherpetic neuralgia (PHN).

Who is at Risk for Shingles?

Anyone who has had chickenpox can develop shingles, but certain groups are at higher risk. These include:

1. **Older Adults:** People over the age of 50 are at a significantly higher risk of developing shingles. As we age, our immune system becomes less effective, making it easier for the virus to reactivate.
2. **Weakened Immune Systems:** People with weakened immune systems, such as those undergoing chemotherapy, organ transplants, or those living with diseases like HIV/AIDS, are more likely to develop shingles.
3. **Chronic Stress:** Stress can weaken the immune system, making it easier for the varicella-zoster virus to reactivate.
4. **History of Chickenpox:** If you've had chickenpox (even if it was many years ago), you carry the varicella-zoster virus in your body and are at risk for shingles later in life.



How Can You Prevent Shingles?

The good news is that shingles can be prevented with a vaccine. The vaccine is recommended for adults 50 years and older, even if they've had shingles before. The vaccine significantly reduces the risk of developing shingles and also helps prevent the long-term pain and complications associated with the condition.

Shingles Vaccine (Shingrix):

There are two main types of shingles vaccines, but the Shingrix vaccine is the most widely recommended. This vaccine is given in two doses, usually 2 to 6 months apart. Shingrix is more than 90% effective in preventing shingles and its complications, including postherpetic neuralgia. Even if you've had shingles before, you can still get the vaccine to reduce your risk of getting it again.

Talk to Your Doctor

If you're unsure whether the shingles vaccine is right for you, speak to your doctor. They can help you understand your personal risk and determine the best way to protect yourself from shingles.

Take Action Against Shingles Today!



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 • 1-800-263-0067 TTY: 711

Compliance Hotline

Help us look out for Medi-Cal fraud and abuse. If you suspect Medi-Cal fraud or abuse, call our Compliance Hotline.

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!

The PHC California committee meets quarterly via ZOOM

To RSVP, call Member Services 1-800-263-0067

Gift cards are provided for attendance.

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.



ATTENTION: This information is available for free in other languages. Please contact our customer service number at 1-800-263-0067, 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)

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Questions?

Contact Your RN Care Manager

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

Tel: 1-800-474-1434

Nurse Advice Line

Available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Tel: 1-800-797-1717