



POSITIVE OUTLOOK

Health and Wellness Information for Members

Winter/Spring 2026



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New Year, New Goals: Tips for Living Well with HIV

A new year is a fresh start. Small steps can make a big difference for your health and well-being.

Take Your Meds Every Day

Taking your HIV medicine every day helps keep the virus under control.

Try:

- Setting an alarm on your phone
- Taking meds at the same time each day
- Using a pill box
- Ask your pharmacy for adherence packaging

Keep Your Appointments

Seeing your medical provider helps you stay healthy.

Regular visits help check:

- Your viral load
- Your CD4 count
- How your body is doing overall

Eat to Feel Strong

Healthy food gives your body energy.

Try to:

- Eat more fruits and vegetables
- Drink plenty of water
- Limit sugary drinks

Move Your Body

You don't need a gym to stay active.

Simple movement helps your heart and mood:

- Walking
- Stretching
- Dancing at home

Take Care of Your Mind

Your mental health matters too.

It's okay to:

- Talk to someone you trust
- Ask for help when you feel stressed
- Take breaks and rest
- Access your health plan mental health benefits

Stay Connected

You are not alone.

Support can come from:

- Friends or family
- Support groups
- Your care team

Set Small Goals

You don't have to change everything at once.

Start with one goal, like:

- Drinking more water
- Not missing meds
- Going to your next appointment



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

A Message from PHC California Utilization Management & Care Management

Referrals vs. Authorizations: What's the Difference?

When you get medical care, you may hear the words referral and authorization. They mean different things, but both help you get the care you need.

A referral is when your main doctor sends you to another doctor, like a specialist. This helps make sure you see the right provider for your health needs.

An authorization is when your health plan says “yes” to a service, test, or treatment. This step makes sure the care is covered before you receive it.

Here's the easy way to remember:

- A referral tells you who to see
- An authorization approves what care you can get
- Sometimes you may need both. Other times, you may only need one.

If you're not sure what you need, your doctor's office or Member Services can help. You don't have to figure this out on your own.

For more help, Call PHC Member Services (1-800-263-0067, TTY 711) Monday–Friday, 8:00 AM–8:00 PM



Heart Health & HIV

Heart health is important for people living with HIV. HIV and some HIV medicines can cause long-term inflammation in the body. Over time, this can affect the heart. The good news is that taking care of your HIV also helps protect your heart. Staying in care and making small healthy choices can make a big difference.

Simple ways to support your heart:

- Take your HIV medicines every day as prescribed
- Keep regular doctor visits and lab tests
- Move your body when you can, like walking or stretching
- Eat more fruits, vegetables, and whole foods
- Avoid smoking or ask your provider for help quitting

Healthy habits can lower the risk of heart problems and help you feel better every day.

Heart Health Resources in LA County

Los Angeles County offers free and low-cost programs to support heart health and overall wellness:

- **LA County Public Health:** Heart Health Programs: Information on heart-healthy living, nutrition, and physical activity: <https://publichealth.lacounty.gov>
- **LA County Public Health Events Calendar:** Find local wellness events, health fairs, and education programs; <https://publichealth.lacounty.gov/phcommon/public/cal/index.cfm>

DoxyPEP for STI Prevention

Los Angeles County now offers DoxyPEP, a new option that can help prevent some sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

What Is DoxyPEP?

DoxyPEP means taking an antibiotic called doxycycline after sex to help prevent certain STIs. Some people call it a “morning-after pill for STIs.”

Studies show DoxyPEP can lower the chance of getting:

- Syphilis
- Chlamydia

When Do I Take It?

- Take two doxycycline pills (200 mg total)
- Take it within 24 hours after sex, but no later than 72 hours
- It is used after sex without a condom (oral, anal, or vaginal/front-hole sex)
- If you are pregnant, let your provider know immediately and inform your medical provider before doxycycline is ordered for you

How Do I Take It Safely?

- Take with a full glass of water
- Taking it with food may help your stomach
- Wear sunscreen, as doxycycline can make skin more sensitive to the sun
- Do not share this medication with others
- Avoid dairy, vitamins, or antacids 2 hours before or after taking it

Important Things to Know

- DoxyPEP does not protect against HIV, mpox (monkeypox), or viruses
- Some types of gonorrhea may not respond to doxycycline
- Keep getting STI testing every 3 months or if you have symptoms

If You Are Living With HIV

- Keep taking your HIV medications as prescribed
- Continue seeing your health care provider regularly
- Talk to your provider to see if DoxyPEP is right for you

For more information, visit:

<http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/dhsp/DoxyPEP-ActionKit.htm>

Optometric and Vision Services — A Covered Benefit

Your vision care is covered.

You can get routine eye exams and prescriptions for eyeglasses or corrective lenses. There are no limits on eye exams.

Eyeglasses are covered once every 24 months. Contact lenses are covered when they are medically needed, such as for certain eye conditions.

If you have diabetes it can affect your vision. It is important that you have a retinal eye examination every year. You can have the examination at your AHF HCC or at your optometrist or ophthalmologist’s office. If you need help scheduling this specific type of eye examination, please contact Member Services or your Care Manager to arrange an appointment.

If you have questions or need help scheduling an eye exam, contact Member Services for support.

For more help, Call PHC California Member Services: 1-800-263-0067 (TTY 711) Monday–Friday, 8:00 AM–8:00 PM

New Science: mRNA and HIV Research

Scientists are using mRNA technology the same kind used in some COVID-19 vaccines to study new ways to prevent and treat HIV. This research is still early, but it shows promise for the future.

Researchers are learning how mRNA could:

- Help the body make a stronger immune response
- Support new HIV vaccine ideas
- Improve future HIV treatments

There is no mRNA HIV vaccine yet, but studies are underway to learn more. This work gives hope for new tools to help protect people from HIV.

Learn more: <https://www.nature.com/articles/s44222-025-00387-2>

You can also see the newsletter online @:

www.php-ca.org/newsletter

2025 CAHPS Survey Results (What Members Told Us)

CAHPS is a survey that asks members about their health care experience. It helps us understand what is working well and where we can do better.

In 2025, 109 members completed the survey. This feedback helps guide improvements across PHC California.

Overall Care

Members shared positive feedback about their overall care experience:

- 73.4% rated the health plan highly
- 70.4% rated their overall health care highly
- 87.9% rated their personal doctor highly
- 70.8% rated specialists highly

Communication With Doctors

Members reported very strong communication with their care teams:

- 97.7% said doctors explained things clearly
- 98.9% said doctors listened carefully
- 97.7% said doctors showed respect
- 96.6% said doctors spent enough time with them

Getting the Care You Need

Members shared their experiences accessing care:

- 81.9% were able to get needed care, tests, or treatment
- 76.7% were able to get care quickly
- 72.3% were able to get urgent care quickly
- 81.0% were able to get routine care
- 69.1% were able to get a specialist appointment

Care Coordination & Support

Members highlighted strong coordination and support:

- 90.6% said their care was well coordinated
- 87.7% reported positive customer service experiences
- 95.3% said forms were easy to fill out

Support for Healthy Living

Members also shared positive experiences related to health counseling:

- 88.9% of members reported being advised to quit smoking within the past two years

Thank You for Your Feedback

Thank you for sharing your feedback. Your responses help us understand what is working well and where we can do better. PHC California will continue working to improve care, services, and support for our members.



Language Help Is Available

At PHC California, we are committed to making sure every member has access to the care they need, no matter their language. If you don't speak English well or are hearing impaired, you can use our Language Line Services to talk to your doctor or health care provider. This service is free and available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, in over 290 languages.

At PHC California, we want every member to get the care they need. If you do not speak English well, or if you are deaf or hard of hearing, we can help. You can use Language Line Services to talk with your doctor or health care provider. This service is free and available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, in over 290 languages.

How It Works:

1. Tell your doctor or health care provider that you need an interpreter.
2. They will call Language Line for you.
3. An interpreter will help you understand your care and ask questions.

This helps you fully understand your health and make informed choices.

For more help, Call PHC Member Services (1-800-263-0067, TTY 711) Monday–Friday, 8:00 AM–8:00 PM

Five Wishes: Plan Your Health Care Ahead (In-Person Workshop)

Do you want a say in your health care decisions? Five Wishes can help. Five Wishes is a living will. It helps you write down what kind of care you want if you cannot speak for yourself. You can also name the people you trust to help make decisions for you.

Join a Five Wishes Advance Directive Workshop to talk through important choices and fill out your own living will in a small, supportive group.

What to Expect:

- Learn how Five Wishes works
- Get help filling out your living will
- Talk about important health care choices
- Lunch and a \$20 gift card are provided (Only if you attend in person workshop)
- Transportation assistance available

Workshop Details:

When: Every 2nd Friday of the month
Next Meeting: February 20, 2026
Time: 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM
Through: December 2026
Where: Hollywood Flagship Location
4905 Hollywood Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90027
(Near Edgemont St. and Hollywood Blvd.)

How to Sign Up:

- o Call Daisy at (323-579-1273) to RSVP
- o You must be an AHF client
- o You must speak with Daisy before attending

Already have a living will?

Give a copy to your doctor so it can be added to your medical record.

Take Care of Your Health and Earn Gift Cards

Taking care of your health can earn you Amazon gift cards. PHC California offers rewards when you complete important health checkups.

Here are some of the services that may qualify:

HIV Follow-Up Visits

See your doctor to support your HIV health and wellness.

Limit: Up to 2 gift cards per year. (Must be 6 months apart)

Diabetic Eye Exam

A quick eye exam to check for diabetes damage.

Limit: Once per year.

Breast Cancer Screening (Mammogram)

An X-ray of the breast to help find cancer early.

Limit: When you are due.

Colorectal Cancer Screening

Choose one of the following options:

- Colonoscopy – Done by a doctor
- Cologuard – Done at home with a mailed test kit

Limit: When you are due.

Health Risk Assessment

Complete a short survey by phone or mail.

Limit: Once per year.

How It Works

1. Call Member Services or talk to your Care Coordinator
2. Ask which health checkups you need
3. Get help scheduling your appointments
4. Ask for help completing the form online

Please allow 1–2 weeks to receive your Amazon e-gift card after your visit or test is verified.

Important Information About Gift Cards:

- You may not be eligible for some gift cards if you already completed the same screening last year and received a gift card.
- Your Care Coordinator or Member Services can help check if you qualify for a gift card.
- Always verify your gift card delivery method (email or mailing address) before it is submitted.
- Once a gift card is sent, it cannot be replaced if it is lost or thrown away, and we cannot change your mailing address or email after the request is submitted.
- Gift cards are offered based on eligibility. We keep a record of all gift cards that have been issued. If you already received a gift card for a service, it will show in our system. We do not send duplicate gift cards, and all requests are checked before a gift card is sent.
- Please allow 1-2 weeks to receive your Amazon e-gift card, after your test completion is verified in your medical record.

Community Supports



Community Supports are extra services that may help you stay healthy and live more independently. These services are optional and are offered when they are medically needed. They do not replace your regular Medi-Cal benefits.

If you qualify, Community Supports may help with housing, meals, personal care, or recovery after a hospital stay.

PHC California offers these Community Supports:

- Help moving from a nursing facility back to your home
- Changes to your home to make it safer and easier to use
- Help with housing deposits
- Support finding and moving into housing
- Help staying housed and managing your tenancy
- Medically tailored meals or supportive food services
- Help moving to assisted living or avoiding a nursing facility
- Personal care services
- Short-term medical respite care after illness or hospitalization

For more help, Call PHC California Member Services:
1-800-263-0067 (TTY 711)
Monday–Friday, 8:00 AM–8:00 PM



Zero Discrimination Day — March 1

Zero Discrimination Day is a time to stand up against stigma and unfair treatment. It reminds us that everyone deserves respect, dignity, and equal access to health care, including people living with HIV.

While this day is recognized once a year, the message matters every day. Discrimination can make people feel afraid to get tested, talk to a doctor, or ask for help. Stigma can also affect mental health and make it harder to stay in care.

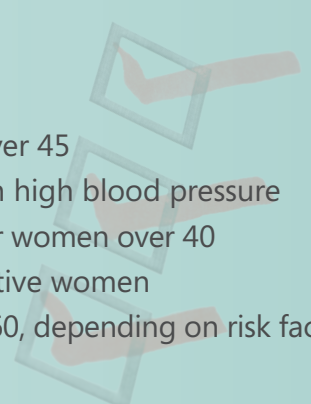
For people living with HIV, feeling respected and supported is just as important as medical care. Taking HIV medication as prescribed, going to regular appointments, and getting routine checkups help people live long, healthy lives. Support from family, friends, and the community makes it easier to stay engaged in care.

When we speak openly, use respectful language, and treat each other with kindness, we help reduce stigma. By choosing compassion and understanding, we create safer spaces where everyone can focus on their health and well-being.

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



Helping Improve Community Health

PHC California works with local public health partners to understand the health needs of our community. This work helps us learn what services are needed most and where we can do better.

One way we do this is through a Community Health Assessment (CHA). A CHA looks at health information from the community, like access to care, common health concerns, and barriers people may face when getting services.

We also use a Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). A CHIP uses what we learn from the assessment to make a plan to improve health in the community. This plan focuses on actions that support better care, health education, and access to services.

PHC California partners with Los Angeles County and other groups to support this work. Together, we use this information to guide programs and services that help our members and communities stay healthy.

To learn more about this plan and the work being done, visit: <http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/pie/planning/chip.htm>



Medication Reconciliation: Keeping Your Medicines Safe

Sometimes medicines change after a doctor visit, hospital stay, or pharmacy refill. If your care team does not have the right information, it can lead to:

- Taking the wrong medicine
- Taking too much or too little
- Medicines that do not work well together

Medication reconciliation helps your providers give you the best care possible.



When Medication Reconciliation Happens

Your provider may review your medicines:

- At a doctor or clinic visit
- After leaving the hospital
- When starting or stopping a medicine
- When you see a new provider

How You Can Help

You can help keep your medication list up to date by:

- Bringing all your medicines to your appointments
- Telling your provider about any changes
- Sharing if you stopped taking a medicine or had side effects
- Asking questions if something is unclear

Remember

Your medicines are an important part of your care. Making sure your list is correct helps keep you healthy and safe.

Mindfulness Minute: Before or During Your Visit

Doctor visits can sometimes feel stressful. Before your appointment, take one minute to pause.

Sit comfortably and place your feet on the floor. Take a slow breath in through your nose. Breathe out slowly through your mouth. Do this two more times.

If you're meeting with your doctor or care coordinator, take a moment to think about one question or concern you want to share. It's okay to take your time and ask for things to be explained again.

This short pause can help you feel calmer, more focused, and ready to talk about your care.



A Message from Your Health Plan

Test It Out – Join a Health Trial!

New drug trials and treatment studies start all the time. These helps create better treatments for all people living with HIV/AIDS. There are many types of clinical trials, and one may be right for you.

Your doctor may ask you to join a trial—think about it!

For more info, call AHF Research at (323) 913-1033

Keep Your Contact Info Up to Date

PHC cares about your health and well-being. If you move or change your phone number, **please call Member Services** to update your record.

Member Services: 1-800-263-0067 (TTY: 711)

Monday–Friday, 8:00 AM–8:00 PM

Compliance Hotline: Report Fraud or Abuse

Help us protect Medical!

If you see something wrong on your Explanation of Benefits, or suspect fraud or abuse:

Call Member Services 1-800-263-0067 (TTY: 711)

Or our Compliance Hotline at

1-800-AIDS-HIV (1-800-243-7448)

Join the Member Advisory Committee (PPCAC)

PHC California is looking for members who want to make a difference in their health plan and community.

As a PPCAC member, you can:

- Learn how the healthcare system works
- Share your ideas, concerns, and suggestions
- Help PHC California improve its services and member experience
- Hear directly from health plan leaders
- Receive a gift card for attending

Who can join?

Open to all PHC California Medi-Cal members in California.

How it works:

The committee includes PHC staff, members, providers, and community advocates. Meetings are held quarterly via Zoom and focus on health plan performance, benefits, policies, and educational materials.

To RSVP, call Member Services at 1-800-263-0067 (TTY 711) Monday–Friday, 8:00 AM – 8:00 PM

Your voice matters. Help shape the future of your health care. **Meetings are held via Zoom**

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

Support for Members with 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.

Call Member Services to request help

Language Access Notice

ATTENTION: This information is available for free in other languages.

Call: 1-800-263-0067 (TTY: 711)

Hours: 8:00 AM – 8:00 PM, seven days a week

ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística.

Llame al (800) 263-0067, 8:00 AM - 8:00 PM, los siete días de la semana. (TTY: 711)

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

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 (800) 263-0067, 8:00 am –8:00 pm, los siete días de la semana. (TTY: 711)

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