



HEALTH matters

Helpful information from CenCal Health



CenCal Health
4050 Calle Real,
Santa Barbara, CA 93110

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La versión en español, Temas de salud, está adentro.

It's vaccination time: Stay protected!

With the fall season around the corner, it is important that everyone age six months or older receive their COVID-19 vaccination and yearly influenza (flu) shot.

Let's work together to keep our communities healthy! Getting vaccinated against the flu and COVID-19 is the safest way to protect our communities from severe illness, hospitalization, and death.

Flu and COVID vaccinations are very important for people who are at higher risk for serious complications such as:

- Children younger than 5
- Pregnant individuals
- Adults 65 and older
- People with certain chronic health conditions, such as diabetes, heart disease, and asthma

You can safely get a COVID-19 and flu vaccine at the same time. Getting multiple vaccines at the same time also means fewer appointments and periods of pain and less discomfort.



Remember to take care of yourself so you can take care of people you love. Call your doctor today to schedule your vaccine appointment for yourself and your family.

Article offered in collaboration with the Santa Barbara County Public Health Department

Keeping your Medi-Cal & CenCal Health coverage: Fast Facts for You!

Once each year, Medi-Cal makes most members prove that they still meet the requirements for coverage. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Medi-Cal stopped this annual renewal process. Now, renewals have started again.

Here are **Fast Facts** to stay informed and not panic!

1. **Not everyone has to fill out paperwork to keep Medi-Cal.** Some members will be automatically renewed due to their specific situation. These members get a letter in the mail telling them that they are renewed.
2. **Not everyone who has to renew will get their renewal packet at the same time.** You will receive yours sometime in the next 12 months, usually the month before you were enrolled. For example, if you were enrolled in October 2020, you will probably receive your renewal packet in September.
3. **If you have moved addresses in the last three years, tell Medi-Cal so they can send your renewal packet to your new address when it's your turn.**

HAVE YOU MOVED?

If you live in **Santa Barbara County**, message Medi-Cal telling them your new address. To send them a message from your phone or computer, open your internet browser and go to [DSSoctopus.com](https://www.dssocalifornia.com) (Do not type **www.** in front of the address.) Fill out the form and hit "Submit"!

If you live in **San Luis Obispo County**, call the nearest DSS office:

- **Arroyo Grande:** (805) 474-2000
 - **Atascadero:** (805) 461-6000
 - **Morro Bay:** (805) 772-6405
 - **Nipomo:** (805) 931-1800
 - **Paso Robles:** (805) 237-3110
 - **San Luis Obispo:** (805) 781-1600
4. **The renewal envelope is large — you can't miss it!**
It may be yellow or white.
 5. **The renewal forms are easy to fill out.** But there is also help available. Go to our website, www.KeepCenCal.org for a list of organizations in your county that can help you in person or over the phone.
 6. **Return your completed forms to Medi-Cal by mail, fax, or even online.** Go to www.keepmedicalcoverage.org and click "I Got a Renewal Form." Then view the video on how to complete and return your paperwork OR renew online!

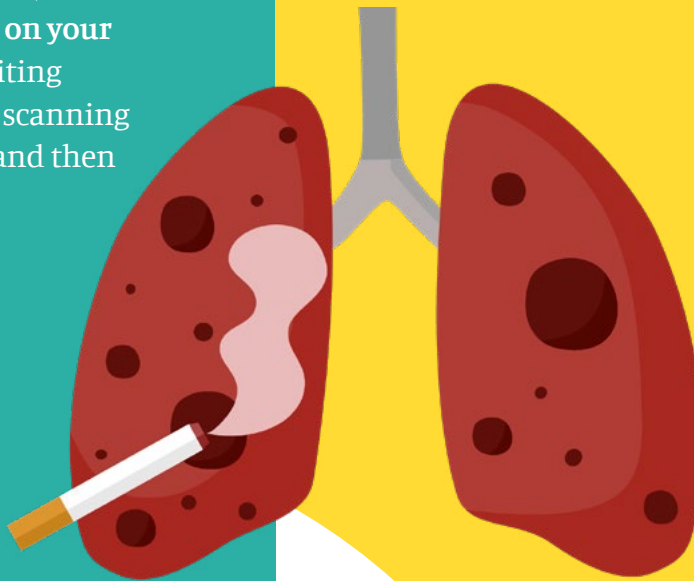


Do you use Tobacco? Take this quick survey!

Do you...

- Currently use a tobacco/vape product
- Used a tobacco product in the past OR
- Have used a quit-tobacco medication

CenCal Health wants to learn from you! Take a short survey about tobacco use, quitting tobacco, and medications. **This survey has no impact on your health benefits.** Access the survey by visiting www.surveymonkey.com/r/8LOR3CX or scanning this QR code with your phone's camera and then tapping the link that appears.



Tobacco Cessation programs

- Free counseling through Kick It CA at <https://kickitca.org/>
- Online smoking cessation programs at www.smokefree.gov
- National Tobacco hotline: 1-800-QUIT NOW (1-800-784-8669)
- Text QUIT to 47848 to join the texting program called SmokefreeTXT

If you are thinking about quitting or trying to quit, we know the cravings for nicotine can be strong at first. But it will get better with time!

Here are some tips on how to cope:

- Ask your Primary Care Provider for help.
- Use nicotine gum, lozenges, or an inhaler.
- Distract yourself.
- Try to stay away from other smokers, at least in the beginning.
- Stay away from cigarettes, or better yet, get rid of them.
- Remind yourself why you stopped smoking.
- Remember that most cravings do go away after 20 minutes.
- Chew on a toothpick or a piece of gum.
- Relax! Try deep-breathing exercises, yoga, or a bath.

COVID Testing and Treatment

To find out about your benefits for COVID-19 testing and treatment, open your mobile phone's camera & point it to this QR code then click the link.



Practice Safe Sex to Prevent Infection!

Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) is a virus that attacks the immune system, the body's natural defense system. HIV infection is caused by the human immunodeficiency virus.

People can get HIV when they come in contact with infected blood, semen, or vaginal fluids. This is usually through sexual contact or sharing needles. If you have HIV while you're pregnant, the virus can be passed to your baby during birth.

Here are some ways to avoid getting or giving someone HIV:

- Completely avoiding sexual contact (abstinence) is the only certain way to prevent an infection.
- Use a condom every time you have sex. A condom is the best way to protect yourself from HIV.
- Discuss HIV before you have sex with someone. Even though a sex partner doesn't have symptoms of HIV, they may still be infected.
- Take a medicine that reduces your chances of getting HIV, such as PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis) or PEP (post-exposure prophylaxis). When taken as prescribed, both PrEP and PEP are highly effective for preventing HIV. Contact Medi-Cal Rx for more information, at [medi-calrx.dhcs.ca.gov](https://www.medi-calrx.dhcs.ca.gov) or 1-800-977-2273.
- If you inject drugs, don't share needles or other injection supplies.



Watch for symptoms of HIV!

HIV may not cause symptoms early on. If it does, symptoms include fatigue, muscle aches, skin rash, and headache. These usually go away within two to three weeks.

Symptoms may not come back for years. If HIV isn't treated, it will usually get worse over time and cause AIDS.

Tell your sex partner or partners if you have symptoms of an infection or if you're being treated for HIV/AIDS. Go to www.cencalhealth.org, Health & Wellness, and search "Safe Sex."



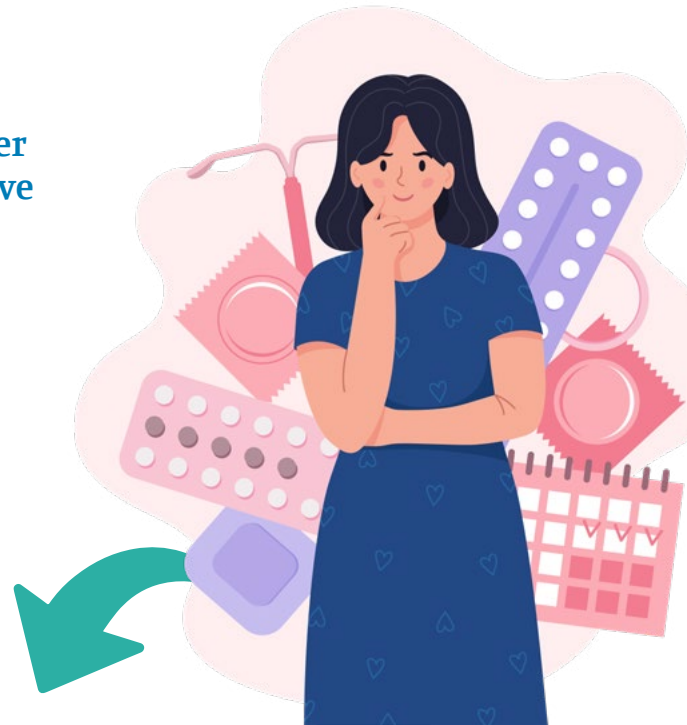
Family Planning Methods

An unintended pregnancy is a pregnancy that is either unwanted or unplanned. CenCal Health members have benefits to help prevent or manage an unintended pregnancy.

Birth Control

There are several types of birth control you can use to prevent pregnancy:

- Implant
- Intrauterine Device (IUD)
- Hormonal methods
- Barrier methods
- Emergency birth control after unprotected sex



To learn more about each type of birth control and what works for you, talk with your doctor, or visit <https://medi-calrx.dhcs.ca.gov/>

Abortion

Abortion is an ending of a pregnancy by getting surgery or taking medicine. The safest time for an abortion is in the first trimester, when there is low risk for complications. It's not easy to decide to end a pregnancy. You may need some time to think about your choices.

Family planning clinics also offer counseling to help you decide what is best for you. You may also want to talk with someone close to you who understands how pregnancy and raising a child would affect your life.

CenCal Health members do not pay for abortions. Abortion law in California gives women the right to end their pregnancy up until 24-28 weeks. For more information on your abortion benefits, contact your doctor or Member Services at 1-877-814-1861.

Need a translator? We got you covered!

CenCal Health offers interpreter services at no cost to our members.

If you need an interpreter for a medical appointment, you can request:

- An over-the-phone interpreter 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- A video interpreter in the doctor's office.
- An in-person interpreter for certain services.



CenCal Health and your doctor will always work with you to provide an interpreter. You do not need to bring your own interpreter or family member to help you talk with your doctor. Please call Member Services to request interpreter services at 1-877-814-1861 (TTY 1-833-556-2560) or call the California Relay Line at 711.

Prevent falls at home!

Every year, thousands of older adults fall and hurt themselves. Falls are one of the main causes of injury and loss of independence in people ages 65 and older.

- **Keep your bones strong.** Talk to your doctor to be sure you are getting enough vitamin D and calcium.
- **Have your vision and hearing checked each year.** If you have trouble seeing and hearing, you might not be able to avoid objects that make you lose your balance.
- **Remove or fix things you could trip over,** such as raised doorway thresholds or throw rugs. Installing grab handles and nonskid mats in the shower can prevent falls.
- **Keep your house well lit.** Use night-lights (or keep the overhead light on at night) in hallways and bathrooms.
- **Know the side effects of the medicines that you take.** Ask your doctor if the medicines you take can affect your balance. For example, sleeping pills and some medicines for anxiety can affect your balance.

To learn more about ways to prevent falls at home, visit www.cencalhealth.org/health-and-wellness, and search “prevent falls”.

Mental Health Services are available for you

Members do not require a referral to see any contracted Mental Health Specialist for an initial mental health assessment or treatment.

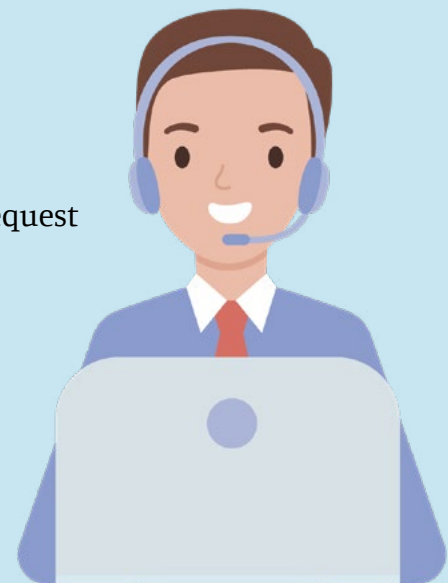
Members can find a Mental Health Specialist by:

1. Searching providers on www.cencalhealth.org.
2. Calling the Behavioral Health Call Center at (877) 814-1861.

If you need assistance, please contact our Behavioral Health Call Center and request a Behavioral Health Navigator referral.

Behavioral Health Navigators can assist by:

1. Contacting providers with you or on your behalf.
2. Helping you to make an appointment with a mental health specialist.



Your Privacy Rights

Protected Health Information (PHI) is health information that has your name, Social Security number, or other information that can let others know who you are. Your PHI can be spoken, written, or electronic. CenCal Health must protect your PHI. Additionally, you have certain rights regarding your PHI such as:

- Right to see and get a copy of your health records.
- Right to ask that your health information not be shared with certain people, groups, or companies.
- Right to change any wrong information or add information that may be missing or incomplete.
- Right to an Accounting (Listing) of Disclosures.
- Right to ask for confidential communication.
- Right to a Paper Copy of CenCal Health's Notice of Privacy Practices.

If you have questions about your PHI, privacy rights, or want to learn more, please contact CenCal Health's Privacy Office at:

CenCal Health
Attn: Privacy Office
4050 Calle Real
Santa Barbara, CA 93110

Phone: (877) 814-1861
Fax: (805) 681-8279
Email: privacy@cencalhealth.org



Behavioral Health Treatment: Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA)

CenCal Health Members have benefits for Behavioral Health Treatment (ABA). Members may qualify if they have the following:

1. Are under 21 years of age.
2. Are medically stable.
3. Do not require 24-hour nursing.
4. Have a recommendation from a Physician (Psychiatrist or PCP), Psychologist, or Surgeon that ABA is medically necessary.

If you believe that your child may benefit from ABA, please contact your PCP or a qualified physician (listed above) to start the referral process.

Members have the right to choose their ABA Provider, your PCP can assist you with this.

Behavioral Health Treatment Providers are listed on www.cencalhealth.org. If you have questions or need more information, please contact the Behavioral Health Call Center at (877) 814-1861.

What to know: Substance Use Disorder

Some people who drink alcohol, use cannabis or other drugs, or misuse prescription or over-the-counter medicines may develop substance use disorder.

This means that a person uses these substances even though it causes harm to themselves or others.

A person who has substance use disorder will have two or more of these symptoms:

- Having a strong need, or craving, for the substance.
- Continuing to use, even though the substance use hurts your relationships.
- Not being able to do your main jobs at work, school, or home.
- Having uncomfortable symptoms when you stop or use less (withdrawal).
- Using the substance even though you know it's causing health problems.
- Using substances in conditions where doing so is dangerous, such as driving.

What can you do if you think you have a problem with drugs or alcohol?

If you are worried about your substance use, get help.

- Call and talk with your Primary Care Provider (PCP). Your PCP can provide services or refer you to an expert who can help.
- You can also call your local county Drug and Alcohol Services Program.
 - » Santa Barbara County: 1-888-868-1649
 - » San Luis Obispo County: 1-800-838-1381

If you feel that you are in a crisis, call 911 or go to the nearest Emergency Room.

Sign up for your Member Portal account today!

CenCal Health now offers personal Member Accounts for members 18 years and older! You can view and manage your Medi-Cal benefits securely from the comfort of your home, or on the go.

To create your free account today, open your mobile phone's camera & point it to this QR code then click the link.

