

# living healthy

December 2014  
Volume 20, Issue 4

A newsletter for the members of Central California Alliance for Health



## Member rewards

**H**ere are two ways you could get a gift card.

**Are you a new Medi-Cal member? Be a winner!**

1. Contact the Alliance at **1-800-700-3874** to pick a doctor if you don't already have one assigned.
2. See your doctor for a new patient exam within three months from the effective date on your Alliance ID card.

Complete these steps and the Alliance will enter you into a monthly raffle to win a \$50 gift card!

**Mom, you need to be healthy to keep your family healthy!**

Between three and eight weeks after your baby is born, it is important that you have your



postpartum visit with your doctor. These visits are a very good way to find and prevent physical and emotional health problems.

You will receive a book called ***What to Do When Your Child Gets Sick*** after you have your baby.

It is a useful tool to use as a new parent.

There will also be a form in the packet for you to bring to your postpartum visit. You and your doctor can fill it out and then return it to the Alliance for a \$25 gift card!

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# Top tips for safe toys

**S**hopping for a new toy for a favorite kiddo? Keep safety at the top of your list:

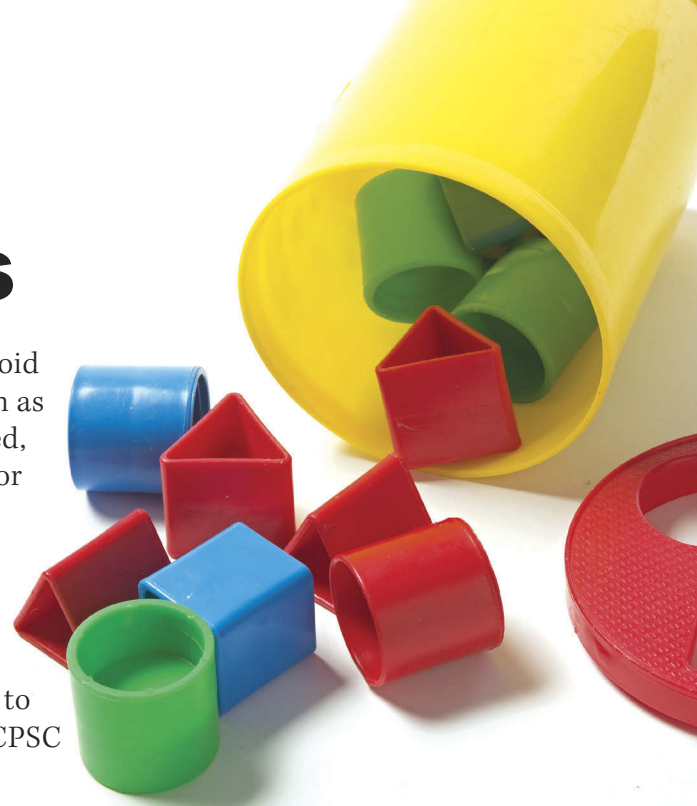
- Read labels. Look for—and follow—age guidelines.
- Look for toys that are sturdy and well-built.
- Choose toys that match the child's skills and interests.
- For children under age 3, avoid toys that have small parts. They can cause choking.

- For children under age 6, avoid toys with small magnets, such as construction sets. If swallowed, they can cause serious harm or even death.

- For kids under age 8, avoid toys with sharp edges or points. Also skip any electric toys with heating elements.

For more on toy safety and to see product recalls, visit the CPSC website at [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov).

Source: U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission



## What to know about diabetic eye disease

### WHAT IS IT?

It refers to eye problems people with diabetes may have. These include:

- **Cataract:** clouding of the lens of the eye.
- **Diabetic retinopathy:** damage to blood vessels in the retina; most common.
- **Glaucoma:** damage to the optic nerve.  
There are often NO early warning signs.

### WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Get a comprehensive dilated eye exam at least once a year. The Alliance pays for a retinal eye exam every year for Medi-Cal members who have diabetes.
- Keep your health on TRACK:



**T**ake your medications.



**R**each and maintain a healthy weight.



**A**dd physical activity to your daily routine.



**C**ontrol blood sugar, blood pressure and cholesterol.



**K**ick the smoking habit.



» WHERE CAN YOU LEARN MORE? Visit [www.nei.nih.gov/diabetes](http://www.nei.nih.gov/diabetes).

Source: National Eye Institute, 2013

# Change in access to some medicines

**S**tarting October 6, access to some types of pain medicines will change. This will affect pain medicines like Vicodin, Norco and Lortab. It will also affect cough medicines like Tussionex, Hycodan, Pennkinetic, Mycodone and Tussionex.

The change is being made by a federal agency, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). It is not a decision of the Alliance. The DEA is changing medicines that are hydrocodone combination products (HCPs) from Schedule 3 to Schedule 2.

**What does this change mean?** Being Schedule 2 means that prescriptions for these medicines will need to be written on tamper-resistant prescription forms. They cannot be called in to pharmacies. And the prescriptions will only be good for one fill. No refills are allowed. But if you already have an active prescription for one of these medicines that has refills left, you can still get the refills if:

- The prescription was written before October 6, 2014
- The refills are dispensed before April 8, 2015



» **TAKE ACTION.** Call your Primary Care Provider if you have any questions about how this change will affect you.

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## GETTING AN APPOINTMENT

# How long should you have to wait?

**W**e know it is important for you to get care when you need it. But it is not always possible for a doctor to see you right away. You may have to wait longer for some types of appointments than others. For example, you should be able to get an urgent care (care when you are sick) appointment sooner than an appointment for a regular checkup.

We work with the doctors and clinics in our network to make sure you can get care when you need it. We have always done this because we know it is important.

Health plans in California have to meet certain standards for access

to care. The regulations to put this law into place are called the Timely Access to Non-Emergency Health Care Services standards. There are different standards for different types of appointments.

In the chart below are the standards for different types of

appointments. The waiting times for an appointment may be longer if the provider feels that it will not harm your health if you have a longer wait.

If you feel you are not getting care when you need it, call Member Services at **1-800-700-3874**.

Type of care you need	Time to get an appointment
Urgent care	Within 48 hours of when you call
Non-urgent primary care	Within 10 business days of when you call
Non-urgent specialty care	Within 15 business days of when you call
Non-physician, non-urgent mental health care	Within 10 business days of when you call
Non-urgent diagnostic services	Within 15 business days of when you call



## Does your doctor speak your language?

It is important that you can talk to your doctor easily. If you do not understand each other 100 percent of the time, it could affect your health care. There are doctors in our network who speak languages other than English. You can find these doctors in your Provider Directory or by calling Member Services.

**If you have trouble talking with your doctor, we can help.** You don't have to use family or friends to interpret for you. You don't have to rely on the doctor's office staff to interpret, either. You have the right to a trained interpreter. The Alliance pays for

this service. Your doctor can call a special telephone line to get an interpreter who speaks your language. Then you and your doctor will talk through the interpreter. If you would like an interpreter, let your doctor's office know when you call to make an appointment. Let them know what language you prefer. Ask them to call the Alliance's Language Line telephone interpreter service when you arrive.

**As an Alliance member, you have the right to these free services:**

**Interpreter services** in your language to help you talk with your:

- Doctor

- Other health care provider
- Health plan

Telephone interpreters are used for most conditions. A face-to-face interpreter may be used for special conditions. The Alliance must approve face-to-face interpreters ahead of time.

**Written translations** of letters and notices that affect your health care coverage are available in Spanish and Hmong. We can also help you understand these documents if you read a different language.

For help with getting an interpreter or understanding something we send you in writing, please call Member Services at **1-800-700-3874**. If you have impaired hearing or speech, call our TTY line at **1-877-548-0857**. You can reach us Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

# Earthquake: Be prepared

**N**atural disasters can happen quickly, without warning. If you have a physical condition, a medical condition and/or a disability, it could be difficult to manage your health when natural disasters, such as earthquakes, take place. Senior citizens in particular may need more help.

It is important to plan ahead and learn how to protect yourself and

your family. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has the following tips to help you plan ahead.

## Before an earthquake:

- Write down any special needs that you have and any medications you take. Make a copy of the list and put it in your purse or wallet.
- Build a support team of people. These people will help you in an emergency. You may want to give

them a spare key to your home or let them know where they can find one in an emergency.

## During an earthquake:

- If you use a wheelchair, try to get under a doorway or into an inside corner, lock the wheels, and cover your head with your arms. Remove any items that are not securely attached to the wheelchair.
- If you are able, seek shelter under a sturdy table or desk. Stay away from outer walls, windows, fireplaces, and hanging objects.
- If you are unable to move from a bed or chair, protect yourself from falling objects by covering up with blankets and pillows.
- If you are outside, go to an open area away from buildings and tall objects—and stay there.

## After an earthquake:

- If you are trapped, try to create sound to attract help to your location.
- Turn on your battery-operated TV or radio to receive emergency information.
- If you can, help other people in need.



## Formulary changes

Drug name	Used to treat	Action
Cymbalta	Depression	Added

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES

# Your rights and responsibilities

**T**he Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a law to protect people with disabilities and to ensure access to public and private places such as health care centers and doctors' offices. New buildings or buildings having major changes are required to meet current access standards. Older buildings may not meet all current access standards, but building owners are encouraged to make minor changes to improve access for people with disabilities.

**How do I know if my doctor's office is accessible for seniors and people with disabilities?** The Alliance surveys Primary Care Provider clinics and some specialist clinics to determine if members with disabilities can get in and around a doctor's office. You can find results of clinic surveys in the Provider Directory. You can find the Provider Directory in your new member package by mail or you can access it at [www.ccah-alliance.org](http://www.ccah-alliance.org). The directory lists codes which help you to know the level of access at each doctor's office. **If you are not sure, you can call the doctor's office to ask if they have the type of access you need.**

**Can I access print material in different formats?** Yes, you may have access to health care materials in different formats such as Braille, large print and audio files. For more information or to make a request, please call the **Health Education Line** at **1-800-700-3874, ext. 5580**.

Examples of such materials and

formats include but are not limited to:

- Diabetes education materials in audio format
- Prenatal and birthing information in Braille
- Getting ready for health screenings in digital format
- Easy-to-read web-based prevention and wellness information

