



**L.A. Care**  
HEALTH PLAN®

SPRING 2017

**be**  
*well*

A Publication for L.A. Care Members



of Providing Health Care in Los Angeles County  
1997-2017

**Celebrating**  
**20 Years**  
of Providing Health Care in Los Angeles County  
**1997-2017**

It is L.A. Care Health Plan's 20th Anniversary of serving you – our over 2 million members across Los Angeles County. From finding you a doctor, to offering Healthy Cooking and Zumba® classes, to providing health education about diabetes management, heart health or vaccines, we are here for you at each step of the way and at every stage of life. L.A. Care and our Plan Partners are committed to helping you get quality health care and reaching your health and wellness goals.

L.A. Care is proud to offer health care insurance for your entire family. We also have many other resources available

to meet your needs, such as the member portal where you can learn more about your benefits, behavioral health care services, Community-Based Adult Services, language interpreting services and the Nurse Advice Line. Our Family Resource Centers in Lynwood, Inglewood, Pacoima, Boyle Heights and Palmdale are one way to connect with us. Stop by for a visit – we would love to meet you!

Thank you for being an L.A. Care member. We look forward to serving you for many more years. If you have questions about your benefits or L.A. Care programs and services, please call Member Services at 1.888.839.9909 (TTY 711). You can also visit our website at [lacare.org](http://lacare.org).



# Ask the Doc: What You Need to Know About Prediabetes

## Q: What is prediabetes?

**A:** Prediabetes means your blood sugar levels are higher than normal, but not high enough to be called diabetes. When your body cannot use insulin (a hormone made by the pancreas) to convert sugar from food into energy, you develop diabetes. Too much sugar in the blood hurts your body and puts you at risk of heart disease and stroke. Prediabetes is a warning sign that you may need to change your diet, increase your exercise and lose weight.

## Q: How will I know if I have prediabetes?

**A:** Most people do not have symptoms of prediabetes. A blood test is the only way to know for sure.

## Q: What can I do to prevent diabetes?

**A:** Lifestyle changes you can make that will help delay or prevent prediabetes or diabetes include:

- 1. Losing Weight.** Lose as little as 5 to 10 percent of your weight, which is 10 to 20 pounds for someone who weighs 200 pounds. The best way to lose weight is to cut back on how much you eat and move your body more.
- 2. Exercising.** Be physically active at least 30 minutes a day. It will help with weight loss, make your body's insulin work better and lower your blood sugar.
- 3. Making Good Food Choices.** Eat more fresh vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins. Choose less foods high in sugar and fat. Choose more foods high in fiber, which will help you feel full.



## Q: How can I learn more about prediabetes?

**A:** There are several ways:

- You can reach out to L.A. Care's Health Education Department at 1.855.856.6943 (TTY 711) to find a class near you or to speak to a health coach. They are available Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Contact the National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse at 1.800.860.8747 (TTY 1.866.569.1162) or visit [www.diabetes.niddk.nih.gov](http://www.diabetes.niddk.nih.gov)
- Call the L.A. Care Nurse Advice Line; they can also assist you. Please see their contact information listed below.



## Nurse Advice Line Can Help You

Do you have questions about your health? Need medical advice fast? The Nurse Advice Line is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Registered nurses will answer your health questions and help you take care of your family. Get tips on avoiding the flu, treating the common cold, and so much more. You can also use the audio library to learn about different health topics. Call 1.800.249.3619 (TTY 711) or chat with a nurse online for free. Please visit [lacare.org](http://lacare.org) and log onto the member sign-in to access the nurse chat function.

If you are a Medi-Cal member with one of our Plan Partners, you can call the Nurse Advice Line at:

**Anthem Blue Cross**  
1.800.224.0336 or TTY 1.800.368.4424

**Care1st Health Plan**  
1.800.605.2556 or TTY 1.800.735.2929

**Kaiser Permanente**  
1.888.576.6225

# Allergies and Asthma: What You Need to Know

Asthma is a disease of the lungs that narrows airways and makes it hard to breathe. Symptoms are coughing, wheezing and tightness in the chest. Allergies occur when the body reacts to something harmless around you like certain foods, trees, dust or a pet. It can cause symptoms such as sneezing and itchy eyes. Things that cause your allergy or asthma symptoms to flare up are called triggers.

Talk with your doctor about your asthma treatment and make a written **Asthma Action Plan**.

You will likely take medicines using an inhaler. **Controller medicines** are taken every day to reduce airway inflammation and help prevent asthma symptoms from occurring. **Quick-relief medicines** (sometimes called rescue medicines) are taken as soon as you have any warning signs of an asthma attack.

## Asthma Triggers

- Grass, trees, plants, and weeds
- Dust and molds
- Some insects and household pets
- Smoke, colds or flu
- Changes in the weather



To avoid allergy and asthma attacks, know the things that trigger your symptoms and avoid them when you can. See your doctor often to review your triggers, medicines and treatment plan.

L.A. Care offers a free program called *L.A. Cares About Asthma*® to help members keep their asthma under control. To learn more about the program, please call 1.888.200.3094 (TTY 711).

# Get Help With Alcohol-Related Concerns



According to the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc. (NCADD), alcohol is the most commonly used addictive substance in the U.S., with 1 in every 12 adults suffering from alcohol dependence.

Treatment involves counseling by a health care professional and medications that reduce the desire to drink.

Your primary care physician (doctor) offers Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) once a year for adults. This supports healthy living with early treatment for people with, or at risk for alcohol use disorders. People who have an alcohol use disorder may have a physical or emotional dependence on alcohol. Symptoms include repeated alcohol use despite related legal and health issues.

There are three steps to SBIRT:

- **Universal screening:** Identifies people that may have an alcohol use disorder
- **Brief intervention:** Focuses on motivating those at risk toward change
- **Referral:** Offers a referral to specialty care for treatment

A key aspect of SBIRT is to prevent and intervene by linking patients to health care, programs and specialty care. Please see your doctor if you need help for an alcohol use disorder.

If you believe that you or a loved one needs behavioral health care or substance use treatment, please contact **Beacon Health Options**, L.A. Care's behavioral health provider, at 1.877.344.2858 (TTY 711), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and holidays.

# Meeting Members' Needs

L.A. Care recently finished a Group Needs Assessment (GNA) to learn more about our members' needs. As part of the GNA, we sent out a survey to over 10,000 members in 11 languages. Thank you to all who took the time to fill out and return the survey. Your feedback is valuable to us. The results will be used to better meet our members' health care needs and help improve L.A. Care services.

Here are some of the key findings from the survey:

- Your number one health request is having more doctor appointments.
- You want more doctors near you.
- The most helpful information from L.A. Care is knowing who to call when your doctor's office is closed, how to choose a doctor, and when to go to the emergency room.

- Many of you are searching the internet to learn about health issues. Half of you use the internet daily.
- About a third of you have trouble filling out forms by yourself.
- You prefer to receive information from L.A. Care by mail. The number of members choosing to receive information by email and texting is increasing.
- You are busy! "No time" is the number one reason for not going to a health education class. Many of you said cost is a factor as well. The good news is that L.A. Care health education services are free.



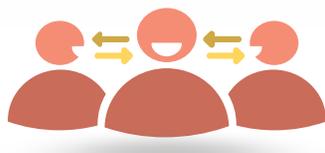
## Getting Care in Your Language Is Easy...

Have you ever used a friend or family member as an interpreter because you felt more comfortable, or did not know how to ask for a trained interpreter? The GNA survey also showed that you are not alone. A number of our members have used a friend or family member as an interpreter in the past.

We would like to remind you to **not** use friends and family members as interpreters, especially minors, except in an emergency. Here's why:

- A skilled interpreter will be able to understand your cultural needs and be able to communicate information to you clearly.
- Interpreting services, as well as American Sign Language, are available at no-cost to L.A. Care members 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- It's **easy** to get an interpreter! Call Member Services at **1.888.839.9909** (TTY 711).

Your health is important. We will connect you with an expertly trained interpreter that can help you get the care you need in your language.



## Let's Choose Health Together!



**Family Resource Centers**

The L.A. Care FRCs are *Your Centers for Health and Wellness!* Our FRCs are vibrant spaces for the

community to come together and learn new skills. The Centers offer health education and exercise classes that are free and open to everyone. You and your family can take CPR, Dance, Healthy Cooking, Yoga, Zumba® classes and much more at your nearest center. L.A. Care members can attend an orientation, request a member ID card, and get help choosing a doctor or making an appointment.

There are five FRCs conveniently located throughout Los Angeles County:

- **Boyle Heights (The Wellness Center at the Old General Hospital)**
- **Inglewood (Corner of Century & Crenshaw)**
- **Lynwood (Plaza Mexico)**
- **Pacoima (Corner of San Fernando Rd. & Van Nuys)**
- **Palmdale (Towne Square Shopping Center)**

Visit an L.A. Care Family Resource Center today or view the calendar of activities on our website at [lacare.org/frc](http://lacare.org/frc) or for more information, call 1.877.287.6290 (TTY 711).

# Getting Connected With L.A. Care's Formulary



L.A. Care uses a list of covered drugs called a Formulary. The drugs on the Formulary have been reviewed and approved by a team of pharmacists and doctors, and the Formulary updated monthly. The Formulary, updates, restrictions and preferences are on the L.A. Care website at [lacare.org](http://lacare.org). Click on the For Members tab.

Under Member Services, select Pharmacy Services and you can check the Formulary to see if your drug is covered. You can get a copy of the Formulary in your language, large print or in audio. For questions about the Formulary, call Member Services at 1.888.839.9909 (TTY 711).

## How Do I Use the Formulary?

- Generic drugs are listed by their generic names. The brand name is next to the generic name in CAPITAL letters. If a drug only comes as brand, only the brand name will show.
- Both brand name and generic medications are covered by L.A. Care. When available, Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved generics will be used.
- You can search for a brand or generic drug in the Formulary by pressing "Ctrl + F" on your computer, or by using the index on the Formulary page. If you cannot find a drug on the Formulary, it is non-Formulary and not covered.

## Formulary Restrictions

- Certain covered drugs have restrictions such as Step Therapy (ST), Quantity Limits (QL), generic drugs and prior authorization (PA). To see a full list and explanation of the restrictions, visit [lacare.org](http://lacare.org).
- If your drug is non-Formulary, or has Formulary restrictions, your doctor will need to submit a request to L.A. Care. The request can be approved if there is a documented medical need.

## Where to Pick Up Your Medication

- You can fill your prescription at any pharmacy that partners with L.A. Care. Visit our website to locate one. You can use the mail order pharmacy for drugs used to treat chronic conditions like diabetes and high blood pressure. Always follow your doctor's instructions when you take your medication for safe and effective therapy.

## Go green and get *Be Well* electronically!

Would you like to get *Be Well* by email? Please send your email address to [editor@lacare.org](mailto:editor@lacare.org). Be sure to like us on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.



# Medical Identity Theft: Protect Yourself!

You could become a victim of medical identity theft if someone gets your medical ID or Social Security number. Once they have it, they can use it to see the doctor, buy prescription drugs, or submit fake bills in your name. Medical identity theft can also damage your credit rating and harm your health. If false information gets into your medical records, you may get the wrong treatment. Here are some ways to protect yourself against medical identity theft:

- Do not trust strangers who offer free or discounted medical services.
- File paperwork and shred what you do not need.
- Keep your insurance and Social Security numbers safe.
- Never share your information with persons who say they are bill collectors. If they really are bill collectors, they will already have your information.
- Review your medical bills and statements. Check for items or services you did not receive. If you see something strange or wrong, call your health care provider.

If you have questions about your bill or think there is a mistake, please call L.A. Care Member Services at 1.888.839.9909 (TTY 711).





# Wait Times for Appointments

Did you know L.A. Care must meet the California Department of Managed Health Care (DMHC) Timely Access Law and has rules about how long you should wait to get a doctor appointment? Appointments must be offered within the timeframes listed below.

## Primary Care Doctors

- Routine appointment (non-urgent): 10 business days
- Urgent appointment: 48 hours

## Specialists

- Routine appointment (non-urgent): 15 business days
- Urgent appointment (no authorization required): 48 hours
- Urgent appointment (requiring prior authorization): 96 hours

## Exceptions

- The purpose of the Timely Access Law is to make sure you get the care you need. Sometimes you need appointments even sooner than the law requires. In this case, your doctor can request that the appointment be sooner.
- Sometimes waiting longer for care is not a problem. Your provider may give you a longer wait time if it would not be harmful to your health. It must be noted in your record that a longer wait time will not be harmful to your health.
- If you can't get a timely appointment in your area because there are not enough providers, your health plan must help you get an appointment with an appropriate provider.

Some health care service plans may be exempt from these standards. For more information please call the DMHC Help Center at 1.888.466.2219.

## What if I need health advice when my doctor's office is closed?

You can get health advice when your doctor's office is closed and on weekends or holidays.

- L.A. Care doctors must be available, or have someone available, to help you at all times.
- If you need to talk to your doctor when the office is closed, call your doctor's office phone number. A doctor or nurse should call you back within 30 minutes. Follow their instructions.

If you have trouble reaching your doctor, call L.A. Care's Nurse Advice Line at 1.800.249.3619 (TTY 711) 24 hours per day/7 days per week. A nurse is available to discuss your health care. However, if you have a medical emergency and need help right away, dial 911 or go to your nearest emergency room.

The Greatest  
Wealth Is Health!

Virgil, Roman poet



## Did You Know?

Care Management is a free service for all members.

L.A. Care has Care Managers. These are nurses who can help you get the most from your health care plan. They can schedule doctor visits and find transportation to get you there. Care Management staff can also explain your health care benefits and help you understand your medication and health concerns. Plus, they can put you in touch with other resources such as food pantries, low-income housing and clinics in your area.

To speak to a Care Manager, please call 1.844.200.0104, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., except on holidays. For free interpreting services and information in your language or in braille, large print, or audio, call Member Services at 1.888.839.9909 (TTY 711).

# Important Numbers

Do you have questions about your health plan or your benefits?  
Call your health plan directly or call L.A. Care Health Plan.

## L.A. CARE

### L.A. Care Health Plan

**1.888.839.9909** (TTY 711)

### PASC-SEIU: 1.844.854.7272

24 hours a day, 7 days a week and holidays

### L.A. Care Cal MediConnect

**1.888.522.1298** (TTY 711)

24 hours a day, 7 days a week and holidays

### L.A. Care Family Resource Centers

(Your Centers for Health and Wellness)

**1.877.287.6290** (TTY 711)

### L.A. Care Covered™

**1.855.270.2327** (TTY 711)

### L.A. Care Compliance Helpline

(to report fraud or abuse)

**1.800.400.4889**

24 hours a day, 7 days a week and holidays

### L.A. Care Language/Interpreter Services

**1.888.839.9909** (TTY 711)

24 hours a day, 7 days a week and holidays

### L.A. Care's Nurse Advice Line

(for non-emergency medical advice)

**1.800.249.3619** (TTY 711)

24 hours a day, 7 days a week and holidays

## MEDI-CAL PLAN PARTNERS

**Anthem Blue Cross: 1.888.285.7801**

**Care1st Health Plan: 1.800.605.2556**

**Kaiser Permanente: 1.800.464.4000**

## Plan Partners' Nurse Advice Lines

(for non-emergency medical advice)

**Anthem Blue Cross: 1.800.224.0336**

(TTY 1.800.368.4424)

**Care1st: 1.800.609.4166**

(TTY 1.800.735.2929)

**Kaiser: 1.888.576.6225**

## OTHERS

**LogistiCare** (No-Cost Medi-Ride to the Doctor)

**1.866.529.2141** (Spanish **1.866.529.2142**)

(TTY **1.866.288.3133**)

24 hours a day, 7 days a week

**Beacon Health Options** (Behavioral Health Care)

**1.877.344.2858** (TTY **1.800.735.2929**)

**beaconhs.com** 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

**IN CASE OF EMERGENCY, CALL 911**

## Looking for New L.A. Care Volunteers!

You can be a voice to help L.A. Care meet the needs of the neighborhoods we serve. We are seeking new people to help with our Regional Community Advisory Committees (RCACs).

RCAC members bring the voice of their communities to L.A. Care's Board of Governors, which guides programs for over 2 million members. L.A. Care invites people over 18 years of age of many backgrounds to volunteer and encourages seniors and people with disabilities to be part of RCAC. For more information, please call 1.888.522.2732, Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.



## L.A. Care Works for You

At L.A. Care, we inform, educate, and engage our members. We want to empower YOU to be well and happy with your health care. We reach more than 2 million members through mail, email, phone, websites, newsletters, and even through your doctor!

Let us help you with your health care when and how you need it. Call us at 1.888.839.9909 (TTY 711) 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and holidays. Also, visit our website and member portal at **lacare.org**.



**Immunizations (vaccines) can protect infants, children and teens from disease!**

Well-child visits and vaccines are covered by L.A. Care at no additional cost. If you have questions or need more information, please call Member Services at 1.888.839.9909 (TTY 711).

**IN THIS ISSUE:**

- Celebrating 20 Years of Serving Our Members! | 1
- Ask the Doc: What You Need to Know About Prediabetes | 2
- Get Help With Alcohol-Related Concerns | 3
- Getting Connected with L.A. Care's Formulary | 5
- Wait Times for Appointments | 6
- And More!

SPRING 2017

# be well

A Publication for L.A. Care Members

PSRST STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
LOS ANGELES, CA  
PERMIT NO. 3244

**Health and wellness or prevention information**



**SALES & MARKETING DEPARTMENT**



**L.A. Care**  
HEALTH PLAN®



**English** To request free interpreting services, information in your language or in another format, call L.A. Care at 1.888.839.9909 or TTY 711.

**Arabic** لطلب خدمات ترجمة فورية مجانية، ومعلومات بلغتك أو بتتسيق آخر، اتصل بـ L.A. Care على الرقم 1.888.839.9909 أو رقم الصم 711 TTY.

**Armenian** Անվճար բանավոր թարգմանչական ծառայություններ ինչպես նաև ձեր լեզվով կամ այլ ֆորմատով տեղեկություններ խնդրելու համար, զանգահարեք L.A. Care 1.888.839.9909 կամ TTY 711 հեռախոսահամարներով:

**Chinese** 如果您需要免費口譯服務，或需要您使用之語言版本或其他格式的資訊，請致電 L.A. Care，電話號碼是 1.888.839.9909 或 TTY 專線 711。

**Farsi** جهت درخواست خدمات رایگان مترجم شفاهی، دریافت اطلاعات به زبان خودتان یا سایر فرمت ها، با L.A. Care به شماره تلفن 1.888.839.9909 یا TTY 711 تماس بگیرید.

**Hebrew** לקבלת שירותי תרגום חנם או מידע בשפה אחרת או בפורמט אחר, אנא התקשר ל- L.A. Care במספר 1.888.839.9909 או TTY 711.

**Japanese** 無料通訳サービス、日本語又はその他の形式で情報をご希望の際は、L.A. Careにお電話、フリーダイヤル1.888.839.9909もしくはTTY 711までご連絡ください。

**Khmer** ដើម្បីស្នើសុំសេវាការបកប្រែជាឥតគិតថ្លៃ ឬសុំរាប់ព័ត៌មានជាភាសាខ្មែរ ឬជាទម្រង់ដទៃទៀត សូមទូរស័ព្ទទៅ L.A. Care តាមលេខ 1.888.839.9909 ឬ TTY 711។

**Korean** 무료 통역 서비스, 다른 언어 또는 다른 형식으로 된 자료가 필요하신 경우, L.A. Care 1.888.839.9909번 또는 TTY 711번으로 문의하십시오.

**Russian** Чтобы сделать запрос о предоставлении бесплатных услуг переводчика, информации на Вашем языке или в другом формате, позвоните в L.A. Care по номеру телефона 1.888.839.9909 или по номеру линии TTY 711.

**Spanish** Para solicitar servicios de interpretación gratuitos o información en su idioma o en otro formato, llame a L.A. Care al 1.888.839.9909 o al 711 para TTY.

**Tagalog** Upang humiling ng mga libreng serbisyo sa pagsasaling-wika, impormasyon sa iyong wika o sa isa pang format, tumawag sa L.A. Care sa 1.888.839.9909 o TTY 711.

**Thai** ในการขอรับบริการล่าม ข้อมูลในภาษาของคุณ หรือในรูปแบบอื่น ๆ โทรมาที่ L.A. Care ที่ 1.888.839.9909 หรือ TTY 711

**Vietnamese** Để yêu cầu dịch vụ thông dịch miễn phí, thông tin bằng ngôn ngữ của quý vị hoặc bằng một hình thức khác, vui lòng gọi L.A. Care tại số 1.888.839.9909, hoặc nếu dùng TTY, xin gọi số 711.

The benefit information provided is a brief summary, not a complete description of benefits. Limitations, co-payments, and restrictions may apply. Benefits may change on January 1 of each year. To learn more, please call the L.A. Care Member Services at **1.888.839.9909 (TTY 711)**, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and holidays.

*Be Well* is a member news publication by L.A. Care for members of L.A. Care's Health Plan.

If you would like the information contained in this newsletter in another language or another format, please call the L.A. Care Member Services at **1.888.839.9909 (TTY 711)**, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week including holidays.

**California Department of Managed Health Care**  
If you have been receiving care from a health care provider, you may have a right to keep your provider for a designated time period. Please contact your HMO's customer service department, and if you have further questions, you are encouraged to contact the Department of Managed Health Care, which protects HMO consumers, by telephone at its toll-free number: **1.888.HMO.2219 (1.888.466.2219)**, or at a TTY number for the hearing impaired at **1.877.688.9891**, or online at [www.hmohelp.ca.gov](http://www.hmohelp.ca.gov).

**California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) Office of the Ombudsman**  
For help with Medi-Cal, you may call the California Department of Health Care Services (CDHCS) Ombudsman Office at **1.888.452.8609**. The Ombudsman Office helps people with Medi-Cal make use of their rights and responsibilities.



**lacare.org**  
**For a Healthy Life**

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