



L.A. Care
HEALTH PLAN®

L.A. Cares About
Your Heart. 



My Heart Care Team



Call your Heart Care Team if you have questions or need help. Keep the following important phone numbers nearby in case of an emergency.

Important Phone Numbers

Me: _____

My Doctor: _____

My Health Educator: _____

My Heart Nurse: _____

My Pharmacy: _____

L.A. Care Member Services: _____

L.A. Cares About Your Heart® Resource Line

1.855.707.7852

(TTY/TDD 711)

Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.

L.A. Care Nurse Advice Line

1.800.249.3619

(TTY/TDD 711)

24 hours a day, 7 days a week

L.A. Care Health In Motion™

1.855.856.6943

(TTY/TDD 711)

Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.



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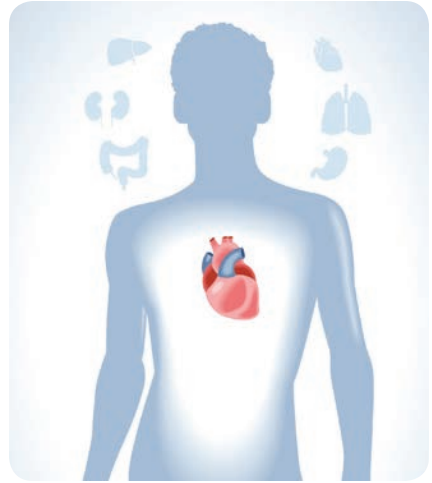
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Understanding Heart Disease

Heart disease, also known as cardiovascular disease, is any number of diseases that affect the heart and blood vessel system. Heart disease happens slowly over time. Many people do not have symptoms or do not know they have it. High blood pressure and high cholesterol are common conditions that lead to heart disease.



Types of Heart Disease:

Coronary Artery Disease (CAD): A disease that results when fat and cholesterol build up in the arteries and reduce blood flow and oxygen to the heart. This is the most common type of heart disease.

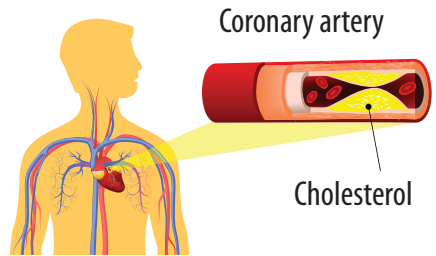
Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD): A disease that results from narrowed arteries in the arms and legs that reduces blood flow to the heart.

Carotid Artery Disease: A disease that results when fat and cholesterol build up in the arteries and reduce blood flow and oxygen to the brain. This increases the risk of stroke.

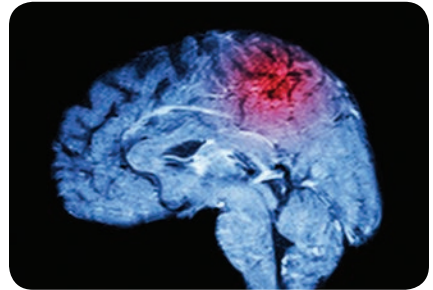
Arrhythmias: A problem with irregular heartbeats caused by the heart's electrical system not working properly. The heartbeat may become too fast or too slow.

Angina: Chest soreness, tightness, or pain when the heart does not get enough blood and oxygen.

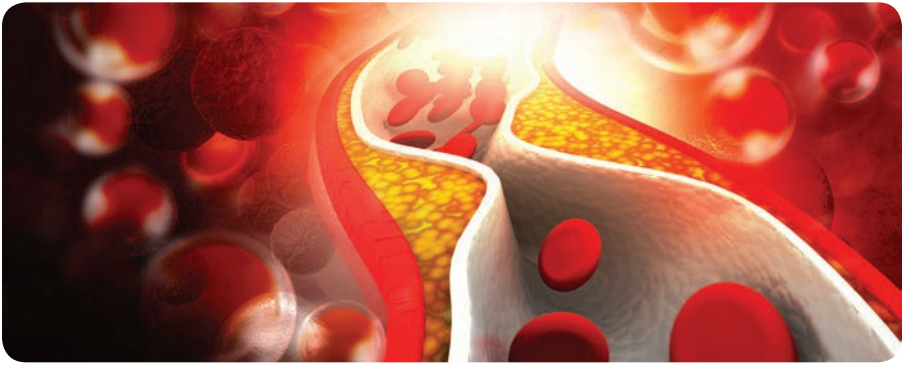
Heart Attack: Happens when blood flow from a coronary artery to the heart is completely blocked. You may feel “like an elephant is sitting on your chest.”



Stroke: Happens when blood flow to the brain is blocked due to a blood clot or bleeding. Symptoms vary depending on which part of the brain (and body part it controls) is affected. Symptoms can include face drooping, arm weakness, and speech difficulty.



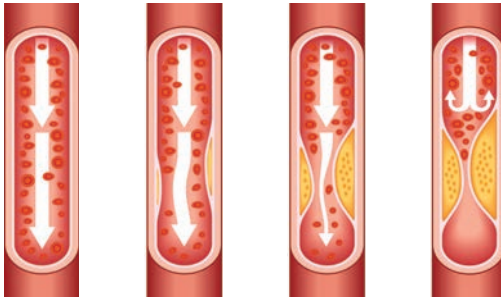
Understanding Heart Disease: *High Cholesterol*



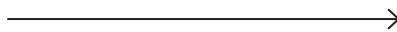
Cholesterol is a waxy substance made by the body. It is also found in foods such as egg yolks, meat, poultry, fish, and dairy products. The body needs some cholesterol, but too much is harmful.

Extra fat and cholesterol can build up; this is called **plaque**. Plaque attaches to blood vessel walls and can build up over time. This buildup makes the vessels thin and hard. It can block blood flow to the heart, increasing the risk of heart disease, chest pain, and heart attack.

Plaque Buildup



No buildup



Too much buildup

There are three types of cholesterol. It is important to know your levels of each kind.

LDL, HDL and Triglycerides

- **LDL:** Stands for low-density lipoprotein, think of LDL as “*bad*” fat. It builds up a waxy coating on your blood vessels. You want your LDL levels low.
- **HDL:** Stands for high-density lipoprotein, think of HDL as “*good*” fat. It helps to keep LDL from building up. You want your HDL levels high.
- **Triglycerides:** Like LDL, high triglycerides can be unsafe to your health. You want your triglycerides low.

Cholesterol Levels		
	My Current Levels	My Goal Levels from My Doctor
LDL		
HDL		
Triglycerides		

There are things you can do right now to prevent heart disease! Eat the right foods, get some exercise, keep a healthy weight, don't smoke or quit if you do, and don't drink too much alcohol.



Understanding Heart Disease:

High Blood Pressure

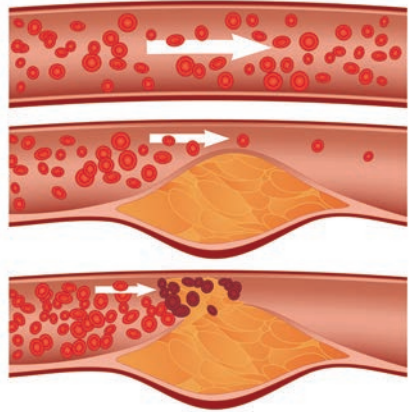
Blood pressure is the level of force blood puts on artery walls as it travels through the body. An ideal blood pressure is less than 120/80. If your blood pressure is above 140/90, then you may have high blood pressure.

Your blood pressure can be changed by:

1. The amount of blood your heart pumps each minute
2. The total amount of blood in your body
3. Anything that is working against blood flow

High blood pressure weakens the vessel walls over time. This can be a problem because:

1. This may cause the vessel to bulge like a bubble. The bubble can burst and bleed into nearby tissues.
2. Weak vessel walls are more likely to tear. Plaque builds more easily in areas with tears. A **clot**, a solid clump made of blood cells and plaque, may form. Pieces of clots can become loose and travel to your heart, lungs, or brain. This is very dangerous and can cause death.



Blood Pressure Tips:

- ✓ Take medications as prescribed by your doctor
- ✓ Eat healthy and make a food plan
- ✓ Exercise regularly
- ✓ Lose excess weight
- ✓ Lower your alcohol intake
- ✓ Quit smoking



Do you know your blood pressure? If not, ask your doctor at your next visit. You can also check your blood pressure yourself with a blood pressure cuff from the drug store.

My blood pressure is _____

My doctor recommended blood pressure range is _____

Lifestyle Changes to Take Care of My Heart: *Eat Right*

Use the MyPlate method as a guide to make sure you have a healthy, balanced meal. Think of your plate as having different sections. One half is for vegetables and fruits, and the other half is for proteins and carbohydrates (carbs). What you drink with your meal also counts. Avoid sweetened or diet drinks. Better choices include water, unsweetened tea, or non-fat milk. Limit fruit juices.

Build a Healthy MyPlate

Think of your plate as having 4 equal sections.

1. Fill 1 section (1/4) of your plate with vegetables.
2. Fill 1 section (1/4) of your plate with fresh fruit. (Fruit juice is not a replacement for fruit.)
3. Fill 1 section (1/4) of your plate with lean protein like fish, chicken or turkey.
4. Fill 1 section (1/4) of your plate with carb foods. Choose whole grains to fill this section.
5. Have water or one cup of non-fat milk or unsweetened non-dairy milk, like soy or almond milk, with your meal rather than a sweetened or “diet” drink.



My Food Plan

I will use the MyPlate method to plan my meals.

My plate will consist of:

Carbohydrates (1/4 of my plate): _____

Proteins (1/4 of my plate): _____

Vegetables (1/4 of my plate): _____

Fruits (1/4 of my plate): _____

Drink: _____



Tips for Heart-Healthy Cooking



Add herbs to dishes for flavor.



Use vinegar or citrus juice to enhance flavors.



Add hot peppers for some spice.



Use liquid vegetable oils or non-fat cooking sprays to cook your food.



Make dressings with canola oil, corn oil, or olive oil.



Stay away from coconut oil, palm oil, sunflower oil, butter, and lard.



Use a large pan to cook veggies, poultry, or seafood in veggie stock. Skip high-salt teriyaki and soy sauce.



Use a rack in the pan so the meat or poultry does not sit in its own fat drippings.



Bake foods in covered cookware with a little liquid.



Cook chicken or fish by putting it in a simmering liquid. This is called poaching.



Use non-stick veggie oil to brown or sauté foods.



Steam veggies in a basket or simmering water.

Helpful Tips



High-fiber foods like whole grains, fruits, and vegetables help lower LDL.



Avocados help raise HDL and lower LDL.



Nuts help lower blood cholesterol and keep blood vessels healthy.



Baked or grilled fish high in Omega 3 fatty acids help raise HDL.



Oatmeal and oat bran help lower LDL.



Small amounts of dark or bittersweet chocolate can raise your HDL.



Garlic may lower LDL according to the latest research.



Olive oil helps raise HDL and lower LDL.



Leafy greens, like spinach, can help keep cholesterol from clogging arteries.

Cut the Salt

Too much salt in food can cause your body to retain (hold on to) water. This can hurt your heart, kidneys, and blood vessels.

People who have high blood pressure or other heart concerns should lower their salt intake. Foods that come from a can or package, or are frozen, may have a lot of salt. Here is a guide for using less salt:

Breakfast



Heart Healthy Choices

- Fresh Fruit
- Greek Yogurt
- Wheat Bread
- Hot Cereal

Less Healthy Choices

- Bacon
- Sausage
- Pancakes
- Biscuit Mixes

Lunch



- Fish
- Dry Beans
- Oil & Vinegar

- Lunch Meats
- Cheese
- Bottled Dressings

Dinner



- Skinless Chicken
- Lean Meats
- Steamed Vegetables

- Pork
- Fatty Meats
- Fried Foods

Snack



- Unsalted Popcorn
- Fresh Fruits

- Salted Chips
- Pies
- Cookies
- Donuts

Other Tips to Cut the Salt

Here are other tips to cut down on salt and make your meals heart-healthy.

- Keep the salt shaker off the table to avoid adding extra salt.
- Choose foods labeled “low sodium,” “no added salt,” or “reduced sodium.”
- Put canned vegetables and beans in a strainer and rinse under water to reduce sodium.
- Buy unseasoned, frozen items and add your own low-salt topping. For example, buy plain chicken breast and add fresh salsa with lime and cilantro.
- Avoid sauces in jars. Make your own sauce out of fresh vegetables. For example, sauté fresh tomatoes with garlic and onion and add to your pasta.
- Make your own low-salt spread for your sandwich! For example, try $\frac{1}{4}$ of avocado to match the creaminess of mayonnaise.
- There are different herbs and spices to add flavor to your meals. Instead of salt, try a new herb or spice in your meals each week.

Your taste buds need time to get used to less salt. This is normal. Have fun and be creative in the kitchen. Think of your own ways to “dress up” your meals without the added salt.

Lifestyle Changes to Take Care of My Heart: *Stay Active*



Staying active is another great way to help lower blood pressure and cholesterol and to keep a healthy weight. It builds up your strength, lowers your hunger, and best of all, it makes you feel great!

Regular physical activity is important for a healthy heart.

Always talk to your doctor first and get his or her help to make an exercise plan that's right for you.

Start slowly and build up gradually.

Exercise regularly, but don't worry

if you skip a day. For heart health, try to do 30 to 40 minutes of moderate to vigorous aerobic activity three to four times a week.

Helpful 
Tips

What can I do to be more active?

Circle the activities you enjoy the most. It's best to do at least one activity from each column.

Aerobic



Swimming



Dancing/Zumba



Walking

Strengthening



Using Resistance Bands



Gardening



Free Weights

Stretching



Yoga



Simple stretching



Tai chi

How many times a week will I do these activities? _____

For how many minutes each time? _____

- Mix it up or divide the exercise time, such as 10 minutes three times a day
- Stretch and warm up before you start and do a cool-down after. This will help your heart move slowly from rest to activity and then back to rest and will prevent muscle cramping.
- Save a small amount of money for every workout. At the end of the month, reward yourself.



Lifestyle Changes to Take Care of My Heart: *Reduce Alcohol*



Heavy drinking over a long period of time can increase your risk of heart disease. Heavy drinking can damage your brain, liver, heart, and other organs.

Too much alcohol is not good for you. It can cause:

- Liver disease
- Cancer of the mouth and throat
- Cancer of the liver
- High blood pressure

The Risks of Heavy Drinking

Heavy drinking can:

- Raise blood pressure. High blood pressure is a risk factor for heart attack and stroke.
- Cause weight gain, which can also increase your blood pressure.
- Weaken the heart muscle, which means the heart can't pump blood well. This is called **cardiomyopathy** and can cause early death.
- Enlarge the heart.
- Make your heart beat irregularly, making you feel breathless.

Get Help

If you are struggling to quit or need help reducing heavy drinking, here is a list of resources that can help:



Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)

aa.org

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

findtreatment.samhsa.gov

1.800.662.4357

Al-Anon Family Groups

al-anon.alateen.org

Lifestyle Changes to Take Care of My Heart: *Avoid Tobacco*

Smoking is addictive. This means your body starts to crave and need it. Addiction is one reason why quitting is so hard. You may need medication to help you. Talk to your doctor about the right medicine for you. Whether you choose a patch, nasal spray, or gum, you must use it exactly as indicated by your doctor.

Smoking can:

- Raise your blood pressure and heart rate
- Narrow and harden the artery walls
- Make your heart work harder
- Increase the risk for clotting and for a heart attack

Good things happen when you stop smoking. You will:

- ✓ Feel better
- ✓ Breathe easier
- ✓ Have whiter teeth and a healthier mouth
- ✓ Taste and smell food better
- ✓ Not expose your kids or grandkids to secondhand smoke
- ✓ Save money!

I will plan my quit day by:

- Throwing away all my cigarettes
- Getting my teeth cleaned
- Cleaning my clothes, house, and car
- Telling my friends and family I am quitting
- Enrolling in a Quit Smoking Program

Living Smoke-Free Action Plan

The first step to living smoke-free is to take time to think about why you want to quit. Be as specific as you can.

GOOD: I want to quit for my health.

BETTER: I want to quit so I can play with my kids at the park.

My reasons for quitting:

1. _____
2. _____

Have a Plan

The key to quitting is to have a plan. Set a quit date. Pick a day that has meaning to you.

My Quit Date: _____

If you need help quitting smoking, here is a list of resources that can help:

L.A. Quits
laquits.com

California Smoker's Helpline
1.800.NO.BUTTS
quitnet.meyouhealth.com
tobaccofreeca.com

American Lung Association of California
1.213.384.5864
lungusa.org/california

Southern California Nicotine Anonymous
scina2012.squarespace.com



Managing Medications



In addition to lifestyle changes, your doctor may prescribe medications. When it comes to medications, it's important to keep track of them.

- Make a list of all the medicines you take (prescribed and over the counter). Keep this list in your purse or wallet.
- Make a second list of any medicines to which you are allergic.
- Tell your doctor how you take your medicines.
- Take your medicines exactly as prescribed. Do not skip a dose. If you miss a dose, do not double up.
- Learn the names of the medicines you take, what they do, the dose, and how often you take them.
- Ask if you should skip certain foods, drinks, vitamins, or herbal supplements while you are taking the medicines.
- Make sure you ask your doctor questions about things you don't understand.
- Use a pill box to make it easier for you to remember to take your medicines.
- Do not stop taking your medicines, even if you feel better, until you have talked to your doctor.
- Ask your doctor for a 90-day supply of your medicines.
- Tell your doctor if you have any side effects of your medicines.
- Make sure a friend or family member knows what medicines you take in case you need help.



Talk With Your Doctor About Your Heart

Ask your doctor what your cholesterol (LDL, HDL, Triglycerides) levels are and if they are within the normal ranges. If they are not, ask your doctor what you can do.

- Talk with your doctor about the kinds of healthy foods you should include your meal plan.
- Discuss an exercise plan that is right for you and how to achieve it.
- Find out if you are at a healthy weight.
- Have your blood pressure read at each doctor visit.
- Ask your doctor what your normal blood pressure range should be.
- Talk with your doctor about the medicines you are taking, including when, how, and why you are taking each medicine.
- Discuss your drinking and/or smoking habit(s) with your doctor.
- Call your doctor if you have questions or need help. Remember, your doctor is leading your Heart Care Team.

Managing Medications



Cholesterol Medications



Cholesterol medicines lower the level of cholesterol in your body. Some medicines will lower LDL and some will raise HDL.

It often takes four to six weeks for cholesterol medicines to work. These drugs lower your risk of a heart attack, stroke, and heart disease.

It is best to take these medicines in the evening because the body makes more cholesterol at night than during the day.







Blood Pressure Medications



High blood pressure is often called a “silent killer” because many people have it but do not know it. Some people do not feel sick at first. Without treatment, people with high blood pressure can get very sick or even die.

There are many different types of blood pressure medicines. Each works in its own way. It is vital to take your blood pressure medicines each day as directed by your doctor. Do not stop taking your medicines until your doctor says it is OK to stop.

Use this chart to list your medicines and when to take them.

When do I take this medication?	Medication Name	How much should I take?
 Morning		
 Noon		
 Evening		
 Only when I need it		



Bring your medicines with you to each visit. Your medicines may change over time.



Important Exams and Tests

Use this chart to know when you should complete your tests and exams. Always check with your doctor about how often you should have these exams and tests.

Test	How Often
Blood Pressure	At each doctor visit
Cholesterol	As recommended by your doctor
Urine Test	As recommended by your doctor
Weight	At each doctor visit
Flu Shot	Each year
Pneumococcal Vaccination	As recommended by your doctor
If you have diabetes	
HbA1c	As recommended by your doctor
Glucose Screening	As recommended by your doctor
C-reactive	As recommended by your doctor
A1c Test	Every 3 months if A1c is over 7; Every 6 months if A1c is under 7
Dilated Eye Exam	Each year
Kidney Test	Each year
Foot Exam	Once a year by doctor; Daily self exam at home



You may also want to talk with your doctor about:

(check the ones you want to talk with your doctor about)

- Abuse and violence
 - Advance directives
 - Aspirin
 - Asthma
 - Bladder control
 - Dental health
 - Depression
 - Diabetes
 - Drug and alcohol concerns
 - Fall prevention
 - Family planning/ birth control
 - How to quit smoking
 - Your medication(s)
 - Mental health concerns (memory loss or changes)
 - Nutrition
 - Pain management
 - Parenting
 - Planning for long-term care
 - Prenatal health (for pregnant women)
 - Physical activity/ exercise
 - Safety
 - Sexually transmitted diseases and HIV
 - Weight concerns
 - Any other concerns
-



For questions or to speak with a nurse about heart disease, call the Heart Resource Line at **1.855.707.7852** (TTY/TDD 711). You can also call the 24-hour Nurse Advice Line for free health care advice at **1.800.249.3619** (TTY/TDD 711), 7 days a week.

Healthy Heart Tracking Sheet

Take this with you when you see your doctor. Have your doctor help you fill out your personal goals and any information provided during your visit.

Test	How Often	Goal	Date	Date	Date	Date
Blood Pressure	Each visit					
Total Cholesterol	Two times a year	<200 mg/dL				
Triglycerides		<150 mg/dL				
LDL		<100 mg/dL				
HDL		>30 mg/dL				
If you have diabetes						
HbA1C	Every three months (if you have diabetes)					
Glucose Screening	As recommended by your doctor					
C-reactive Protein Screening	As recommended by your doctor					

Have your doctor review the medicines you're taking during each visit and track changes to your prescription.

Date	Blood Pressure Medicine	Cholesterol Medicine	Diabetes Medicine

Ask your doctor about what your healthy weight goal should be at each visit.

Date	Actual Weight	Goal Weight	Action Needed


Be sure to get these shots from your doctor to help keep your heart healthy.

Shots	How Often	Date	Date	Date
Flu Shot	Each Year			
Pneumonia	As recommended by your doctor			

My Action Plan

Now that you know more about managing heart disease, think of what you want to do to better take care of yourself.

What can I improve?

	What am I doing to feel like this?	What can I do to feel better?
 I feel GOOD		
 I DO NOT feel good		
 I feel AWFUL		

How **sure** are you that you will reach your goal?

Please circle the number below. You should be a 7 or higher.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

1=not sure at all

10= completely sure



My Action Plan:

	Activity	How long	When	How many days						
				S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
Example	I will... <i>Walk</i>	<i>30 minutes</i>	<i>After dinner</i>		✓		✓		✓	
Goal 1	I will...									
	I will...									
Goal 2	I will...									
	I will...									
Goal 3	I will...									
	I will...									
Goal 4	I will...									
	I will...									

Did you know, as an L.A. Care member, you can get help with managing your heart health in person or over the phone? Call our Health Education department at **1.855.856.6943** (TTY/TDD 711).



Important Resources



Your Doctor

Your doctor is always there for you. Make and keep your doctor appointments. Keep your doctor's phone number handy.

My doctor's name is: _____

Phone number: _____

L.A. Cares About Your Heart® Resource Line

To speak to a nurse about your heart, call the L.A. Cares About Your Heart® Resource Line at **1.855.707.7852** (TTY/TTD 711).

Free Health Workshops

L.A. Care's *Health In Motion*™ offers free health workshops near you. Make new friends and learn about your heart in a fun way! Call **1.855.856.6943** (TTY/TDD 711).

L.A. Care Nurse Advice Line

Call the L.A. Care Nurse Advice Line for general health questions to keep you and your family healthy. You can call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Call **1.800.249.3619** (TTY/TDD 711).

L.A. Care Family Resource Centers

Call or visit one of L.A. Care's Family Resource Centers for questions about your L.A. Care membership and for free health and exercise classes.

Boyle Heights

1.213.294.2840

The Wellness Center

at the Old General Hospital

1200 North State St., Ste. 1069

Los Angeles, CA 90033

Lynwood

1.310.661.3000

Plaza Mexico

3180 E. Imperial Highway

Lynwood, CA 90262

Inglewood

1.310.330.3130

Corner of Century & Crenshaw

3111 W. Century Blvd, Ste. 100

Inglewood, CA 90303

Pacoima

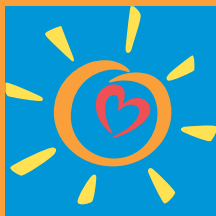
1.213.438.5497

*San Fernando Rd. & Van Nuys Blvd.
in the Zocalito*

10807 San Fernando Rd.

Pacoima, CA 91331

For accommodation of people with special needs, call **1.888.439.5123** or TTY/TTD **711**.



L.A. Care
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(TTY/TDD 711)

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