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WELL

A NEWSLETTER FOR L.A. CARE
COVERED™ MEMBERS



L.A. Care
Covered.



OCTOBER 2024

October is National Healthy Lung Month

Keeping Your Lungs Healthy in Los Angeles

Living in Los Angeles means you need to take good care of your lungs, especially as you get older. The air isn't always clean, but you can do a few things to keep your lungs healthy.

- **Avoid Smoking:** Don't smoke, and stay away from other people's smoke. Smoking is bad for your lungs, and even being around smoke can hurt them. If you want to stop smoking, check out resources like Kick It California for support.
- **Stay Inside on Smoggy Days:** Sometimes, the air in Los Angeles gets really dirty. On those days, check the Air Quality Index (AQI) on AirNow and try to stay indoors as much as you can.
- **Exercise Safely:** Regular exercise like walking, swimming, or biking is great for your lungs. Just make sure to do it in clean air, like indoors or in areas where the air is fresh.
- **Keep Your Home Clean:** Keep your house free from dust, mold, and other things that can make the air dirty. Using an air purifier and keeping windows open when the air is clean can help too.
- **Stay Up-to-Date with Doctor Visits and Shots:** See your doctor regularly and get your flu shot every year. Getting a pneumonia vaccine is also important to protect your lungs from infections.

By doing these things, you can help keep your lungs strong and enjoy life in Los Angeles more.



Fight the Flu and Covid-19. Get Vaccinated this Season!

Protect yourself and your loved ones this season by getting your flu and Covid-19 shots. The shots are updated each year to give the best protection. Just show your L.A. Care member ID card at your local pharmacy or doctor's office.

Here are other tips to prevent from getting sick this season.

- Stay away from those who are sick and stay home when you are sick.
- Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer often.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Cough into your sleeve to stop the spread of germs.

Keep yourself and family healthy this season!



October is Health Literacy Month

It is important to understand health information so you can make smart choices about your health. Health literacy helps us prevent illness, understand what doctor's say, and figure out the best ways to take care of our families and ourselves.

Sometimes, health words and ideas can be confusing. These are some easy ways to learn more and feel confident about your health:

- **Ask Questions:** Whenever you visit your doctor or pharmacist, ask questions until you understand everything they say.
- **Read Up:** Look for information in places like health brochures or trustworthy websites.
- **Talk About It:** Share what you learn with friends or family. Talking helps you remember better.

It's okay to ask for help understanding health information. You're taking a big step towards a healthier life just by wanting to learn more!



Prescription Drugs Listed on L.A. Care Website

To find out more about L.A. Care list of covered drugs called the Formulary, and monthly updates, visit the <https://www.lacare.org/members/getting-care/pharmacy-services> under "Formulary Updates".

You will also find information about limits or quotas, generic and brand medications, restrictions, on medication coverage, the medication request process, drug preferences and procedures on how to use the Formulary.



Doctor's Orders

Remember to take your medications the same way, everyday!

Did you know that medications are taken incorrectly 50% of the time?

At L.A. Care Health Plan, we know taking medications can be hard and confusing.

There are many reasons why people stop taking their medications: forgetting to take them, not understanding their doctor's instructions, feeling side-effects, or thinking their medication is not working.

Not taking your medications can worsen your health and lead to more trips to the hospital.

Tips to Help You Take Your Medications Everyday:

- Keep your medications somewhere you can easily access or see everyday
- Set an alarm
- Associate taking your medications with another daily activity to make it a habit (e.g., after brushing your teeth in the morning)
- Use a pill box and refill it at the same time each week (e.g., every Sunday after dinner)
- Keep a "medicine calendar" to check off each time you take your medications
- Ask your doctor for a different medication if it's too expensive or you feel side effects
- Ask your doctor for a 90-days' supply of medication and/or sign up for mail order to visit the pharmacy less often

If you disagree or do not understand your medication, don't be shy – ask your doctor or pharmacist why!



Getting Support for Substance Use

Did you know there is a number to call if you or someone you care about needs support with substance use or alcohol?

If you or someone you know needs help with alcohol, drugs, or other substances, Carelon Behavioral Health can connect you with treatment. Call toll free at **1-877-344-2858** 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

<https://www.carelonbehavioralhealth.com/>

When you call Carelon Behavioral Health, a live person will answer and listen to you. They understand that some people struggle with alcohol or drugs.

Carelon Behavioral Health can give you different choices to help, like talking to a counselor, getting medicine to help you stop using, or even living at a place to get treatment. There are also groups you can meet with to talk to other people who are going through similar things.

Even if you are already getting help somewhere, Carelon Behavioral Health can still be a resource for your mental health. They can connect you with a therapist or psychiatrist. These specialists can talk to you about what is going on and help you feel better.

Life can be tough sometimes, and some people struggle with alcohol or drugs. That is totally okay! The important thing is there are people who want to help. Treatment works, and you can get better!



How Long Should I Wait for My Appointment?

Did you know L.A. Care 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 (no authorization required):

48 HOURS

SPECIALISTS

Routine appointment (non-urgent):

15 BUSINESS DAYS

Urgent appointment (requiring prior authorization):

96 HOURS

BEHAVIORAL CARE



Routine appointment (non-urgent):
15 BUSINESS DAYS (PHYSICIANS)



Non-urgent follow-up appointment:
10 WITHIN 10 BUSINESS DAYS OF PRIOR APPOINTMENT (NON-PHYSICIANS)



Routine appointment (non-urgent):
10 BUSINESS DAYS (NON-PHYSICIANS)



Urgent appointment (no authorization required):
48 HOURS (NON-PHYSICIANS & PHYSICIANS)

BEHAVIORAL CARE (Continued)



Life threatening emergency:
IMMEDIATELY



Non-life threatening emergency:
HOURS



Emergency care:
IMMEDIATE, 24 HOURS A DAY, 7 DAYS PER WEEK

AFTER-HOURS



- ⌘ Access – After Hours recording or answering service must state emergency instructions to address medical emergencies
- ⌘ Access – After Hours recording or answering service must state a way of contacting the provider
- ⌘ Timeliness – Recording or live person must state that provider will call back within 30 minutes

Did you know 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 with your doctor when the office is closed, call your doctor's office phone number. Follow their instructions.
- ⌘ A doctor or nurse should call you back within 30 minutes.



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 will give you the health information you need. Remember, if you have a medical emergency and need help right away, dial **911** or go to your nearest emergency room.



L.A. Care
HEALTH PLAN®



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 **1-855-270-2327** (TTY 711) 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and holidays. Also, visit our website at **lacare.org**.



Important Numbers

Do you have questions about your benefits? Please see the contact information below to get help and answers.

L.A. Care Health Plan

L.A. Care Covered

1.855.270.2327 (TTY 711)

Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

L.A. Care Medi-Cal Plan

1.888.839.9909 (TTY 711)

24 hours a day, 7 days a week and holidays

1200 W. 7th Street Los Angeles, CA 90017

L.A. Care Medicare Plus

1.833.522.3767 (TTY 711)

24 hours a day, 7 days a week and holidays

L.A. Care PASC-SEIU Health Plan

1.844.854.7272 (TTY 711)

24 hours a day, 7 days a week and holidays

L.A. Care Community Resource Centers

(Your Centers for Health and Wellness)

1.877.287.6290 (TTY 711)

L.A. Care Compliance Helpline

(to report fraud or abuse)

1.800.400.4889 (TTY 711)

24 hours a day, 7 days a week and holidays

L.A. Care Language/Interpreter Services

1.855.270.2327 (TTY 711)

24 hours a day, 7 days a week and holidays

L.A. Care Nurse Advice Line (for non-emergency medical advice)

1.800.249.3619 (TTY 711)

24 hours a day, 7 days a week and holidays

Others:

Carelon Behavioral Health

(Behavioral Health Care)

1.877.344.2858

(TTY 1.800.735.2929) **carelonbehavioralhealth.com**

24 hours a day, 7 days a week

TelaDocR

1.800.835.2362 TTY 711

(Talk to a doctor for urgent care needs)

24 hours a day, 7 days a week and holidays

In case of emergency, call: **911**



Community Engagement Group

Looking for L.A. Care Members to Join the Community Engagement Group!

Do you want to help improve the healthcare of your family? Would you like to share your thoughts on how L.A. Care can improve health services for its members? If you answered yes, then L.A. Care would like to invite you to join our Community Engagement Group (CEG)!

As a CEG member, you will receive information on L.A. Care's programs, trainings on health topics and skills to help you be an advocate for your community. Best of all, you will meet other members who want to make a difference in improving the health care for over 2 million L.A. Care members in L.A. County! If you are interested in joining the CEG or have questions, please email coeadvisory@lacare.org



Nurse Advice Line:

Members can speak with a registered nurse 24 hours a day, seven days a week through our Nurse Advice Line (NAL) <https://www.lacare.org/members/getting-care/nurse-advice-line>