



5 steps to a healthy new year

Have you been thinking about taking better care of your health? The new year is a good time to start.

Take these 5 steps:

- 1. Get moving.** Adults should get exercise for at least 2½ hours a week—this is 30 minutes, 5 days a week. Children should get 60 minutes of exercise each day. This year, try walking more or taking an exercise class.
- 2. Lose weight.** More exercise helps, but you also need to watch what you eat. Reduce portion sizes and avoid fried foods. Eat more fruits and vegetables, and cut back on sweets. If you have soda or sweetened drinks every day, you may be drinking more calories than you realize. Switch to water.
- 3. Sleep well.** Your body and brain need sleep to work their best. Most adults need about 7 to 8 hours of sleep each night. Lack of sleep has been linked to heart disease, weight gain, and other problems.
- 4. Stop smoking.** Quitting cuts your risk for cancer, heart disease, stroke, and infertility. And keep your loved ones from breathing smoke in the house or car.
- 5. Get checked.** Get tests that detect cancer early. For women, this means getting Pap tests from ages 18 to 65, and mammograms after age 50. Both men and women should be tested for colon cancer starting at age 50. All adults and children should have a checkup with the doctor at least once a year to maintain good health.

Keep track of your healthy new life with our **FREE** pocket calendar for women. It includes information and tips to keep you healthy. To receive one, call us at **1-800-421-2560, extension 3126.**



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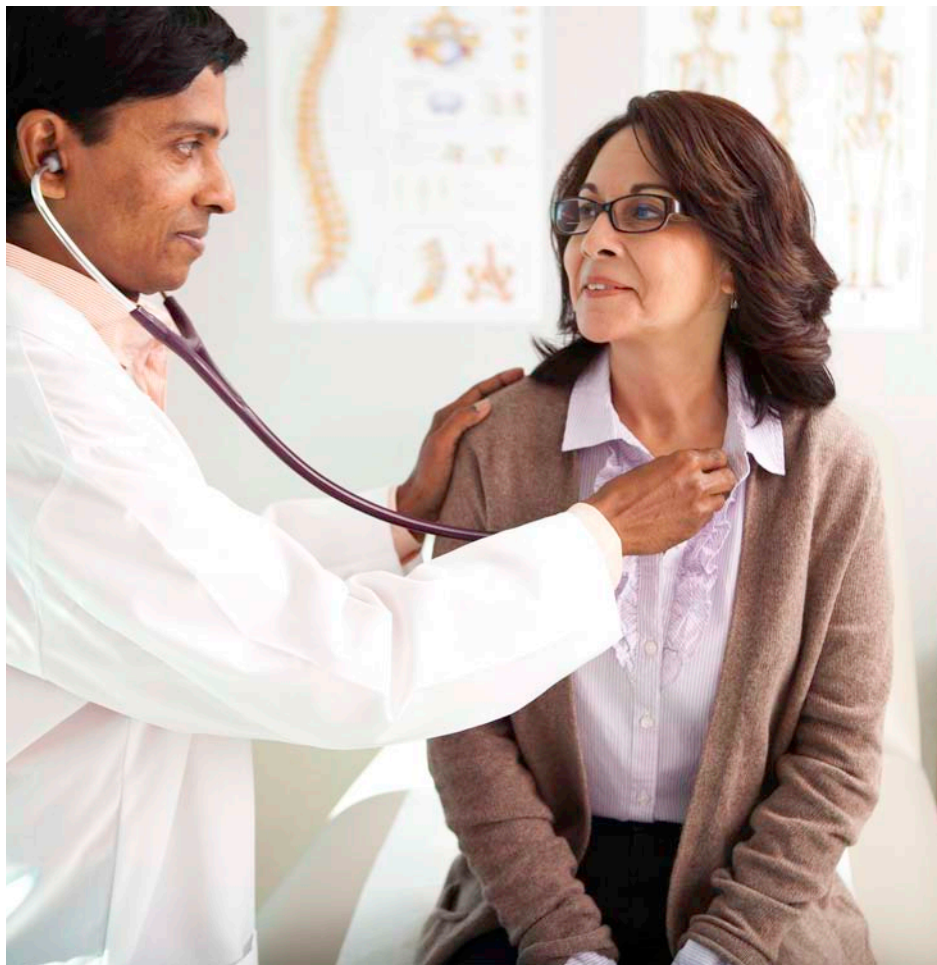
Questions & Answers

How can Member Services help me?

Member Services representatives are here to serve you. We can help you:

- Select a doctor or change to a new one
- Find a pharmacy or help you get your prescription filled
- Arrange for interpreter services or transportation for your medical visit
- Assist you if you receive a bill for covered services
- Solve a problem or take your complaint
- Answer your questions about your health coverage

Our Member Services staff can be reached Monday–Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., at our toll-free number: 1-877-814-1861.



Don't miss doctor visits

There are many reasons why you should not miss a medical appointment. It may mean that you don't get the care you need. It can keep someone else from being seen. And it disrupts the doctor's schedule and wastes the doctor's time.

If you are not able to keep a medical appointment with your doctor or another provider, please call the office and cancel. Try to call 24 hours in advance or as soon as you know you cannot make it. This gives the office time to schedule another patient to

be seen in your place.

If you miss 3 or more visits in 1 year, your primary care doctor may decide not to see you again. So help avoid this by keeping your appointments. Do your best to be on time for your appointments with your doctor and other health providers. This is part of your responsibility as a member of our health plan.

If you have a problem getting to your appointments, call Member Services at 1-877-814-1861. We want to help you get the care you need.

Keep your teeth healthy

Do you tend to skip brushing your teeth because you're in a hurry or just too tired? Or do you take time to floss your teeth?

To avoid cavities and gum disease:

- Brush at least twice a day and floss once a day
- Don't use tobacco
- Limit food or drinks that are high in sugar
- Visit a dentist for regular checkups and cleanings
- Be on the lookout for signs of gum disease. Talk with

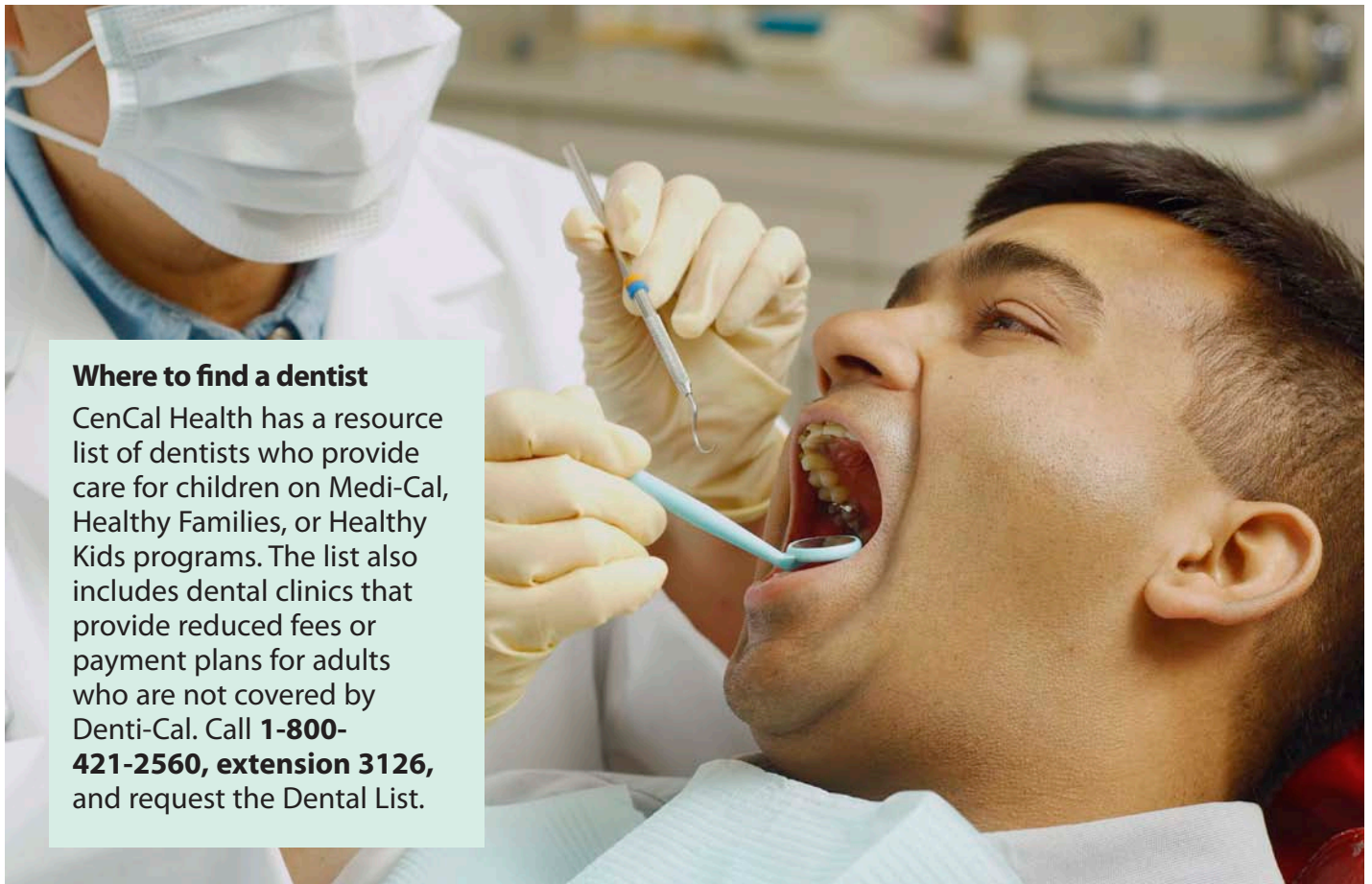
your dentist if you have tender or bleeding gums, loose teeth, bad breath, or pain when chewing.

Do you have diabetes?

If you have diabetes, you are at higher risk for tooth loss, gum disease, and other mouth troubles. To prevent gum disease and other dental problems, visit your dentist every 6 months. Make sure to tell the dentist you have diabetes. And make sure to see your doctor to get tested for LDL and A1c to keep your cholesterol and

blood sugar in control.

Baby teeth are important, too. It is important to take care of a child's first teeth. Don't let your baby suck on a bottle for a long time filled with milk or juice. This can cause cavities that are ugly and painful. If the baby needs a bottle to fall asleep, fill it with water. Babies and young children should not have soda or other sugary drinks. Ask your doctor to apply fluoride varnish to protect your young child's teeth.



Where to find a dentist

CenCal Health has a resource list of dentists who provide care for children on Medi-Cal, Healthy Families, or Healthy Kids programs. The list also includes dental clinics that provide reduced fees or payment plans for adults who are not covered by Denti-Cal. Call **1-800-421-2560, extension 3126**, and request the Dental List.

Community programs and resources

There are many programs and resources in the community that can help you. The ones listed here can provide healthy food for you or help you with emotional needs or a crisis.

Food and nutrition

CalFresh provides monthly assistance to purchase healthy foods. To find out if you are eligible, call the Department of Social Services or get information at www.calfresh.ca.gov or call **1-877-847-FOOD** (in Spanish, **1-888-9-COMIDA**).

WIC. If you are pregnant, just had a baby, or have children age 5 or younger, you may be eligible for checks to buy healthy food and for nutrition education through the WIC (Women, Infants and Children) program. For more information, go to www.wicworks.ca.gov or call:

- Santa Barbara County: **1-877-275-8805**
- San Luis Obispo County: **1-800-660-3313**

If you are in crisis, or just need help finding community resources, always call 211.

Crisis and mental health

If you are concerned about partner violence or child abuse, get help.

- **Santa Barbara County Domestic Violence Solutions**, www.dvsolutions.org. Offers a 24-hour crisis line and programs in Santa Barbara, 964-5245; Santa Maria, 925-2160; Lompoc, 736-0965; and Santa Ynez, 686-4390.
- **San Luis Obispo County Women's Shelter Program**, www.womensshelterslo.org or call 781-6400. **North County Women's Shelter & Resource Center**, www.ncwomensshelter.org, or call 226-5400.

Free mental health services for individuals and families, in English and Spanish.

- **San Luis Obispo County and North Santa Barbara County**
 - **Transitions-Mental Health Association**, 540-6500, www.t-mha.org. Sponsors free parenting class for parents with difficult teens and other services.
- **Santa Barbara**
 - **Mental Health Association**, 884-8440, www.mhainsb.org. Programs and support for individuals and families experiencing mental illness.

Health information for you

CenCal Health wants to help you get the health information and support you need. Call our toll-free Health Education Request Line at **1-800-421-2560, extension 3126**, to request information on these topics in English or Spanish:

- Asthma
 - Take Control of Asthma (for adults)
 - Asthma Detectives (for children)
- Diabetes
- Heart Health and Blood Pressure
- Nutrition Information for Children and Families
- Pregnancy and Childbirth
- Quit Smoking



How to help your children behave

How can I teach my children to behave?

- Set rules that fit your children's ages.
- When children do something wrong, stop them. Then show them the right way.
- Praise them when they do the right thing.

What should I do when my child won't behave?

Never hit or shake a child. Instead, give the child a "timeout":

- Warn your child. "If you throw food again, you will get a timeout."
- If the child throws food again, stay calm. Put the child in a safe place with no toys or TV for a few minutes.

I can't always control my anger.

When you get angry, try to:

- Take a deep breath. Count to 20.
- Find someone you trust to watch your children. Take a short walk.



I need help. I'm worried I might hurt my children.

Let your doctor know how you feel. Or call **211** to speak to someone right away. There are programs that can help you.

Vaccines are important

A message from Lowell Gordon, M.D., Chief Medical Officer at CenCal Health

As the new year starts, it is a good time to remind parents about vaccines. They are safe, they work, and they are important.

One of my favorite movies when my kids were little was *Balto*. The movie is about the sled dog that saved the children of Nome, Alaska, in 1925 during a blizzard. *Balto* hauled the serum needed to fight a diphtheria epidemic.

In the 1930s, an estimated 3,000 people died of diphtheria, a horrible death by choking.

In the U.S. today, death from the disease is unheard of, thanks to the diphtheria vaccine. This is the "D" in the DTaP vaccine for infants and children. Similar stories can be told for smallpox, polio, measles, meningitis, tetanus, whooping cough, and pneumonia.

A great disservice was done by a British doctor who claimed that measles, mumps,

and rubella (MMR) vaccine caused autism. The doctor's work has been discredited and his medical license revoked. But many parents started going against doctors' advice to immunize their children. The Institute of Medicine, the country's most prestigious advisory panel, has stated without a doubt that MMR is not linked to autism in children. Vaccines are known to save lives and we owe it to our children to have them vaccinated.

Member rights and responsibilities

As a member of the Health Plan, you have the right to:

1. Receive information about the Health Plan, the providers, and the health services available to you, and your rights and responsibilities as a member.
2. Be treated with respect and dignity by your health care providers and Health Plan staff.
3. Choose your Primary Care Provider (doctor) from our Provider Directory.
4. Get appointments within a reasonable amount of time.
5. Have the privacy and confidentiality of your records and your relationship with your doctor protected (this means we will not share your health care information without your written approval or unless it is required by law).
6. Receive information about your medical condition in terms you can understand in order to participate in making decisions about your care with your health care provider.
7. Have an open discussion of appropriate treatment options, including the right to refuse treatment, for your condition, regardless of cost and benefit coverage.
8. Make recommendations about the Health Plan's Rights and Responsibilities policies.

9. Request a copy of your medical records and/or request a change.

10. Obtain needed interpreter services at no charge when receiving covered medical services and to be able to file a complaint if your language needs are not met.

11. Receive medical services from an Indian Health Clinic without approval from the Health Plan if you are a Native American Indian.

12. File a complaint or appeal (by phone or in writing) about the Health Plan or health care provided and be assured by CenCal Health that there will be no discrimination or retaliation against you for filing a complaint.

13. Receive member materials (letters, member handbook, provider directories and other important information) that have been translated into the threshold (for CenCal Health those languages are Spanish and English) language.

You have a responsibility to:

1. Learn how to use the Health Plan and provide the information to the Health Plan that is needed to give you the best care possible.
2. Follow the instructions and treatment plan you have

agreed on with your health care provider.

3. Treat your providers and Health Plan staff with courtesy and respect.

4. Always present your member identification ID card when getting services

5. Help CenCal Health keep correct records by providing timely information regarding changes in address, family status, and other health care coverage.

6. Notify CenCal Health as soon as possible if a provider bills you inappropriately.

7. Understand your health problems and take part in making a treatment plan with your provider that you both agree on.

8. Be on time for your appointments and inform the provider's office if you must cancel at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance.

9. Call your Primary Care Provider first when needing medical care, except in an emergency.

10. Follow the recommendations for preventive care, yearly check-ups, and a healthy lifestyle.

If you have questions about your rights and responsibilities, call the Member Services Department at 1-877-814-1861.



YOUR HEALTH is published for the members and community partners of CENCAL HEALTH, 4050 Calle Real, Santa Barbara, CA 93110, telephone 1-800-421-2560, website www.cencalhealth.org.

Information in YOUR HEALTH comes from a wide range of medical experts. If you have any concerns or questions about specific content that may affect your health, please contact your health care provider.

Models may be used in photos and illustrations.

To report FRAUD call 1-800-421-2560, extension 3012.

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