

living

healthy

A newsletter for the members of
Central Coast Alliance for Health



**CENTRAL COAST
ALLIANCE
FOR HEALTH**



California Children's Services **Help for children with serious health problems**

Does your child have a serious health problem? For example, cancer, diabetes, or a serious injury or birth defect?

If so, your child's doctor may refer your child to California Children's Services (CCS). If CCS

determines that your child is eligible, CCS will pay for care for your child's special condition, not the Alliance.

If your doctor refers you, CCS will send you an application. You **must** fill out and return the forms in order for your child to be covered. Otherwise, you may

get bills for the care. Or your child may not get all the care he or she needs. The Alliance does not cover care for CCS conditions.

Please do your part to enroll in CCS. Call your child's doctor to find out if your child qualifies for CCS. If you have been referred already, please fill out and send in the forms. You can call CCS for help:

- Santa Cruz County CCS, **763-8900**
- Monterey County CCS, **755-5500**



To learn more about the services available, check the CCS Web site, www.dhs.ca.gov/pcfh/cms/ccs.

Central Coast Alliance for Health

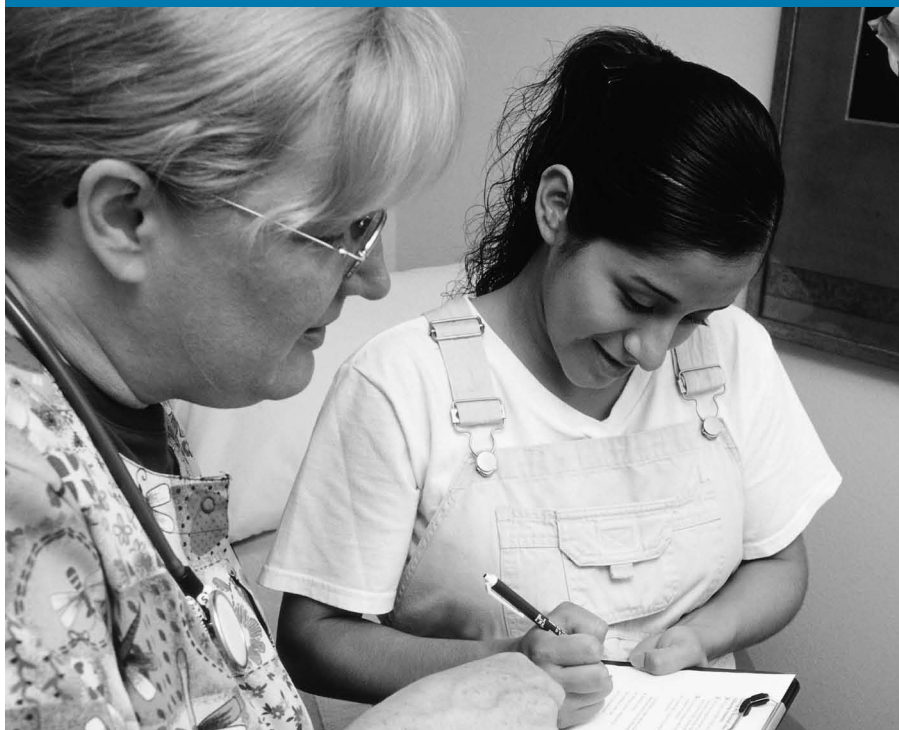
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Compliments or complaints?
Call Member Services.
1-800-700-3874, ext. 5505

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Transportation New phone numbers

The Alliance has new phone numbers for non-emergency medical transportation. For questions about transportation, call:

- Monterey County:
1-800-700-3874, ext. 5616
- Santa Cruz County:
1-800-700-3874, ext. 5625



Changes to lab sites

Starting on April 1, 2006, the Alliance will be using a different provider for lab services.

This means that there will be some new sites you can go to for lab work. It also means that you may not be able to go to some of the lab sites you are now using.

Following is a partial list of the changes.

Lab sites you can use

Lab sites you will be able to go to as of April 1:

- 550 Water St., Suite C-1, Santa Cruz
- 1595 Soquel Drive, Suite 340, Santa Cruz
- 272 Green Valley Road, Freedom
- 264-B San Jose St., Salinas
- 1055 Los Palos Drive, Salinas
- 559 E. Alisal St., Suite 200, Salinas
- 880 Cass St., Monterey
- 1180 Broadway St., King City

There will be other sites available. Please call Member

Services at **1-800-700-3874, ext. 5505**. Or go to our Web site, www.ccah-alliance.org, for a full list of all sites you can use as of April 1.

Sites no longer available

Lab sites you will no longer be able to go to as of April 1:

- 1555 Soquel Drive, Santa Cruz
- 680 E. Romie Lane, Salinas
- 23625 Holman Highway, Monterey
- 576 Hartnell St., Monterey
- 505 Central Ave., Pacific Grove

There may be other sites that will no longer be available besides the ones listed above. Please call Member Services for more information.

What you need to do

If you need lab work, your doctor will refer you to a lab site that is part of our network.

If you know you have a standing order at a site that will not be part of our network after April 1, ask your doctor to send your order to another site that is.

Drug formulary changes

Medication added	Used to treat
Glimepiride (Amaryl)	Diabetes
Hydrocodone/APAP 10/325 (Norco)	Narcotic analgesic
Hydrocodone/APAP 10/500 (Lortab)	Narcotic analgesic
Labetalol (Normodyne)	High blood pressure
Olopatadine (Patanol)	Eye allergy
Simvastatin (Zocor)	High cholesterol



New moms

Take care of yourself

Bathing, rocking and round-the-clock feedings—new babies need a lot of care.

But if you're a new mother, you need care too.

After all, your body is still recovering from pregnancy and birth. You are probably very tired. Maybe you have cramps and bleeding. Your legs and feet may be swollen. And your breasts may be tender or leak milk.

You may also have a lot of thoughts and feelings to sort through. At times you might feel happy or excited. At other times you may feel stressed or sad.

These are normal changes after having a baby. And they are good reasons to take extra care of yourself.

Here are some things you can do.

- Get as much rest as you can. Try to lie down or sleep when your baby sleeps. And only do what must be done—now isn't the time to try to keep a spotless house or take on big projects.

Visit your doctor. Checkups aren't just for your baby.

- Prop your feet up when you can. This may help keep swelling down.

- Use pads, not tampons, to soak up leaking blood.
- Drink lots of water.
- Eat healthy foods like fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Let friends and family pitch in. It's OK to ask for help with cleaning, laundry, meals or baby care.
- Visit your doctor for a checkup. The best time is between three to eight weeks after your baby's birth. Call early to make your appointment.

Sources: American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists; National Women's Health Information Center

Depression and pregnancy

For many women, pregnancy is a happy time. But for others, the weeks and months leading up to a baby's birth are filled with sadness.

These women don't just have a "blue mood." They have an illness called depression.

Watch for these clues

Pregnancy has ups and downs, of course. Mood swings are normal.

But the following signs may mean depression, especially if

they last longer than two weeks:

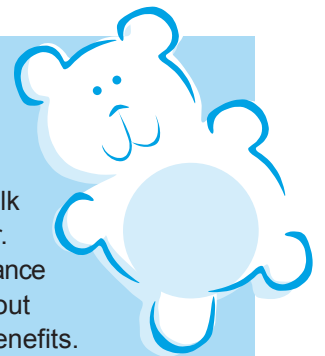
- A sad mood most of the day nearly every day.
- Loss of interest in things you like to do.
- Feeling guilty, hopeless or worthless.
- Thinking about death or harming yourself.
- Feeling very tired or not having energy.
- Changes in eating or sleeping habits.
- Trouble thinking and making choices.
- Aches and pains that don't get better with treatment.

What to do

If you think you might be depressed, talk to your doctor. Or call the Alliance to find out about your health benefits. You may need to take medicine or see a counselor.

On the bright side, treatment can help you feel better now and later. It might even help keep depression away after you have your baby.

Remember, you don't have to handle depression on your own.





Watch for dehydration

Don't be surprised if your baby gets diarrhea. It's a common illness—like a cold.

But sometimes babies with diarrhea get very sick.

They lose so much fluid that they become dehydrated. And in babies this can be life-threatening.

Here are the signs of dehydration in babies:

- No wet diapers for three hours or more.
- Dry mouth or tongue.
- Few tears when crying.
- Sunken eyes.
- Low energy.
- Crankiness.

If you think your baby is dehydrated, call a doctor right away.

Source: The Journal of the American Medical Association, Vol. 285, No. 3

Some of the first tests your child takes may be the most important.

After birth, your baby will be tested in the hospital for certain health problems. A small amount of blood will be taken from your baby's heel for the tests.

Most babies are just fine. But if the tests show any problem, early treatment can help your baby.

The tests need to be given twice—in the hospital and at your baby's first checkup.

So be sure to take your baby to the doctor or clinic for the second round of tests. Your baby needs a checkup and shots at 2 to 4 weeks. Go again at 2, 4, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18 and 24 months to keep your baby healthy.

What to expect in your baby's first 12 months

Few things will give you more joy as a parent than watching your baby learn to stand, walk or say "ma-ma" or "da-da."

These "firsts" are called milestones. And if you watch for them, you'll see how your baby is developing.

Answer "yes" or "no" to the following questions. Answering "no" doesn't mean your baby has a problem.

But let your doctor know if there's a big difference between what your baby can do and these milestones.

3 months

- ___ Does your baby coo or babble?
- ___ Does your baby react to your voice?
- ___ Are your baby's hands often open?
- ___ Does your baby hold his or her head up?

6 months

- ___ Does your baby touch his or her hands together?
- ___ Does your baby roll over?
- ___ Does your baby react to noises in another room?
- ___ Does your baby reach out to be picked up?

9 months

- ___ Does your baby crawl?
- ___ Does your baby hold a bottle?
- ___ Does your baby drop toys on purpose?
- ___ Does your baby pull away from strangers?

12 months

- ___ Does your baby pull up to stand?
- ___ Does your baby say at least one word?
- ___ Does your baby walk while holding on to furniture?
- ___ Does your baby look for toys?

Source: American Academy of Pediatrics



Help spot asthma attacks



Free asthma class

Learn how to live better with asthma. The Alliance pays for asthma education. You will learn how to:

- Avoid asthma triggers.
- Use medicine the best way.
- Prevent most attacks.

Get the most from your Alliance benefits. Call us for a program near you: **1-800-700-3874, ext. 5580.**

When asthma attacks, you need to fight back.

And your best defense against a flare-up is spotting it early. That way you can treat it right away and get it under control faster.

Watch for signs

To do this, you need to know what warning signs you often have just before an asthma attack. An attack might be coming on if you:

- Have a lower peak-flow reading.
- Cough a lot, especially at night.
- Breathe hard or fast.
- Feel tightness or discomfort in your chest.
- Get out of breath easily.
- Wheeze.
- Feel tired.
- Have an itchy, scratchy or sore throat.
- Have a headache or stuffy head.

- Sneeze or have a runny nose.
- Have a fever.
- Have dark circles under your eyes.

Act quickly

If you notice the warning signs, it's time to take action. The first step is to follow your **Asthma Action Plan**. This plan—made with your doctor's help—can tell you what kind of medications to take, when to take

them and how much to take.

If you know what is causing the asthma flare-up, try to get away from that trigger. For example, you may need to leave the room if someone is smoking or if the family pet is present.

Finally, stay calm. Follow your plan. Measure your peak flow if needed. And call your doctor if your medicine isn't working or if you need help.

Sources: American Medical Association; American Academy of Family Physicians

When asthma is an emergency!

Asthma attacks can be mild and easy to treat. Taking medicine often helps control your asthma.

But sometimes an asthma attack can be very bad. At those times, you need to get help right away.

Watch for these signs:

- Your rescue medicine isn't helping.
- Your peak flow keeps dropping even after you take your medicine.
- Your peak flow is less than

50 percent of your best.

- Your fingernails or lips turn gray or blue.
- You have trouble walking or talking.
- You have a very hard time breathing.
- Your neck, chest or ribs pull in with each breath.
- Your nostrils flare when you breathe.

If you experience any of these problems, call your doctor or get emergency help right away.

Source: American Academy of Family Physicians



To learn more, call the Health Education Line at **1-800-700-3874, ext. 5580.**

Stopping heartburn

There's nothing fun about heartburn, starting with how it happens.

You get heartburn when stomach acids back up into your throat. You might feel a burning pain in your chest and have a bad taste in your mouth.

Heartburn might be worse after you eat, or when you lie down or bend over.

It may help to:

- Avoid onions, mint, tomatoes, strong spices, citrus juice and coffee.
- Eat at least two hours before lying down.
- Plan your eating so you avoid big meals.
- Avoid smoking.
- Raise the head of your bed 4 to 6 inches.
- Control your weight.

Antacids can often help with heartburn. But if they don't or if the changes you make don't help, see your doctor. Severe or regular heartburn can be a sign of something more serious.

Also, heartburn isn't heart trouble. But the signs of each condition can be confused with the other.

If you have pain that goes into your neck and shoulders, shortness of breath or other possible heart attack signs, get help right away.

Source: National Heartburn Alliance



Seeking sound sleep

It's late, really late. You toss and you turn, and still no sleep.

You know you'll be tired come morning if you don't get some sleep soon. But that only seems to make things worse.

Sound familiar?

You're not alone

Nearly half of us have insomnia at some time. You might have a hard time falling asleep, or you wake up during the night and have trouble getting back to sleep, or you wake up too early in the morning.

By day, this can leave you tired, moody and less able to focus on tasks.

Sleep problems may have many causes. For example, coffee and soft drinks with caffeine can affect your sleep. Stress or not keeping a regular sleep schedule can cause you troubles too.

How to sleep better

These tips may help you get the best rest:

- Go to bed and get up at the same time each day.
- Avoid caffeine six hours before bedtime.
- Start a bedtime routine, such as taking a warm bath or reading a book.
- Avoid napping a lot.
- Don't drink alcohol or smoke.
- Exercise often, but do it during the day.

Nearly half of us have insomnia at some time.

- Keep your bedroom quiet and dark.
- Avoid eating close to bedtime.
- If you can't sleep after 30 minutes, go to another room for a while before returning to bed.

If your sleep troubles continue or you have concerns about your sleeping, see your doctor.

Source: National Sleep Foundation