Staying Healthy in the New Year

As one year ends and the new year begins, we often look at ways to improve our health and shed extra pounds gained from enjoying our favorite foods and treats over the holidays. It is a time to reset our routine and let go of unhealthy habits. Following are some tips to help you have long-lasting success and improve your health:

• **Stop unhealthy habits** – If you smoke, take steps to quit. If you need help to quit, call L.A. Care at 1.855.856.6943 to learn about in-person workshops and online self-paced programs and resources. Talk to your doctor about medications covered by your health plan that can help you quit smoking. Limit your alcohol use.

• **Set easy goals** – Break your goals into small parts that you can do easily. Aim to lose 1-2 pounds a week, instead of 20 pounds a month. Walk or run for 20 minutes a day to build up to reaching a goal of walking or running a marathon.

• **Reboot your diet** – Clean out your cabinets and refrigerator. Get rid of fattening, sugary foods and snacks like chips and sodas. Buy healthier foods and snacks such as fruits and vegetables. Enjoy lean protein meats and dairy. Choose turkey or chicken and low-fat yogurt. Snack on air-popped popcorn, crunchy celery and carrots. Drink more water.

• **Get moving!** – You don’t have to join a gym; you can take a walk during lunch or after dinner to get exercise. Plan time daily to do something fun and physical.

You’ll have more success if you enjoy it. L.A. Care’s **Family Resource Centers** offer Zumba and other exercise classes. For more information, please visit lacare.org or call 1.877.287.6290.

• **Go to bed and get some zzz’s** - Sleep is important for our body to feel good, have more energy and better concentration. Set a regular bed time that allows you to get 7-8 hours of deep sleep. Don’t use electronics before bed – watch television, use your cell phone, laptop, etc. They stimulate brain activity and may make it harder to get to sleep.

Be sure to make an appointment to get an annual checkup from your doctor. Practicing healthy habits is one of the best New Year’s resolutions we can make. Cheers to good health!
Q: What is heart disease?
A: Your heart pumps blood to your whole body. This blood is carried in tubes called arteries and veins. Heart disease is when blood can no longer travel smoothly through your heart or its tubes.

Q: What is a heart attack?
A: A heart attack is when the blood flow to the heart is blocked by a clot. Most people survive their first heart attack and return to their normal lives. But healthy changes have to be made to prevent further damage.

Q: What risk factors increase the chance of getting heart disease?
A: Some risk factors for heart disease cannot be controlled, such as age. Other risk factors, such as smoking, weight and exercise, stress, and blood pressure can be controlled.

You can reduce the risk of heart issues by adopting a healthy lifestyle – eating nutritious foods, getting regular exercise and getting enough rest. See your doctor for regular screenings.

Risk Factors for Heart Disease

Blood Pressure: High blood pressure is when blood pushes too hard against the tubes that carry your blood. It raises your risk of heart attack and stroke.

Cholesterol: This is a fatty substance in your blood. It can build up and block blood flow.

Diabetes: This is when you have too much sugar (glucose) in your blood, which makes you more likely to have a heart attack with no symptoms.

Smoking: Increases your risk of heart disease, stroke, lung disease and cancer.

Stress: Bad feelings, such as stress and anger, have been linked to heart disease.

Unhealthy Diet: Eating foods high in salt and fat increases the risk of heart conditions. Eat foods low in salt and fats. Include more fresh fruits and vegetables in your diet.

Weight and Exercise: Being overweight and not exercising make other risk factors more likely.
Helpline Launches Dedicated **Quit Vaping Line!**

The California Smokers’ Helpline has a NEW counseling line dedicated to people who want to quit vaping. The toll free number is **1.844.8.NO.VAPE (1.844.866.8273)**. The helpline has promotional materials available as well. For more info, please visit: **nobutts.org/quitvaping**.

For more information about the helpline’s cessation services, including telephone counseling, mobile apps, online chat, and a texting program, visit: **nobutts.org/free-services**.

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**Vaping – More Dangerous Than You Think**

Vaping is inhaling vapor from an e-cigarette, pen, or other device. These devices work by heating a liquid containing nicotine, marijuana, or other drugs. Candy-like flavors add to their appeal. Vaping is on the rise and many people think it is less harmful or addictive than cigarettes. The truth is vaping is more dangerous than you think.

Research into the long-term effects of vaping are ongoing and there is much we don’t know. Here is some of what we do know.

- **E-cigarettes are just as addictive as regular cigarettes.** In fact, nicotine levels in vape products vary. You might be getting as much nicotine in one vape pod as a whole pack of cigarettes!
- **Vaping won’t help you quit smoking.** Instead of switching, some people end up using both. About 60% of e-cigarette users also smoke.
- **Vaping is harmful to brain growth in teens and young adults.** Yet these groups are drawn to vaping due to the flavors and “cool” devices.

Serious lung disease has been linked to vaping. See your doctor if you vape and you think it is making you sick. Most people need to be treated in the hospital. Many of these people are young. Symptoms include:

- Shortness of breath, cough
- Fatigue, body aches
- Vomiting and diarrhea

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Grief is deep sorrow and a natural reaction to loss. Saying goodbye to someone who has passed away can make you very sad. Sometimes you have the opportunity to make peace with the situation before the loss occurs. At other times it happens suddenly and you may be left with feelings of guilt and asking yourself “what more could I have done?”

Other endings such as divorce or a relationship, loss of health, a job, a friendship, or even loss of financial stability can cause feelings of grief. Shock, anger, sadness, and grief are all symptoms one can experience. There is no “normal” timetable or expiration date for grieving.

The feelings of loss can be overwhelming and unexpected emotions can arise. Sharing your feelings are important to heal from emotional pain. Turn to friends and family for support. Join a grief support group, talk to a therapist or a grief counselor. Maintain hobbies and interests and take care of your mental and physical health. With time and support from family, friends and professionals, you can manage your grief and begin to move forward towards acceptance.

Hotlines and Support
- Behavioral health services are available by contacting Beacon Health Options at: 1.877.344.2858
- Suicide Hotline: 1.800.273.8255

Your Centers for Health and Wellness!

Come to L.A. Care’s Family Resource Centers (FRCs) to improve your health and elevate your knowledge with a variety of classes and services that are FREE and OPEN to anyone! The Centers offer classes like CPR, Dance, Healthy Cooking, Parenting Support, Yoga, Zumba®, children’s classes and much more. Earn rewards when you attend six health education classes and receive a gift!

L.A. Care members can attend a Member Orientation to learn how to get a Member ID card, choose or change a doctor, and fill a prescription. At the Centers, L.A. Care members can also speak to a Member Services Representative or Care Manager to learn more about their health plan benefits.

There are now six FRCs conveniently located throughout Los Angeles County. For more information and to view the schedule of classes, visit lacare.org/frc or call 1.877.287.6290 (TTY 711).

Boyle Heights
(The Wellness Center)
Phone: 213.294.2840

East L.A.
Phone: 213.438.5570

Inglewood
Phone: 310.330.3130

Boyle Heights
(The Wellness Center)
Phone: 213.294.2840

East L.A.
Phone: 213.438.5570

Inglewood
Phone: 310.330.3130

Lynwood
Phone: 310.661.3000

Pacoima
Phone: 213.438.5497

Palmdale
Phone: 213.438.5580
L.A. Care Offers Health Education Services Just for You

No matter what your health care needs are, or how you like to learn, L.A. Care has something for you. If you enjoy meeting people and talking face-to-face, join an in-person group workshop. Busy schedule? We can talk with you over the phone. Prefer to learn online? Go to L.A. Care’s website at lacare.org and log into the member portal for online tools and resources. Like to read? We have health education materials on many health topics and in many languages.

To learn more, call L.A. Care Health Education Unit at 1.855.856.6943 or visit us online at lacare.org/healthy-living/health-resources/health-education.

Management and Prevention of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)

COPD is a lung disease that makes it hard to breathe. It builds slowly and gets worse over time. It causes lung damage that cannot be fixed, but medicines and self-care can help you feel better. Talk with your doctor about medicines that can help you with COPD.

It is important to fill your prescriptions and take your medications. Smoking can cause COPD symptoms to worsen. If you smoke, quit. L.A. Care’s Health Education team can help you with our Smoke-Free Tobacco Program. Please call 1.855.856.6943 to learn more.

For support to manage COPD, you may also visit L.A. Care’s online member portal called My Health In Motion™ (MyHIM) by visiting lacare.org. To sign up, click on the “Member Sign In”, log in and select the “My Health In Motion” tab to start your profile. You can also speak to a Health In Motion Certified Health Coach by calling 1.855.856.6943.
Pregnancy Care

If you're pregnant, or think you might be, call your doctor to schedule an appointment. It is best to be seen early in pregnancy to make sure both you and baby are healthy. Keep seeing your doctor while you are pregnant and be sure to see your doctor again after you have your baby. Your doctor will make sure you are healing properly and doing well emotionally.

To learn about L.A. Care’s Healthy Pregnancy and Healthy Mom programs, call L.A. Care’s Health Education Unit at 1.855.856.6943.

Healthy Habits to Help Prevent Flu

The best way to prevent the flu is to get vaccinated each year. Other steps you can take, include:

- Avoid close contact with others who are sick.
- Stay at home when you are sick.
- Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing.
- Keep your hands clean by washing with soap or by using alcohol-based hand sanitizers.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.

Protect yourself and your family from the flu this year. Getting a flu shot is easy and free for L.A. Care members. Just go to your doctor or pharmacy and show your L.A. Care member ID card.

Prescription Drugs Listed on the L.A. Care Website

To find out more about L.A. Care’s list of covered drugs called the Formulary, and monthly updates, visit the L.A. Care website at lacare.org. There you will 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.
Go Green and Get Be Well Electronically!

Would you like to get Be Well by email? Please sign up on our website at lacare.org/be-well to receive it by email. Be sure to like us on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

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.

Use the audio library to listen to recorded messages on many different health topics. Call the L.A. Care Nurse Advice Line at 1.800.249.3619 (TTY 711) or chat with a nurse online for free. To access the nurse chat function, go to lacare.org and click on “Member Sign In” to log on.

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 TTY 1.800.368.4424

**Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plan:**
1.800.609.4166 TTY 1.800.735.2929

**Kaiser Permanente:**
1.888.576.6225

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.
Know Your Rights and Responsibilities

As a member of L.A. Care, you have the right to...

Respectful and courteous treatment.
- You have the right to be treated with respect and courtesy by your health plan’s providers and staff.
- You have the right to be free from consequences of any kind when making decisions about your care.

Privacy and confidentiality.
- You have the right to have a private relationship with your provider and to have your medical record kept confidential.
- You also have the right to receive a copy of and request corrections to your medical record.
- If you are a minor, you have the right to certain services that do not need your parents’ approval.

Choice and involvement in your care.
- You have the right to receive information about your health plan, its services, its doctors and other providers.
- You also have the right to get appointments within a reasonable amount of time.
- You have the right to talk candidly with your doctor about all treatment options for your condition, regardless of the cost or benefit coverage, and participate in making decisions about your care.
- You have the right to say “no” to treatment, and the right to a second opinion.
- You have the right to decide how you want to be cared for in case you get a life-threatening illness or injury.

Receive timely customer service.
- You have the right to wait no more than 10 minutes to speak to a customer service representative during L.A. Care’s normal business hours.

Voice your concerns.
- You have the right to complain about L.A. Care, the health plans and providers we work with, or the care you get without fear of losing your benefits.
- L.A. Care will help you with the process. If you don’t agree with a decision, you have the right to appeal, which is to ask for a review of the decision.
- You have the right to disenroll from your health plan whenever you want. As a Medi-Cal member, you have the right to request a State Fair Hearing.

Service outside of your health plan’s provider network.
- You have the right to receive emergency or urgent services, as well as family planning and sexually transmitted disease services, outside of your health plan’s network.
- You have the right to receive emergency treatment as follows:
  - Medi-Cal and Cal MediConnect members:
    Emergency care services are covered at all times anywhere in the United States, Mexico, and Canada. For Medicare-covered services, emergency is NOT covered outside of the United States and its territories. For Medicare-covered emergency care provided outside of the United States and its territories that are not covered by Medi-Cal, you may receive a bill from the provider.
  - PASC-SEIU members: Emergency care services are covered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, anywhere.

Service and information in your language.
You have the right to request an interpreter at no charge. You have the right to get all member information in your language or in another format (such as audio or large print).

Know your rights.
- You have the right to receive information about your rights and responsibilities.
- You have the right to make recommendations about these rights and responsibilities.
As a member of L.A. Care, you have the responsibility to...

**Act courteously and respectfully.**
- You are responsible for treating your doctor, all providers, and staff with courtesy and respect.
- You are responsible for being on time for your visits or calling your doctor’s office at least 24 hours before the visit to cancel or reschedule.

**Give up-to-date, accurate, and complete information.**
- You are responsible for giving correct information that your providers and L.A. Care need in order to provide care.
- You are responsible for getting regular checkups and telling your doctor about health problems before they become serious.

**Follow your doctor’s advice and take part in your care.**
- You are responsible for talking over your health care needs with your doctor, developing and agreeing on goals, doing your best to understand your health problems, and following the treatment plans you and your doctor agree on.

**Use the Emergency Room only in an emergency.**
- You are responsible for using the emergency room in cases of an emergency or as directed by your doctor.

**Report wrong-doing.**
- You are responsible for reporting health care fraud or wrongdoing to L.A. Care.
- You can do this without giving your name by calling the L.A. Care Compliance Helpline toll free at 1.800.400.4889, going to lacare.ethicspoint.com calling the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) Medi-Cal Fraud and Abuse Hotline toll-free at 1.800.822.6222.

Healthy habits are learned in the same way as unhealthy ones – through practice!
- Dr. Wayne Dyer
Looking for L.A. Care Members to Join the Community Advisory Committees

Do you want to learn how the health care system works? Would you like to share your thoughts on how L.A. Care can improve their services? L.A. Care is looking for people to join the Community Advisory Committees (CACs). As a CAC member, you can help L.A. Care meet the needs of the neighborhoods we serve. Your voice can really make a difference in improving the health care for the over 2 million L.A. Care members in L.A. County!

For more information, please call the Community Outreach & Engagement Department at 1.888.522.2732 (TTY 711), Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Medical Identity Theft: How to Keep Yourself Safe

If someone gets your medical ID or Social Security number, you could become a victim of medical identity theft. They can use it to see the doctor, buy prescription drugs, or submit fake bills in your name. Your credit rating and your health could also be harmed by medical identity theft. If false information gets into your medical records, you may get the wrong treatment.

Tips to protect yourself against medical identity theft include:

- 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 (if any) and/or your Explanation of Benefits. 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 and/or Explanation of Benefits or think there is a mistake, please call L.A. Care Member Services at 1.888.839.9909 (TTY 711), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and holidays.
How to Access Interpreting Services

To schedule Interpreting Services, please call Member Services at 1.888.839.9909 (TTY 711). Member Services is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, including holidays.

For in person interpreting services, please let us know:

**WHO:** Is the appointment for you, or for your child?

**WHAT:** What kind of doctor are you seeing? Do you want a male or female interpreter?

**WHEN:** What time is your appointment? When do you want the interpreter to be there?

**WHERE:** Where is your appointment? What is the address? Is there a specific building?

**WHY:** What is the appointment for? Follow up? Consultation? Medical visit?

Please notify us at least 24 hours in advance of any changes in the date, time or location of the appointment, or if the appointment has been cancelled.

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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)
24 hours a day, 7 days a week and holidays

**PASC-SEIU**
1.844.854.7272 (TTY 711)
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 (TTY 711)
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

**OTHERS**
Transportation Services
(No Cost Medi-Ride to the Doctor)
1.888.839.9909 (TTY 711)
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

**MEDI-CAL PLAN PARTNERS**
Anthem Blue Cross
1.888.285.7801

Blue Shield of California (BSC) Promise 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)

Blue Shield California Promise Health Plan: 1.800.609.4166
(TTY 1.800.735.2929)

Kaiser Permanente: 1.888.576.6225

**IN CASE OF EMERGENCY, CALL 911**
English
Free language assistance services are available. You can request interpreting or translation services, information in your language or in another format, or auxiliary aids and services. Call L.A. Care at 1.888.839.9909 (TTY 711), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, including holidays. The call is free.

Spanish
Los servicios de asistencia de idiomas están disponibles de forma gratuita. Puede solicitar servicios de traducción e interpretación, información en su idioma o en otro formato, o servicios o dispositivos auxiliares. Llame a L.A. Care al 1.888.839.9909 (TTY 711), las 24 horas del día, los 7 días de la semana, incluso los días festivos. La llamada es gratuita.

Arabic
لقد يكون هناك خدمات مترجمة أو خدمات ترجمة غير موجودة في اللغة العربية. يمكن طلب خدمات الترجمة والتفسير والخدمات الأخرى الخاصة باللغة العربية حسب متطلباتك. للاستفسار، فالمثمر، 1.888.839.9909 (TTY 711).

African
Health and wellness or prevention information

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 Member Services at 1.888.839.9909 (TTY 711), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week including holidays.

Nondiscrimination and Accessibility Statement
L.A. Care complies with applicable federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex.