Actor Jaime Camil Joins L.A. Care to Promote COVID-19 Vaccinations and Wellness Care

While much of California is returning to some sense of normalcy after more than a year of battling COVID-19, it’s important to know that the pandemic is not over. In fact, the number of cases and hospitalizations have risen since the state reopened in mid-June, with the Delta variant of the coronavirus spreading quickly.

In an effort to ensure members are getting vaccinated and returning to the routine wellness care that they may have put on hold during the pandemic, L.A. Care has teamed up with the award-winning actor Jaime Camil to spread the message.

“I was honored to join in this critical effort,” said Camil. “This is very important to me personally because COVID-19 has had an unequal impact on the Hispanic community. I want to help get the facts out and advance health equity for all communities to ensure we all get through this without further suffering.”

In trying to keep ourselves and our family healthy, many of us have put off important doctor visits for more than a year now. Well-care visits can help us get back to good health. Please call your doctor today to schedule a well-care visit or annual check-up for important health screenings or vaccines, if needed. In fact, make appointments for everyone in the family – you, the kids, and even your parents or grandparents.

Camil shared, “As a father, I understand that caring for yourself is one of the best ways you can care for your family and be there for them. That is why I chose to get the COVID-19 vaccine. It not only protects you, but it also protects your loved ones and your community”.

Together, we can end this pandemic and get back to our normal lives. What’s your reason for being vaccinated? Think about it and get vaccinated today!

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Depression is a health condition that affects your feelings, thoughts and ability to carry out your daily activities. It can be treated. People with depression may have difficulty getting up in the morning, and feel very tired during the day. They may also lose hope for the future. Often depressed people want to avoid others. Depression can make it hard to pay attention or to complete a task.

**Common Signs of Depression**

- Sadness, feeling empty or hopeless most of the day, almost daily for two or more weeks
- Loss of interest in activities
- Sleeping too much or too little
- Weight loss or gain
- Feeling worthless
- Trouble concentrating
- Having negative thoughts that don’t stop

**What Can You Do?**

Talking to your doctor is the first step in getting help for depression. There are many medications to treat it. Your doctor may suggest you see a mental health specialist who will help you understand your thoughts and feelings. You can also learn actions and behaviors that can help improve your mood.

Therapy can help you change behaviors or thought patterns which contribute to depression. L.A. Care members can call Beacon Health Options at 1.877.344.2858 to connect with a mental health professional for therapy and other behavioral health services.

**Medication Treatment for Depression**

It may take some time to find the right medication. Talk openly with your doctor about how you are feeling and doing.

- It may take up to three weeks for the medication to work.
- It may take six months or more to fully treat depression.
- Take your medication the way your doctor prescribed it.
- Don’t stop taking your medication, even if you are feeling better.
- Be sure to refill your medication on time.

**Tell your Doctor:**

- If you use home remedies or supplements.
- If you smoke or drink.
- If you use other drugs. This can affect how antidepressant medicine works.
Taking care of your health is important to be there for your family and enjoy the holidays with them. Physicals, or well-care visits, is one of the best ways to care for your health. Make sure you see your doctor once a year for a physical. These services are at no cost to you. Having a physical can help your doctor catch issues early. You will learn if you need shots or tests. Your doctor can show you how to make healthy changes for better health. If you are a new member, please make an appointment to see your doctor for your first visit within three months of joining L.A. Care.

To learn more about what health care services are right for you and your family, talk with your doctor. Take a look at our online tool to see what services you need by age. Visit lacare.org to find information under For Members, Getting Care, Routine Exams. In the Resource section on the right side of the page, are brochures for Children and Teens, Adults and Older Adults.

Stay healthy during the holidays by doing what’s best to enjoy good health!
No-Cost Home Visit Programs

Parenting can be hard and every parent deserves help. Having in-home support can make all the difference. To find the programs that are right for you, please go to https://edirectory.homevisitingla.org/. Fill out the questionnaire and learn about the different types of programs.

For more information on resources for pregnancy visit, lacare.org/pregnancy.

Healthy Habits to Help Prevent Flu

There are many ways you can help prevent getting and spreading the flu. The first way is to make sure you get vaccinated each year. Other ways include:

1. **Avoiding close contact** with others who are sick.
2. **Staying home** when you are sick.
3. **Covering your mouth and nose** when coughing or sneezing.
4. **Keeping your hands clean** by washing with soap or using alcohol-based hand sanitizers.
5. **Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.**
6. **Following local masking and social distancing guidelines due to the ongoing COVID pandemic.**

Getting a flu shot is easy and free for L.A. Care members. Just go to your doctor or local pharmacy and show your L.A. Care member ID card. To learn more visit lacare.org/flu.
**Need Help With Interpretation? We Are Here for You!**

Do you need help talking to your doctor? If so, please call L.A. Care before your next appointment. We can help, call L.A. Care’s Member Services at **1.888.839.9909 (TTY 711)** to set up interpreter services, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, including holidays. An interpreter will go to your doctor’s appointment with you and tell the doctor what you need in your language for FREE. Be sure you have the information of your next appointment: the date, time and where it is going to be.

If you are going to get Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) services, an interpreter can also come to your home and help translate, please call Member Services to schedule.

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**Ready . . . Set . . . Quit!**

Have you been thinking about quitting smoking? It is not easy, it takes time and a plan. A good start to the plan is the Great American Smokeout. The American Cancer Society sets one day each year for people who smoke to commit to healthy, smoke-free lives. This year, the Great American Smokeout is on **Thursday, November 18**.

Giving up smoking may be one of the hardest things you do. With the right plan and support your chances of success can be higher. Even if you have tried to quit more than once, just remember to take it one day at a time. You can quit whether you smoke cigarettes, vape or chew tobacco.

If you need support, call L.A. Care at **1.855.856.6943** to learn more about telephone counseling, online self-paced programs and resources. Talk to your doctor about medication to help you quit. You can also call the California Smoker’s Helpline, a free phone-based counseling service, at **1.800.NO.BUTTS (1.800.662.8887)**.

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Fall Harvest

Fall is here! Squashes such as butternut, acorn, spaghetti and pumpkins are now in season. Try adding this healthy and delicious recipe to your table.

Spaghetti squash has a sweet, mellow flavor and a string like texture when cooked, making it a perfect substitute for pasta. It is low in calories, but high in fiber and vitamins A, B6, and C. It is also low in carbs, with only 10g carbs per cup when cooked, making it a diabetes-friendly food.

**Baked Spaghetti Squash with Tomato Sauce**

**Ingredients:**
- 1 (2-3 lb) spaghetti squash
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 2 cups of your favorite tomato sauce
- 2 tbsp of chopped parsley
- 2 tbsp grated parmesan
- ¼ cup fresh mozzarella cheese
- Salt and black pepper to taste

**Instructions:**
- Cut the squash in half, scrape out the seeds and strings.
- Steam for 20 minutes in a large pot. Or place squash in a dish with ¼ cup water, cover it with a dampened paper towel and microwave for 10 minutes. Check with a fork. It is ready when the squash feels soft throughout. Add more cooking time if needed.
- Let it cool until you are able to touch it. Scoop out flesh with a large fork, it will come out in long strings and look like spaghetti. Place on a baking dish and toss with olive oil.
- Mix tomato sauce with fresh chopped parsley, pour over the spaghetti squash.
- Sprinkle parmesan cheese and black pepper, top with mozzarella cheese.
- Bake 25 minutes at 350°F, until bubbly and cheese is melted. Serve immediately. Perfect with a green salad.

If you have diabetes and want to learn more about self-care, please go to [lacare.org/diabetes](http://lacare.org/diabetes) or you can join a Diabetes Self-Management Education Class by calling L.A. Care's **Health Education Department** at **1.855.856.6943**.
Grow Your Attitude of Gratitude

The holidays usually means spending quality time with family and friends. It is even more special this year due to the pandemic, as you may have been unable to be with your family and friends last year. It is a time to reflect and be thankful. Gratitude is important every day and a time to notice the positive things in our life.

Practicing gratitude is also a great way to promote physical and mental health. Being grateful helps us to deal better with stress and trauma. It can boost feelings of connection.

One simple way to practice gratitude is to count your blessings. Daily or weekly, think of or write down a few things for which you are grateful. Perhaps you appreciate good health, a delicious meal or a having your needs met. Pause to enjoy the things that you are grateful for. Stop and enjoy the feeling of the sun on your skin, children at play, family, or the way your co-worker makes you laugh.

Do something to show your gratitude. Thank people who do something nice for you. Tell people in your life what they mean to you. Take the time to do something nice for someone else. Then possibly they will have reason to be grateful, too.

Prescription Drugs Listed on the L.A. Care Website

To find out more about L.A. Care list of covered drugs called the Formulary, and monthly updates, visit the L.A. Care website at lacare.org. 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.

Gratitude Supports Well-Being…

– Lailah Gifty Akita
Community Resource Centers Distribute Nearly 25,000 Free Backpacks

With many students returning to in-person classes, the L.A. Care and Blue Shield Promise Community Resource Centers were busy over the summer helping families in Los Angeles County prepare for the new school year.

The Resource Centers held nine back-to-school events where they gave away nearly 25,000 free backpacks filled with school supplies to children ages four and older. The drive-thru and walk-up events took place from July 16 to August 14.

The health plans understand that while the economy has started to improve, many families are still recovering from financial troubles due to the COVID-19 pandemic – and that preparing for the school year may be difficult. “Every year, many families come to our backpack and school supply events, which shows there is real need for this type of help,” said John Baackes, L.A. Care CEO. “And the Community Resource Centers are here for this reason – to support the social needs of our communities. Health care should be more than just an ID card in your wallet.”

As part of their ongoing efforts to address food insecurity, the Resource Centers also gave away free bags of groceries at a number of the back-to-school events.

The L.A. Care and Blue Shield Promise Community Resource Centers offer many free classes, programs and services that aim to make our communities healthier.

Get a FREE Smartphone and FREE Text/Talk!

Did you know you could qualify for a free cell phone and low cost phone plan? This program is called Lifeline Assistance. There are five Lifeline cell phone providers in California, but only one, Safelink Wireless, offers FREE smart phones, unlimited talk and text with 3GB of data each month at no charge. You do not need to sign a contract. You will never get a bill.

To learn more or to see if you qualify, call SafeLink at 1.800.723.3546 or go to SafeLink.com/LACARE.
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

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 to 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.

*The applicable waiting time for a particular appointment may be extended if the referring or treating health care provider has determined and noted in the patient record that a longer waiting time will not have a detrimental effect on the health of the member.*

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, Instagram and LinkedIn.
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.

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.

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.
Actor Jaime Camil Joins L.A. Care to Promote COVID-19 Vaccinations and Wellness Care

L.A. Care recommends that everyone who is eligible get the COVID-19 vaccine. All of the vaccines authorized by the FDA – Moderna, Pfizer and Johnson & Johnson, are effective in preventing hospitalization and death. They do not infect you with the COVID-19 virus and side effects are generally mild, while the benefit of the vaccine is great. Many sites throughout L.A. County are now offering vaccines without an appointment, and have expanded hours to include evenings and weekends. There is no cost to L.A. Care members to receive the vaccine.

Visit myturn.ca.gov to find a vaccination location near you, and visit lacare.org/vaccine for the latest information on COVID-19 vaccines.

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 Medi-Cal Plan
1.888.839.9909 (TTY 711)

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 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

TelaDoc®
1.800.835.2362
(Talk to a doctor for urgent care needs)

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY, CALL 911
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, 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.

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