



L.A. Care
HEALTH PLAN®

For A Healthy Life

SPRING 2019

live
well

A Publication for L.A. Care's Seniors and
Members with Special Needs

My Health In Motion™ Personalized Online Wellness

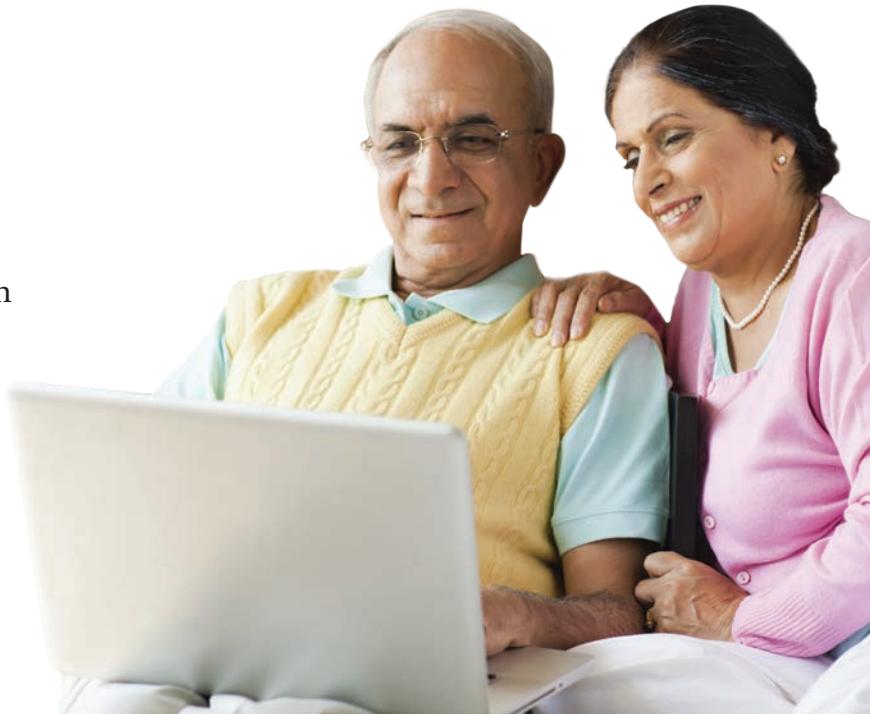
Did you know you have personalized wellness information at your fingertips? With just a few clicks or swipes, you can access a wide range of online health activities and tools. Whether you want to quit smoking, lose weight, or manage stress, L.A. Care's *My Health In Motion™* site has something for you!

It allows you to go at your own pace with ease from your computer or phone. There is no need to make an appointment, travel, or wait. Log on any time, day or night: whenever it fits your schedule. Sign in at lacare.org and click on the "My Health In Motion™" tab to see all the fun tools that can help you stay healthy. You'll find:

- A lifestyle survey with a personal health report that offers real-world tips to improve your health
- Interactive guides on exercising, healthy eating, quitting smoking, and managing your weight
- Health trackers to help you reach your health goals
- Interactive online health workshops
- A health information library
- Healthy recipes and meal plans

With *My Health In Motion™*, you can even send a message to a L.A. Care health coach, trainer or dietitian. Get your personal health questions answered by a qualified health professional!

If you have questions or need help with *My Health In Motion™*, call L.A. Care's **Health Education Department** at **1.855.856.6943 (TTY 711)**.



ELEVATING
HEALTHCARE
IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY
SINCE 1997



Ask the Doc: Asthma Treatment: What You Need to Know

Understanding your asthma treatment can help you lead a healthier and more active life. Here are some important things to know.

Q: What are inhalers used for?

A: An inhaler is a device that delivers medication to the lungs. There are two types of inhalers used to treat asthma: controller inhalers and rescue inhalers. Each works differently.

Q: What does a controller inhaler do?

A: Controller inhalers help **prevent** asthma attacks. They keep the airways in the lungs from swelling and becoming inflamed. A controller inhaler is used every day, even when you don't have asthma symptoms. This will help to manage your asthma and prevent attacks. Always refill your medication on time so you don't run out.



Q: What does a rescue inhaler do?

A: Rescue inhaler gives **quick relief** when you have asthma symptoms or an asthma attack. They open up the airways in your lungs to help you breathe better. Use your rescue inhaler if you have trouble breathing, chest pain, coughing or wheezing.

Keep your rescue medications nearby at all times, even when you leave the house. If you need to use your rescue inhaler more than two days a week, it may mean that your asthma is not well controlled. Be sure to let your doctor know.

Q: What are spacer devices?

A: A spacer is a tube that attaches to an inhaler to help medicine get into the lungs. Check with your doctor to see if a spacer might help you or your child.

Q: What is a peak flow meter?

A: A peak flow meter is a device that measures how well air moves out of the lungs. If you have asthma, you should use it regularly to help detect early signs that your asthma is getting worse. Your doctor can give you a prescription for a peak flow meter or spacer device.

Asthma Action Plan

Talk with your doctor about your asthma treatment and make a written **Asthma Action Plan** that includes:

- How to use the peak flow meter to know if your or your child's asthma is under control
- How to deal with asthma symptoms
- How and when to take medicine
- How to avoid asthma triggers
- When to go to the doctor or get emergency or urgent care

L.A. Care offers a free program called **L.A. Cares About Asthma®** to help members keep their asthma under control. To learn more about the program, please call **1.888.200.3094** (TTY **711**).

You can also get asthma information or free advice from a nurse by calling L.A. Care's 24-hour **Nurse Advice Line at 1.800.249.3619**, (TTY **711**) 24 hours, 7 days, including holidays.

Please visit the L.A. Care website at lacare.org to see L.A. Care's Formulary for medications to treat asthma.



Managing Your Asthma

- A good way to tell that your controller medicine is working well is when you are using your rescue inhaler less.
- Call your doctor if your controller is not working well.
- Avoid things that make your asthma worse (triggers).
- Colds, flu and allergies can make your asthma worse.
- Call **911** if your medicine does not relieve your asthma attack, you are too out of breath to walk or talk, if you have blue lips or fingernails, or you have other emergency medical conditions.

Substance Use Disorder Services Are Available



Many people have challenges coping with alcohol or drug addiction, also known as substance use disorder (SUD).

According to the Los Angeles Department of Public Health, **20 million people need treatment**.

Addiction is a disease where one cannot stop drinking or taking drugs. Having a SUD is harmful to the body and can lead to other issues that affect mental health and relationships with family, friends and employers.

SUD is considered a disease because it causes negative changes in the brain which affects behavior and the ability to make sound decisions. Also, the body becomes dependent and the individual can become sick when not using alcohol and/or drugs. Without medical attention or proper treatment, SUD can be life-threatening and sometimes cause death.

Not everyone that uses alcohol or drugs is addicted. Being unable to control use or stop it, may be a sign to seek treatment and support. There is no single cause of addiction, but it is preventable. There are many resources available and programs to fit individual needs.

Types of Treatment

- Individual and group counseling
- Care management
- Medication management
- Recovery support services*
- Withdrawal management (Detox)*
- Recovery Bridge Housing*
- Residential treatment*

Programs are available on an inpatient or outpatient basis if you need help for an addiction. Please visit your primary care physician and/or the behavioral health resources offered by L.A. Care through **Beacon Health Options** at **1.877.344.2858 (TTY 711)**.

*Note: These benefits are available through the L.A. County Department of Public Health. Beacon Health Options staff will assist you with connecting to the services that meet your needs.



Bite Into a Healthy Lifestyle

Have you been wanting to make healthy changes in your lifestyle but aren't sure how? A great place to start is with National Nutrition Month in March. This year's theme is "Bite Into a Healthy Lifestyle."

Here are three "bites" to a healthier lifestyle:

1. **Awareness** - Be mindful of your food choices when it comes to calories and nutrition.
Make every calorie count!
2. **Knowledge** - Learn all you can about the role food plays in nourishing your body.
Some foods, like fruits and vegetables, help reduce the risk of disease.
3. **Physical activity** - Move your body more!
Getting even a little exercise on most days of the week helps you keep a healthy weight and improves your mood.

You don't have to go it alone! L.A. Care staff is ready to help you get started. You can talk to a dietitian over the phone, watch an online video, or visit a Family Resource Center. Our online wellness portal, *My Health In Motion™*, offers a wealth of health information at your fingertips. Call the **Health Education Department** at **1.855.856.6943** (TTY 711) to learn more. It's time to "bite" into a healthy lifestyle!



Eat good = Feel good!



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

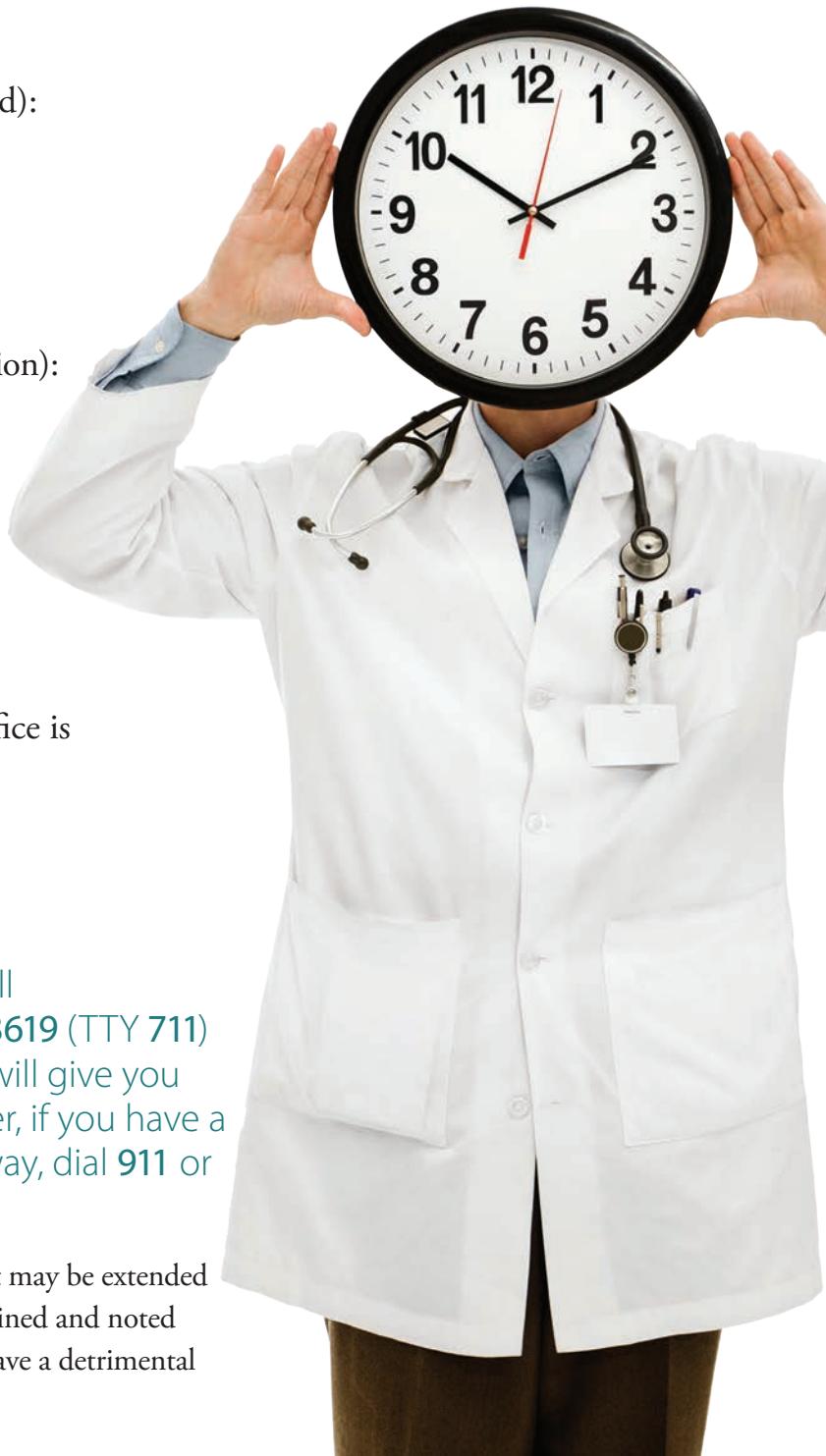
- Routine appointment (non-urgent):
15 business days
- Urgent appointment (requiring prior authorization):
96 hours

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.





Do You Have High Blood Pressure?

High blood pressure (BP) is something that we may not feel, but if left uncontrolled it can harm the heart, kidneys and brain. However, if we control our blood pressure we will have less damage of the heart and kidneys, as well as have less risk of a stroke and disability. It is important to “know your BP,” what is normal and what is elevated.

The American Heart Association recently updated the numbers that define high blood pressure and they are lower than before. High BP, or hypertension, is when the pressure inside the blood vessels is elevated and the force of blood pushing against the walls of your vessels leads to damage in the heart, kidneys and brain. A BP of higher than 130/80 meets the condition of hypertension.

The good news is there are many safe medications for managing your BP. Also, reducing the salt in your diet may help lower your BP. It does not matter how old you are, controlling BP is important. Look at the table and make sure you know your blood pressure numbers. If your blood pressure is elevated or in the hypertension stage, talk to your doctor about what steps you can take to control it and stay healthy.



Blood Pressure Categories

BLOOD PRESSURE CATEGORY	SYSTOLIC mm Hg (upper number)	and	DIASTOLIC mm Hg (lower number)
NORMAL	LESS THAN 120	and	LESS THAN 80
ELEVATED	120 – 129	and	LESS THAN 80
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION) STAGE 1	130 – 139	or	80 – 89
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION) STAGE 2	140 OR HIGHER	or	90 OR HIGHER
HYPERTENSIVE CRISIS (consult your doctor immediately)	HIGHER THAN 180	and/or	HIGHER THAN 120



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



The L.A. Care Formulary Has You Covered



The L.A. Care Formulary is an approved list of covered drugs for L.A. Care members. It is reviewed and updated monthly for safety and effectiveness. The Formulary and updates are available online at lacare.org.

How to Use the Formulary

- Formulary drugs are listed by their generic name and brand name as follows:
Generic name (BRAND NAME)
- If only the brand name drug is on the market, only that will show: BRAND NAME
- Drugs can be searched on the online formulary by generic or brand name, or therapeutic category. Using the “Ctrl + F” function or the index makes it easy.

Generic and Brand Name Medications

- Generic and brand name drugs are covered.
- Generic drugs are safe and cost-effective.
- Brand name drugs are used when a generic drug is not available.

Non-Formulary Medications

Drugs not listed on the Formulary are not covered (non-formulary).

Benefit Coverage and Limitations

Quantity Limits (QL): Some drugs have quantity limits for safety or cost reasons.

Step Therapy (ST): Requires trying one or more drugs first (Step Process).

Medication Request Process

The Medication Request Process requires a Prior Authorization (PA) request from your doctor. The following drugs need a PA:

- Non-formulary drugs
- Formulary drugs needing safety or cost reviews.
- Formulary drugs that exceed quantity limits (QL).
- Step therapy (ST) drugs that do not go through the normal Step Process.
- Brand drug when the generic is available.

Approval may be given for a documented medical need, otherwise the request will be denied.

General Benefit Exclusions (Not Covered)

- Drugs for cosmetic purposes
- Infertility drugs
- Experimental drugs
- Foreign drugs

The Medication Request Process is not available for excluded drugs, but denied requests can be appealed.



Family Resource Centers: 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**

Lynwood

Phone: **310.661.3000**

Pacoima

Phone: **213.438.5497**

Palmdale

Phone: **213.438.5580**

New FRCs Coming in 2019!

Pomona Metro Los Angeles

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.

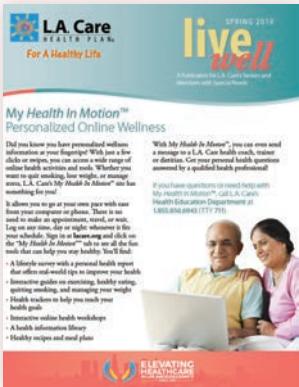
Tips to protect yourself against medical identity theft include:

- 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 **1.888.522.1298** (TTY 711).

Go green and get *Live Well* electronically!



Would you like to get *Live Well* by email? Please sign up on our website at lacare.org/live-well to receive it by email. Be sure to like us on Facebook, Twitter 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 **1.888.522.1298 (TTY 711)** 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and holidays. Also, visit our website and member portal at **lacare.org**.



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.



Word Scramble

Mental gymnastics to help you remember what you've read in this issue!

MSHATA _____

AIHLRNE _____

ORLOECNTLR _____

NNROYTEHIPES _____

RCSEUROSE _____

HEHYATL _____

UTNITOINR _____

EIRESXEC _____

SSEDAIE _____

RURAOYMFQ _____



Answers: asthma, inhaler, controller, hypertension, resources, healthy, nutrition, exercise, disease, formulary



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)

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

1.888.522.1298 (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

MEDI-CAL PLAN PARTNERS

Anthem Blue Cross

1.888.285.7801 (TTY **1.800.368.4424**)

Blue Shield of California (BSC)

Promise Health Plan

1.800.605.2556 (TTY **1.800.735.2929**)

Kaiser Permanente

1.800.464.4000 (TTY 711)

Plan Partners' Nurse Advice Lines

(for non-emergency medical advice)

Kaiser Permanente

1.888.576.6225 (TTY 711)

Blue Shield California Promise

Health Plan: 1.800.609.4166

(TTY **1.800.735.2929**)

Anthem Blue Cross: 1.800.224.0336

(TTY **1.800.368.4424**)

OTHERS

Transportation Services

(No Cost Medi-Ride to the Doctor)

1.866.529.2141 (TTY 711)

(Spanish **1.866.529.2142**)

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

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY, CALL 911

