

health sense



Fall 2020



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Flu vaccine and COVID-19

By Kristin Burnett, Immunization
Program Manager, Contra Costa Public
Health Department

According to the Centers for Disease
Control and Prevention (CDC),
everyone 6 months and older should
get a flu vaccine every year.

Why it matters now more than ever

Flu and COVID-19 can both
make you very sick. They can lead to

hospitalization or even death.

- Getting a flu vaccine this fall
can help “flatten the curve” by
preventing hospitalizations from flu
illnesses.
- Flu and COVID-19 have similar
symptoms. Protecting yourself from
flu can help prevent confusion about

whether symptoms are from flu or
COVID-19.

You can help save lives. Getting a
flu vaccine this year may keep you out
of the hospital. And that can free up
beds for people with COVID-19, says
Robert Redfield, MD, CDC director.

Learn more at [cdc.gov/flu/season/
faq-flu-season-2020-2021.htm](https://cdc.gov/flu/season/faq-flu-season-2020-2021.htm).



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Even during COVID-19, don't skip your child's shots

Families are focused on staying healthy during the pandemic. And that's the right thing to do. But health experts have an important reminder for parents. COVID-19 prevention shouldn't mean skipping your child's vaccines.

Vaccines help protect kids of all ages from serious diseases. Those include diseases like whooping cough and measles. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends children get many of their shots by age 2.

Despite that recommendation, it seems that fewer kids have been getting their shots during the coronavirus crisis.

Schedule your child's shots

Doctors' offices are taking steps to



keep their patients safe during checkups and vaccine visits.

If you think you may have fallen behind on your child's shots, talk to their doctor. They can fill you in on vaccine recommendations for your child. There is no cost for you to receive these preventive care services.

Here are some shots that kids of different ages may need.

Infants and toddlers (birth to age 2 years)

- DTaP (diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis).
- MMR (measles, mumps and rubella).
- Chickenpox.
- Pneumonia.
- Hepatitis A and B.
- Polio.

Preschoolers and school-aged kids (ages 3 to 10)

- DTaP (diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis).
- MMR (measles, mumps and rubella).
- Chickenpox.
- Polio.

Preteens and teens (ages 11 to 18)

- HPV.
- Meningitis.
- Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis).

Asthma program

IMPORTANT MEMBER UPDATES

Contra Costa Health Plan (CCHP), in partnership with Public Health and local energy efficiency programs, was awarded an asthma grant. The funding from this grant will provide asthma home-visiting services. The program will enroll 50 CCHP members per year with severe asthma. These members will receive various asthma services. The services will include clinical treatment with asthma and allergy specialists, patient and family education on asthma and conditions that

may affect asthma in the home, and some minor to moderate home improvement.

Asthma home visits will be conducted by a community health worker and will consist of:

- Asthma education.
- Discussions about conditions that may affect asthma in the home.
- Suggestions about home supplies (special vacuum filters and cleaning supplies).

Due to COVID-19, in-home visits will be conducted by video until it is safe to have home visits. Medical case management will be provided by a registered nurse, including referrals



to other appropriate services. Home improvement will be conducted by 2 county programs.

Keeping a positive outlook during the pandemic

You're wearing a face mask. You're staying 6 feet away from others when out in public. And you're cleaning frequently touched surfaces daily.

But what are you doing for your mental outlook?

According to the American Heart Association, people who are happier tend to have better heart health. They manage stress better. And being more positive may contribute to a longer lifespan.

So how can you build positivity? Here are a few ideas.

Stay connected with friends and family. Whether it's by telephone, social media or online video chat, regular check-ins with loved ones can spread joy in both directions.

Reframe your situation. Try looking at this as an opportunity to focus on yourself and your home. Try to do 1 productive thing a day. It'll make you feel better.

Stay close to your normal routine. Wake up and go to bed at around the same time. Eat regular meals. Practice good hygiene and change into clean clothes. Sticking to your normal routine will make it easier to resume normal life when this is over.

Keep your house neat and tidy. Uncertainty is just outside your front door. Keep your side of the door organized, predictable and clean.

Limit how much news you watch and read. Stay informed, but don't

obsess over endless media coverage.

Focus on the small things that bring happiness each day. At the end of the day, think about all the small moments that gave you pleasure. What were you grateful for? You might want to write your answers down in a journal so you can revisit them.

Spend some time in nature. Take a stroll through a park. Have a seat near a pond and watch the ducks

paddle around. Studies have shown that spending time in nature settings can improve your attention, lower your stress levels and improve your mood. Just be sure to practice social distancing while you're outdoors and wear a face mask if you're around others.

Additional sources: American Psychiatric Association; American Psychological Association; Anxiety and Depression Association of America; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



IMPORTANT MEMBER ALERTS

Behavioral health services

As a member of Contra Costa Health Plan (CCHP), we want you to know that the following services are available to you as part of your Medi-Cal benefits program. The Behavioral Health benefit allows you to request mental health services provided by a psychologist or behavioralist. Contra Costa Health Plan collaborates with Contra Costa Behavioral Health Services. Behavioral health services include mental health services and supports that include, but are not limited to, mental health and substance use disorder treatment, including alternative and culturally specific treatments, and peer and family support services.

Outpatient mental health services are covered by CCHP, and these services include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Psychiatric consultation.
- Outpatient services that include lab work, medications and supplies.
- Psychological testing to evaluate a mental health condition.
- Outpatient services to monitor drug therapy.

In addition, we encourage our Medi-Cal members to use the Behavioral Health Access line by calling **888-678-7277**. Contra Costa Commercial Plan members plan members should call **877-661-6230, option 4**.

Myths and facts about COVID-19

There's a lot of bad information out there about COVID-19. To stay healthy, you want to follow good advice from reliable sources.

Fact: People of all ages can get COVID-19.

Anyone can get very sick with this virus. Older people and those with certain health conditions may be more likely to have severe symptoms. But younger people can get sick or pass the virus on to someone who gets very ill.

Myth: You should use an ultraviolet (UV) lamp to disinfect your skin.

UV lamps should not be used to clean your hands or other areas of the skin. UV light can cause skin irritation.

Myth: Spraying bleach or chlorine on your skin or drinking it can kill the coronavirus.

Not true. Bleach and chlorine can be useful to disinfect surfaces like kitchen



counters. But you should never drink them or use them on your skin. They are poisonous when ingested. And they can damage skin.

Fact: The virus may not cause symptoms right away.

It can take anywhere from 2 to

14 days before people who are infected develop symptoms.

Fact: Vaccines for pneumonia and the flu won't protect you from the coronavirus.

It's true that these vaccines don't protect against the virus. But they are important for other reasons. Almost everyone 6 months and older needs a flu shot every year. Kids under 2 years, adults over 65, people who smoke and people with certain medical conditions also need the pneumococcal vaccine.

Myth: Antibiotics will work against COVID-19.

Antibiotics can't fight viruses. They only work against bacteria. If you're hospitalized with COVID-19, however, you might be given antibiotics to help you avoid certain kinds of pneumonia.

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; World Health Organization

Doctors are making house calls again

Video visits let you talk to your provider from the comfort and safety of your own home

Will Harper

Now you can see your doctor or nurse practitioner without having to make a trip to the clinic. You won't even need to leave your couch!

You can schedule a video visit if you have:

- A smartphone
- A tablet.
- A computer with a camera.

You can see your provider "face to face" at your appointment time. So far, patients love the video visits and find them more satisfying than a telephone

visit. Providers also like video visits because they can literally see how you are doing. That helps them provide better care compared to a simple phone call.

Before your video visit:

- Download the Zoom app.
- A nurse will call you before your appointment to make sure that you are set up and ready to go!



SCHEDULE YOUR VIDEO VISIT Call 800-495-8885. Or use our online patient portal, MyChart!

Important pharmacy benefit change!



Starting on Jan. 1, 2021, you will be getting your Medi-Cal covered prescriptions through a new state program called *Medi-Cal Rx* instead of Contra Costa Health Plan (CCHP). The State Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) is working with a new contractor, Magellan Medicaid Administration, Inc. (Magellan), to provide Medi-Cal Rx services.

Will I need to change my medication?

Most people will not have to change their medications. The list of drugs that require prior approval may be different than the list CCHP uses. Your doctor may need to get approval to refill prescriptions. He or she may talk to you about changing to a medication that does not require prior approval.

Can I use the same pharmacy?

Most people will be able to use the same pharmacy they do now on Jan. 1, 2021. You can call the Medi-Cal Member Help Line at **800-541-5555** (TTY: **800-430-7077**) to ask if your pharmacy will accept Medi-Cal Rx.

What else is different?

Starting on Jan. 1, 2021, you will need to take your Medi-Cal Benefits Identification Card (BIC) when you go to the pharmacy. The pharmacy will use the card to look up your information and give you your medications.

If you did not receive your BIC or it is lost or stolen, you may ask for a BIC from Contra Costa County's Employment and Human Services Department at **800-709-8348**.

What if I have questions?

If you have questions about your

Your Medi-Cal Benefits Identification Card (BIC) can look like either of these cards. You will need your BIC to get Medi-Cal covered medications from the pharmacy starting Jan. 1, 2021.

medication or other pharmacy services before Jan. 1, 2021, please call your doctor or Contra Costa Health Plan at **877-661-6230**, Monday to Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

If you have questions about the letters you will be receiving about Medi-Cal Rx or have general Medi-Cal Rx questions, contact the Medi-Cal Member Help Line at **800-541-5555** Monday to Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

After Jan. 1, 2021, please call the Medi-Cal Rx Call Center Line at **800-977-2273 24/7** or visit **Medi-CalRx.dhcs.ca.gov**.

Case managers

GUIDES FOR YOUR GOOD HEALTH

Would you like help with your health care needs? That's what our case managers do. We are a team of nurses and social workers. Our health care experts can help you get the care you need. They will work with you, your family and your doctor to improve your health. In addition, they can connect you to needed local resources. The service is free for Contra Costa Health Plan members. This service is offered over the phone.

Ask for a case manager if you have:

- A hard time getting to your doctor visits,

taking your meds as you should or eating well.

- Gone to the emergency room a lot (more than 3 times this year).
- Gone to, or had to stay in, the hospital a lot (more than 2 times this year).
- Difficulty with stable housing, lack of transportation to get to medical appointments, lack of food, or another situation that may hinder your health.
- Changes in your memory, mood, personality or behavior.
- Health issues that need to be watched closely.
- Any worries about caring for yourself or your loved ones.

Call now

Get in touch with a case manager. Call **925-313-6887**.

- Please leave a message.
- Be sure to tell us what time we can reach you.
- We will return your call.
- You have the right to decline or stop this service at any time.

Discrimination is against the law

Contra Costa Health Plan (CCHP) follows federal civil rights laws. CCHP does not discriminate, exclude people, or treat them differently because of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex.

CCHP provides:

Free aids and services to people with disabilities to help them communicate better, such as: Qualified sign language interpreters, written information in other formats (large print, audio, accessible electronic formats, other formats); free language services to people whose primary language is not English, such as: qualified interpreters and information written in other languages. If you need these services, contact CCHP between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. by calling **1-877-661-6230**. Or, if you cannot hear or speak well, please call TTY **1-800-735-2929**.

How to file a grievance

If you believe that CCHP has failed to provide these services or discriminated in another way on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex, you can file a grievance with CCHP. You can file a grievance by phone, in writing, in person, or electronically:

By phone: Contact CCHP between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. by calling **1-877-661-6230**. Or, if you cannot hear or speak well, please call TTY/TDD **1-800-735-2929**.

In writing: Fill out a complaint form or write a letter and send it to: CCHP Member Appeals/Grievance Resolution Unit, 595 Center Avenue, Suite 100, Martinez, CA 94553 or fax it to **1-925-313-6047**.

In person: Visit your doctor's office or CCHP and say you want to file a grievance.

Electronically: Visit CCHP's website at **contracostahealthplan.org** (go to: Member Services; click on Grievance Form).

Office of Civil Rights

You can also file a civil rights complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights, by phone, in writing, or electronically:

By phone: Call **1-800-368-1019**. If you cannot speak or hear well, please call TTY/TDD **1-800-537-7697**.

In writing: Fill out a complaint form or send a letter to: **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 200 Independence Avenue, SW Room 509F, HHH Building, Washington, D.C. 20201**. Complaint forms are available at **<http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/office/file/index.html>**.

Electronically: Visit the Office for Civil Rights Complaint Portal at **<https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf>**.

Language Assistance/ Asistencia Lingüística



English

ATTENTION: If you speak another language, language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. Call **1-877-661-6230** (TTY: **1-800-735-2929**).

Español (Spanish)

ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al **1-877-661-6230 "2"** (TTY: **1-800-735-2929**).

Tiếng Việt (Vietnamese)

CHÚ Ý: Nếu bạn nói Tiếng Việt, có các dịch vụ hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ miễn phí dành cho bạn. Gọi số **1-877-661-6230** (TTY: **1-800-735-2929**).

Tagalog (Tagalog– Filipino)

PAUNAWA: Kung nagsasalita ka ng Tagalog, maaari kang gumamit ng mga serbisyo ng tulong sa wika nang walang bayad. Tumawag sa 1-877-661-6230 (TTY: 1-800-735-2929).

한국어 (Korean)

주의: 한국어를 사용하시는 경우, 언어 지원 서비스를 무료로 이용하실 수 있습니다. 1-877-661-6230 (TTY: 1-800-735-2929)번으로 전화해 주십시오.

繁體中文 (Chinese)

注意：如果您使用繁體中文，您可以免費獲得語言援助服務。請致電 1-877-661-6230 (TTY: 1-800-735-2929)。

Հայերեն (Armenian)

ՈՒՇԱԴՐՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ՝ Եթե խոսում եք հայերեն, ապա ձեզ անվճար կարող են տրամադրվել լեզվական աջակցության ծառայություններ: Չանգահարեք 1-877-661-6230 (TTY (հեռատիպ)՝ 1-800-735-2929):

Русский (Russian)

ВНИМАНИЕ: Если вы говорите на русском языке, то вам доступны бесплатные услуги перевода. Звоните 1-877-661-6230 (телетайп: 1-800-735-2929).

توجه: اگر به زبان فارسی گفتگو می کنید، تسهیلات زبانی بصورت رایگان برای شما 1-877-661-6230 (فارسی (Farsi) 1-877-661-6230 (TTY: 1-800-735-2929) فراهم می باشد.

日本語 (Japanese)

注意事項：日本語を話される場合、無料の言語支援をご利用いただけます。1-877-661-6230 (TTY: 1-800-735-2929) まで、お電話にてご連絡ください。

Hmoob (Hmong)

LUS CEEV: Yog tias koj hais lus Hmoob, cov kev pab txog lus, muaj kev pab dawb rau koj. Hu rau 1-877-661-6230 (TTY: 1-800-735-2929).

ਪੰਜਾਬੀ (Punjabi)

ਧਿਆਨ ਦਿਓ: ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਬੋਲਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਸੇਵਾ ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਲਈ ਮੁਫਤ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ। 1-877-661-6230 (TTY: 1-800-735-2929) 'ਤੇ ਕਾਲ ਕਰੋ।

عربي (Arabic)

ملحوظة: إذا كنت تتحدث اذكر اللغة، فإن خدمات المساعدة اللغوية تتوافر لك بالمجان. اتصل برقم (1-877-661-6230) رقم هاتف الصم والبكم: (1-800-735-2929).

हिंदी (Hindi)

ध्यान दें: यदि आप हिंदी बोलते हैं तो आपके लिए मु त में भाषा सहायता सेवाएं उपलब्ध हैं। 1-877-661-6230 (TTY: 1-800-735-2929) पर कॉल करें।

ภาษาไทย (Thai)

เรียน: ถ้าคุณพูดภาษาไทยคุณสามารถใช้บริการช่วยเหลือทางภาษาได้ฟรี โทร 1-877-661-6230 (TTY: 1-800-735-2929).

ខ្មែរ (Cambodian)

ប្រសិនបើ ប្រើសិទ្ធិអ្នកនិយាយ ភាសាខ្មែរ, បសវាជំនួយខ្លួនកភាសា បោយមិនគ្រឹក ល គឺអាចមានសំរាប់ប្រើអ្នក។ ចូរ ទូរស័ព្ទ 1-877-661-6230 (TTY: 1-800-735-2929)

ພາສາລາວ (Lao)

ໄປດຊາບ: ຖ້າວ່າທ່ານເວົ້າພາສາລາວ, ການຮ່ວມມືການຊ່ວຍເຫຼືອດ້ານພາສາ, ໂດຍບໍ່ເສັຍຄ່າ, ແມ່ນມີພ້ອມໃຫ້ທ່ານ. ໂທ 1-877-661-6230 (TTY: 1-800-735-2929)

Fire season preparedness

CCHP wants our members to stay safe, and not only during the stay-home orders due to COVID-19. We also want you to be prepared during the fire season. Here are some suggestions that will help you be prepared in case of fire emergency.

Watch for warnings

Did you know that Contra Costa has a community warning system? It:

- Alerts people in Contra Costa

County to imminent threats to life or safety.

- Alerts are sent in the following manner: sirens, radio, TV and cable, telephone notification/cellphone text and calls (register at cococws.us), Twitter and Facebook, and email.

What should I do?

- Listen, and do not call 911 unless there is a life-threatening situation.

Evacuation

An evacuation order is called when there is threat to life. It is enforced by law. An evacuation may start with an advisory.

- Prepare your home.
- Check on neighbors.
- Locate pets.
- Pre-load the car. Follow the 6 P's: people/pets, papers (phone numbers, important docs), prescriptions, pictures (irreplaceable), personal computer (hard drives, disks), plastic (credit cards, ATM cards, cash).
- Park cars facing out for easy exit.
- Follow directions when you are told to evacuate.



FOR MORE INFORMATION
on fire preparedness, go to
plan.readyforwildfire.org

Community Advisory Council

As your health plan, we would like to encourage you to become part of the Community Advisory Council of the Managed Care Commission (MCC). The Managed Care Commission serves to address the health concerns of persons in Contra Costa County and assures provider, consumer and community feedback to discussions and decision-making. In addition, it also makes recommendations and conducts long-range planning that is shared with the Board of Supervisors, County Health Services Director and Chief Executive Officer of Contra Costa Health Plan (CCHP). Members are appointed by the Board of Supervisors for a 3-year term, and meetings are held 4 times a year via Zoom. We need members to join this committee so you can add your thoughts on how CCHP can provide services for Medi-Cal members. For more information, call CCHP Administration at **925-313-6004**.

Contra Costa Health Plan's Health Education Council

Contra Costa Health Plan is proud to announce a Health Education Council as part of our commitment to improving the health of our members. We are making improvements to our Health Education Program and want to make sure our members have access to free classes for nutrition concerns and different chronic diseases, like asthma and diabetes. We would like to have your participation on this committee. For additional information, please call our main number at **925-313-6000**.

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HEALTH SENSE is published for the members of CONTRA COSTA HEALTH PLAN, 595 Center Ave., Suite 100, Martinez, CA 94553, telephone 925-313-6000, website contracostahealthplan.org.

HEALTH SENSE contains educational health information of general interest. It is not intended to be medical advice and cannot be relied upon as medical advice.

HEALTH SENSE may also contain general information about plan benefits. Plan benefits vary, and for information about your

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particular benefit plan, please see your Evidence of Coverage booklet or call Member Services at 877-661-6230.

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Si desea este folleto en español, llame al **877-661-6230 (oprima 2)**.