

family health

Things to Know

Keeping your child healthy

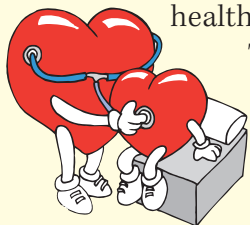
California Children's Services (CCS) is a state program for children with certain diseases or health problems. Through this program, people up to 21 years old can get the special health care and services they need.

CCS will connect you with doctors and trained health care workers who know how to care for your child with special health care needs. If your child is approved for CCS, he or she will still be a Kern Family Health Care member while in this program.

Some of the health problems covered by CCS are: »Cancer. »Congenital heart disease. »Sickle cell anemia. »HIV infection. »Cleft lip or palate. »Other severe health problems.

CCS-approved doctors treat these kinds of problems. Your child's primary care provider takes care of your child's other health needs.

To learn more about CCS, talk to your doctor or call us at **800-391-2000.**



Sun smarts

Summer sun means summer fun.

It's also the time to protect your family from too much sun.

The sun can hurt your skin. Too much sun can lead to: »Wrinkles. »Age spots. »Skin cancer.

The heat can also make you sick. This is called heat illness. Kids and older adults are most at risk.

To stay safe:

- Drink lots of water to stay hydrated.
- Keep inside when it's hot. If you don't have air conditioning at home, go to a place that's cooler, like the library.
- Stay in the shade when you're outside.



- Use sunscreen. Pick one that has a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 15. Also be sure that it protects from both UVA and UVB rays. Put more on every two hours.
- Wear clothes that will cover your skin, such as long-sleeved shirts and wide-brimmed hats.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Si necesita esta información en español, llame al 800-391-2000.

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Take control

Tips to help manage asthma well

You shouldn't hear whistling when you breathe. Not even if you have asthma.

People with asthma have irritated airways. This means that the breathing tubes that go to the lungs can swell up. Then the lungs have a harder time moving air in and out. That can make you cough and whistle when you breathe.

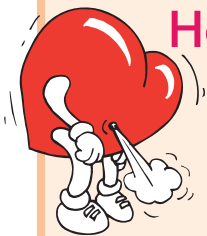
But that shouldn't happen a lot. If it does, your asthma could be out of control. You'll want to see your provider.

Why you need good asthma control

When asthma is out of control, it can affect other parts of your life.

Uncontrolled asthma means your airways are irritated and at risk for infection. When that happens:

- You may miss work. Or kids with asthma may miss days of school.
- You may need to take more medicine just so that you can breathe better.
- You might have to go to the hospital for help.



Help kids manage asthma at school

Have you talked to your child's school about your child's asthma?

If not, talk to your child's provider. He or she can give you a copy of your child's asthma plan. Be sure to share this with the school.

Make sure all your child's teachers and coaches know:

- The medicines your child takes.
- What signs of asthma look like.
- What to do if your child has an asthma attack at school.

Some schools have special rules about medicines. Find out if it's OK for your child to carry his or her own medicine. If not,

make sure your child can get the medicine when needed.

Let teachers know what triggers your child's asthma. For example:

- If furry pets are a problem, ask that animals be kept out of the classroom.
- Does pollen bother your child? Ask that your child stay inside when pollen levels are high outside.

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take To learn more, call Kern Family Health Care's Health Education Department at 800-391-2000.

Is your asthma under control?

Talk with your provider if you answer yes to any of these questions:

- Do you have asthma symptoms a lot?
- Does your asthma bother you at night?
- Have you been to the hospital because of your asthma?
- Do you take your rescue medicine often?

Ask your provider for a written asthma plan. It should say what medicines you take. It should also say what to do if your symptoms worsen.

Also talk to your provider about how to stay away from things that might trigger your asthma. This can include: »Smoke. »Pets. »Dust mites.

Source: American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology

Learning to live with diabetes

If your provider just told you that you have diabetes, you might not know how to feel.

But try not to worry. You'll learn how to manage it.

Find out how to control diabetes so you'll feel better. This can help lower your risk for other health problems. These include:

- Heart disease.
- Eye diseases.
- Stroke.

You may have questions like:

- What can I eat?
- Will I need to take shots?
- What makes my blood sugar get too high or too low?



Ask your health care team any questions you have. Learn all you can about diabetes. This can help you be in charge of your health.

If you have diabetes, you'll want to learn how to control the disease so you'll feel better.

Here are some steps to get started.

Eat well. Your provider can help you know what to eat. You should get a good balance of these foods:

- Lean meats.
- Fruits and vegetables.
- Whole grains.

Be active. Walking, swimming and other kinds of exercise can help you control diabetes. Exercising can help you lose weight if you are overweight.

Take your medicine. Follow your provider's directions if you need pills

or insulin shots.

Check your blood sugar. Your provider can tell you how to do this. Keep track of your blood sugar so you can see how well you are controlling your diabetes.

There are other things you can do to stay healthy:

- Control stress.
- Brush your teeth every day. Be sure to floss too.
- Don't smoke.

And be sure to check your feet every day for:

- Cuts.
- Blisters.
- Red spots.
- Swelling.

Ask your health care team how to keep your blood pressure and cholesterol levels under control. And find out when you need checkups. Learn what problems your provider needs to know about right away.

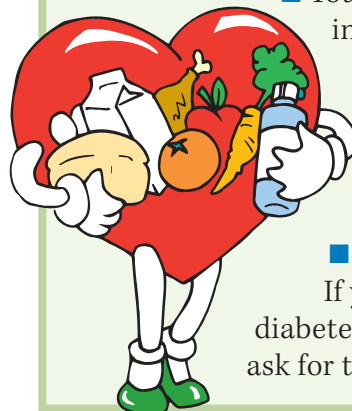
Sources: American Diabetes Association; National Institutes of Health

Come to our free diabetes class

Want to learn more about diabetes? We can help. In this class, you will learn about:

- Your blood sugar level and how to keep it in a healthy range.
- Healthy shopping and cooking.
- The best eating habits for you.
- Simple ways to be more active in your daily life.
- How to care for your feet.
- When you need to see your doctor.

If you are ready to take control of your diabetes, please call us at **800-391-2000** and ask for the Health Education Department.



Are you pregnant?
Take care of your mouth

You're having a baby. So you know you need to see your doctor.

But you should see the dentist too.

A checkup helps keep your mouth healthy. That's good for you and your growing baby.

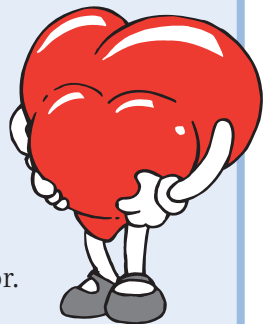
Your teeth and gums need good care. This helps prevent disease and infection.

Gum disease means you might have a baby that is born too soon and too small.

A mouth infection could make your body go into early labor.

Ask your doctor if you can have a dental checkup. Some dentists may need a doctor's note before they will see you. This note tells the dentist that it is OK for you to have a checkup.

Protect your baby. Be sure to visit your dentist soon after you find out you are pregnant. Remember to say you have a baby on the way!



Put a smile on your face

A healthy mouth may help protect your overall health

Regular dental checkups help you have a healthy smile. When you brush and floss your teeth each day, you're doing your mouth a big favor.

Those healthy habits—plus routine trips to the dentist—are great ways to stop tooth decay and gum disease.

A healthy smile

Taking care of your mouth may also mean better overall health.

Scientists now think the germs that cause gum disease may be linked to other health issues. Diabetes, heart disease and stroke are just some of the problems that may be tied to gum disease.

If that's true, stopping gum disease before it starts may be a good way to avoid those other health problems.

Of course, daily brushing and flossing and regular dentist visits are vital. But there's more you can do.

To cut your gum disease risk and improve the health of your mouth:

- Get enough vitamin D. It helps the body absorb calcium, which is needed for strong teeth.
- Limit the amount of chips, crackers and sugary snacks you eat. They can lead to tooth decay.
- Avoid soft drinks. They contain substances that can wear away a tooth's outer layer. That makes decay more likely.

How your dentist can help

Tell him or her about any changes in your mouth. Your dentist should also know if you've been sick or have any ongoing health problems.

By working with your dentist, you can keep your teeth and gums healthy. And when your mouth is healthy, the rest of your body may be happier.

Source: American Dental Association

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take To learn more, visit the American Dental Association website at www.ada.org.

Cervical cancer: Know the facts

How you can protect yourself

There are two things you should know about cervical cancer.

First, this cancer can be fatal. But it can also be prevented.

To help you learn more, here are answers to some common questions about this cancer.

Q. What is cervical cancer?

A. It's a cancer that only women can get. It happens when normal cells in the cervix change into cancerous ones. The cervix is the lower part of the womb.

Q. What causes it?

A. It's mostly caused by a virus. This virus is called human papillomavirus (HPV). HPV can be passed through sex. There are many types of HPV. But only some can cause cancer.

Q. How can cervical cancer be prevented?

A. One way is to have regular Pap tests. A Pap test can find abnormal changes in cells in the cervix before cancer develops. Treatment can then stop cancer from developing. Ask your provider when you should be tested.

Also ask about the HPV vaccines.



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take Thinking about getting an HPV vaccine? Call Member Services to find out if your benefits cover these vaccines.

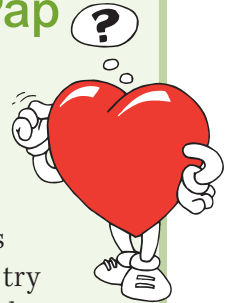
They protect against the types of HPV that most often cause cervical cancer. The shots work best when given to women and girls before they have sex for the first time.

Q. How else can I protect myself?

A. The best way to prevent HPV is not to have sex. That includes vaginal, anal and oral sex. Not having sex can also help prevent cervical cancer.

If you do have sex, have sex with

What does an abnormal Pap test mean?



You're nervous. That's normal if you just found out that your Pap test results were abnormal. But try not to be too worried.

Abnormal results don't always mean cancer. A Pap test might have found unhealthy cells in your cervix. The cervix is the lower part of your womb. But a lot of times, these unhealthy cells go away on their own.

If more serious changes were found, treatment can help keep you healthy.

Still, don't take chances. Make sure to have all the tests your provider says you need.

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

only one person. Ask your partner to do the same. And use a condom every time you have sex.

Q. What are the signs of cervical cancer?

A. You might bleed or have watery discharge from your vagina.

Sometimes there aren't any signs. That's why Pap tests are important. Regular testing can often find cancer early enough for it to be cured.

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services



Your primary care provider

Kern Family Health Care (KFHC) is committed to providing high-quality health care. In order to improve the quality of care provided to our members, KFHC members must see the primary care provider (PCP) or clinic they are assigned to. You will no longer be allowed to receive primary care services from any other KFHC PCP.

This is why it is important for you to choose a PCP that you will be happy with for a long time. The

longer your PCP treats you, the more he or she will know about your health.

If you are not happy with your PCP, you can only change your PCP once a month. Requests made by the 24th of the month will take effect the first day of the following month. Requests made after the 24th of the month will take effect the first day of the second month following the request.

If you need help choosing a PCP, call Member Services at **800-391-2000**.

Know your prescription medicine benefits

We help pay for the drugs your provider wants you to have.

But we may not pay for every drug.

The list of drugs we pay for is called a formulary. Call us for a copy.

When your provider says you need a new drug, be sure that it's on our list.

If it isn't, call your provider right away.

He or she can:

- Order a drug that works the same and is on the list.
- Talk to us. We may be able to help.

We will let you know when we change the list.

If you have questions about what drugs we pay for, call Member Services at **800-391-2000**.

Member rights

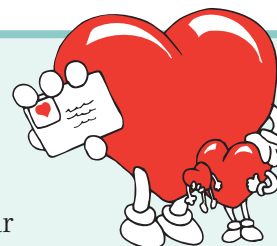
If you have a service or quality-of-care complaint against Kern Family Health Care or a provider, call us first at **800-391-2000** or visit our website, www.kernfamilyhealthcare.com.

You may call the Department

of Managed Health Care (DMHC) for help if:

- Your grievance is an emergency.
- You are not happy with our decision.
- It has not been resolved in 30 days.

The DMHC's toll-free number



is **888-HMO-2219** (**888-466-2219**). Its TDD line (for people with hearing and speech impairments) is 877-688-9891. You may also call the DHCS

Office of the Ombudsman toll-free at **888-452-8609**.

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