

Member NEWSLETTER

SPRING ISSUE • MARCH 2024



VENTURA COUNTY
HEALTH CARE PLAN
A Department of Ventura County Health Care Agency



Featured this issue

TIMELY ACCESS Requirements.....	3
ONE TOUCH REVEAL PLUS – Diabetes Care Program.....	12
SAFE Medication Disposal.....	32

CONTACT INFORMATION

Ventura County Health Care Plan

Regular Business Hours are:

Monday - Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

- vchealthcareplan.org
- VCHCP.Memberservices@ventura.org
- Phone: (805) 981-5050
- Toll-free: (800) 600-8247
- FAX: (805) 981-5051
- Language Line Services:
Phone: (805) 981-5050
Toll-free: (800) 600-8247
- TDD to Voice: (800) 735-2929
- Voice to TDD: (800) 735-2922
- Pharmacy Help: (800) 811-0293
or express-scripts.com
- Behavioral Health/Life Strategies:
(24 hour assistance)
(800) 851-7407
liveandworkwell.com
- Nurse Advice Line: (800) 334-9023
- Teladoc: (800) 835-2362

VCHCP Utilization Management Staff

Regular Business Hours are:

Monday - Friday,
8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

- (805) 981-5060

GRAPHIC DESIGN & PRINTING

GSA Business Support/Creative Services

contents

Patient Emergency & Provider, After Hours Contact.....	3
Timely Access Requirements	3
CAHPS Survey: COMING SOON	3
2024 Affirmative Statement Regarding Utilization-Related Incentive	4
Did you know?	4
Referral & Prior Authorization Process and Services	4
Milliman Care Guidelines & Medical Policy Updates	5
How Often Should You See Your Primary Care Physician?	5
How to Find a Provider	5
Submitting an External Exception Review Request	6
How to request a Step Therapy Exception, Formulary Exception and Prior Authorization Exception	7
Population Health Management Programs	7
Education Materials	7
A Message From our Case Management Nurse	8
Nonpharmacologic Pain Management Treatments	8
Case Management & Disease Management Services	9
Emergency Room vs Urgent Care	10
Post Inpatient Discharge Follow-Up	10
ER Room Visit Follow Up & Appropriate ER Use	11
New Medical Technology	11
One Touch Reveal Plus - Diabetes Care Program	12
Preventive Health Guidelines	13
Well Child Visits	13
Colorectal Cancer Screening	14
Breast Cancer Screening	15
Adult Preventive Care	16
Child Immunizations	17
How Teamwork Can Help You	18
VCHCP Maternal Mental Health Program	19
OPTUM Mental Health Emergency? Call 988	20
Prenatal Care in your First Trimester	22
VCHCP Member Behavioral Health and Substance Abuse Resources	24
Anti-Depressant Medication Management	24
Depression Education Materials Available	24
Accessing Behavioral Healthcare Services	25
Gender Affirming Procedures and Services	25
OptumHealth Behavioral Solutions - ADHD and Autism	26
Everyone Deserves to Have a Healthy, Smokefree Home	28
Top 10 Tips To Quit Smoking	30
Members' Rights & Responsibilities	31
Safe Mediation Disposal	32
Pharmacy Updates	33
2024 National Preferred Formulary Exclusions	33
Express Scripts	33
VCHCP Network Updates	34

Patient Emergency & Provider AFTER HOURS CONTACT

Ventura County Medical Center Emergency Room

300 Hillmont Avenue,
Ventura, CA 93003

(805) 652-6165 or
(805) 652-6000

Santa Paula Hospital

A Campus of Ventura
County Medical Center

825 N Tenth Street
Santa Paula, CA 93060

(805) 933-8632 or
(805) 933-8600

Ventura County Health Care Plan

on call Administrator
available 24 hours per
day for Emergency
Providers

(805) 981-5050 or
(800) 600-8247

THE NURSE ADVICE LINE 1-800-334-9023

Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for
member questions regarding a general health
topic or specific medical questions, including
deciding whether to seek care for a condition.

THERE IS ALSO A LINK ON THE MEMBER WEBSITE:

vchealthcareplan.org/members/memberIndex.aspx
that will take Members to a secured email where
they may send an email directly to the advice line.
The nurse advice line will respond within 24 hours.

To speak with VCHCP UM Staff, please call The Ventura
County Health Care Plan at the numbers below:

QUESTIONS? CONTACT US:

MONDAY - FRIDAY, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Phone: (805) 981-5060 or toll-free (800) 600-8247

FAX: (805) 981-5051, vchealthcareplan.org

TDD to Voice: (800) 735-2929 Voice to TDD: (800) 735-2922

Ventura County Health Care Plan 24-hour Administrator
access for emergency providers: (805) 981-5050 or
(800) 600-8247

Language Assistance - Language Line Services:
Phone (805) 981-5050 or toll-free (800) 600-8247

CAHPS Survey: COMING SOON

*Will you be
one of the randomly
selected participants?*

The Consumer Assessment of
Healthcare Providers & System
(CAHPS) Survey is one of the most
important surveys to the Ventura
County Health Care Plan (VCHCP).

This national survey conducted
by Press Ganey is sent out
to randomly selected health
care members.

If you are selected to participate,
please take the time to complete
the survey, as it is the best way
you can let us know how the
VCHCP can better serve you.

TIMELY ACCESS REQUIREMENTS

VCHCP adheres to patient care access and availability
standards as required by the Department of Managed
Health Care (DMHC). The DMHC implemented these
standards to ensure that members can get an
appointment for care on a timely basis, can reach a
provider over the phone and can access interpreter
services, if needed. Contracted providers are expected
to comply with these appointments, telephone access,
practitioner availability and linguistic service standards.
If a timely appointment is not available at any of our
contracted clinics/facilities, then an out-of-network
(OON) referral request should be sent by the referring
provider to the Plan for authorization. The authorization
request must include the details regarding the access
issue and why an OON referral is required.

Note: The referring provider may allow for an appointment outside of the timely access
requirements if it will not be harmful to the patient's health. These instances must be
documented in the patient's chart and communicated to the patient.

TYPE OF CARE	WAIT TIME OR AVAILABILITY
Emergency Services	Immediately, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
Urgent Need - No Prior Authorization Required	Within 48 hours
Urgent Need - Requires Prior Authorization	Within 96 hours
Primary Care	Within 10 business days
Specialty Care	Within 15 business days
Ancillary services for diagnosis or treatment	Within 15 business days
Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder including nonurgent follow-up appointments with nonphysician mental health care or substance use disorder providers	Within 10 business days
Phone wait time for triage or screening by the provider office	Not to exceed 30 minutes
Wait time for enrollees to speak with a qualified Plan representative during business hours	Not to exceed 10 minutes

2024 Affirmative Statement Regarding Utilization-Related Incentive*

- Utilization Management (UM) decision making is based only on appropriateness of care and service and existence of coverage.
- The organization does not specifically reward practitioners or other individuals for issuing denials of coverage or care.
- Financial incentives for UM decision makers do not encourage decisions that may result in underutilization.
- VCHCP does not use incentives to encourage barriers to care and service.

- VCHCP does not make hiring, promotion or termination decisions based upon the likelihood or perceived likelihood that an individual will support or tend to support the denial of benefits.

** Includes the following associates: Medical and Clinical Directors, Physicians, UM Directors and Managers, licensed UM staff including Management personnel who supervise clinical staff and any associate in any working capacity that may encounter members during their care continuum.*

Did you know?

DIRECT SPECIALTY REFERRAL

- Did you know that the direct specialty referral allows your Primary Care Physician (PCP) to directly refer you to certain contracted specialty doctors for an initial consult and appropriate follow up visits without requiring a Treatment Authorization Request (TAR) submission and prior authorization from the Health Plan?
- Did you know that specialists can perform certain procedures during your initial consultation and follow up visits without prior authorization from the Health

Plan? Also, any follow-up visits will not require prior authorization if you are seen by the specialist within a rolling year and your visit is for the original problem.

45 DAY PEND REVIEW PROCESS

- Did you know that Utilization Management Department's place phone calls or send messages to your doctor if additional information is needed from your doctor?
- Did you know that the Plan's Medical Director reviews all pended and denial letters/determinations for appropriateness of decisions.

VENTURA COUNTY HEALTH CARE PLAN'S Referral & Prior Authorization Process and Services Requiring Prior Authorization

Need information on how and when to obtain referrals and authorization for specific services? Please visit our website at vchealthcareplan.org/members/priorAuthorizations.aspx and click on "VCHCP's Referrals and Prior Authorization Process" or click this link to direct you to the page vchealthcareplan.org/providers/docs/PriorAuthorizationProcess.pdf. This area provides links for members to obtain specific information on the Plan's prior authorization process, what services require prior authorization, timelines, and direct referral information.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE CALL MEMBER SERVICES AT (805) 981-5050.

County of Ventura

Living Here | Working Here | Visiting | Doing Business | Government | Disaster Information

You are here: HCA | VCHCP | Members | INFORMATION FOR CURRENT AND PROSPECTIVE PLAN MEMBERS

VCHCP

Home

For Members

(Current and Prospective)

Find a Provider

Seasonal Flu Information

Plan Newsletters

Language Assistance

Program

Contact Us

My Benefit Plan

Urgent Care

Pharmacy

Forms

Nurse Advice Line

Nurse Advice/Health Information Line is available to Plan members 24-hours per day, 7 days/week. Please call: (800) 334-9023 or click here to email.

Health Education Information

Teladoc

Referrals and Prior Authorizations

Request Case Management or Disease Management

Mental/Behavioral Health and Substance Use

VCHCP contracts with OptumHealth Behavioral Solutions (Life Strategies) for Mental/Behavioral health & substance use services. www.liveandworkwell.com

Continuity of Care

Grievance, Appeals and Independent Medical Review

Other Important Information



How Often Should You See Your Primary Care Physician?

Your Primary Care Provider (PCP) is responsible for treating you when you are sick or injured, and at times is the coordinator of referrals to specialists and other services. Some members rarely see their PCP, which can make care difficult, especially in an emergent situation. Children and Adults should be seen by their PCP at least yearly (more frequently for children under 2 years of age). Preventive Health Visits, or Check-ups should occur regularly to have appropriate preventive screenings, immunizations, and an overall review of your health. This is an important visit to discuss health concerns or even health goals. Staying in contact with your PCP by having annual check-ups can help with establishing a good relationship with your PCP. This relationship can make times of illness or injury run smoother and give you peace of mind for the care you receive.



If you haven't had a checkup in the last year, please call your PCP today to make an appointment.
If you need assistance or have questions, please call Member Services at (805) 981-5050.



Milliman Care Guidelines & Medical Policy Updates

VCHCP Utilization Management uses Milliman Care Guidelines 28th Edition, VCHCP Medical Policies and VCHCP Prior Authorization Drug Guidelines as criteria in performing medical necessity reviews. Due to proprietary reasons, we are unable to post the Milliman Care Guidelines on our website, but a hard copy of an individual guideline can be provided as requested.

A complete listing of new and updated VCHCP medical policies and prescription drug policies are posted on The Plan's website at: vchealthcareplan.org/providers/medicalPolicies.aspx.

To obtain printed copies of any of our VCHCP Medical/Drug Policies or Milliman Care Guidelines, please contact Member Services at (805) 981-5050 or at (800) 600-8247.

Medical Policy Updates

New and updated medical policies are posted on The Plan's website at vchealthcareplan.org/providers/medicalPolicies.aspx.

SUBMITTING AN EXTERNAL EXCEPTION REVIEW REQUEST

for the denial of Request for Step Therapy Exception, Formulary Exception, and Prior Authorization for a Medication

You, your designee, or your prescribing doctor can request that the original step therapy exception request, formulary exception request, prior authorization request and subsequent denial of such requests be reviewed by an independent review organization by following the steps below:

- Submit an exception via online request available in the VCHCP member website vhealthcareplan.org/members/requestPharmacyExceptionForm.aspx or by calling the Plan at (805) 981-5050.
- Ask the Plan to make an exception to its coverage rules.
- There are several types of exceptions that can be requested such as:
 - Cover a drug even if it is not on the Plan’s formulary.
 - Waive coverage restrictions or limits on a drug. For example, the Plan limit the amount on certain drugs it covers. If the drug has a quantity limit, ask the Plan to waive the limit and cover more.
 - Provide a higher level of coverage for a drug. For example, if the drug is in the Non-Preferred Drug tier, ask the Plan to cover it at the cost-sharing amount that applies to drugs on the Preferred Brand Drug tier 3 instead. This applies so long as there is a formulary drug that treats your condition on the Preferred Brand Drug tier 3. This would lower the amount paid for medications.
- Once the Plan receives the exception request via website or via phone call, the Plan’s Utilization Management will contact your doctor to process your External Exception Review Request.
- The Plan sends your external exception review request to an independent review organization called IMEDECS/Kepro.
- VCHCP will ensure a decision and notification within 72 hours in routine/standard circumstances or 24 hours in exigent circumstances.

- The Plan will make its determination on the external exception request review and notify the enrollee or the enrollee’s designee and the prescribing provider of its coverage determination no later than 24 hours following receipt of the request, if the original request was an expedited formulary/prior authorization/step therapy exception request or 72 hours following receipt of the request, if the original request was a standard request for nonformulary prescription drugs/step therapy/prior authorization.
- If additional information is required to make a decision, the Plan in collaboration with IMEDECS/Kepro will send a letter via fax to your prescribing doctor advising that additional information is required.
- Exception request for step therapy/nonformulary/prior authorization will be reviewed against the criteria in Section 1367.206(b) and, if the request is denied, the Plan will explain why the exception request for step therapy/nonformulary/prior authorization drug did not meet any of the enumerated criteria in section 1367.206(b).
- The exception request review process does not affect or limit the enrollee’s eligibility for independent medical review or to file an internal appeal with VCHCP.
- The enrollee or enrollee’s designee or guardian may appeal a denial of an exception request for coverage of a nonformulary drug, prior authorization request, or step therapy exception request by filing a grievance under Section 1368.
- If the independent review organization reverses the denial of a prior authorization, formulary exception, or step therapy request, the decision is binding on the Plan.
- The decision of independent review organization to reverse a denial of a prior authorization, formulary exception, or step therapy request applies to the duration of the prescription including refills.

HOW TO REQUEST A STEP THERAPY EXCEPTION, FORMULARY EXCEPTION AND PRIOR AUTHORIZATION EXCEPTION

Submitting Exception Requests To The Preferred Drug List

Members can request individual exceptions to the preferred drug list through their primary care practitioner or directly to VCHCP by phone or through the VCHCP website.

To submit an exception request to VCHCP, complete the online request form available in the VCHCP member website vhealthcareplan.org/members/requestPharmacyExceptionForm.aspx or by calling the Plan at (805) 981-5050.



VCHCP will review your exception request and will either contact you or reach out to your doctor to get more clinical information.

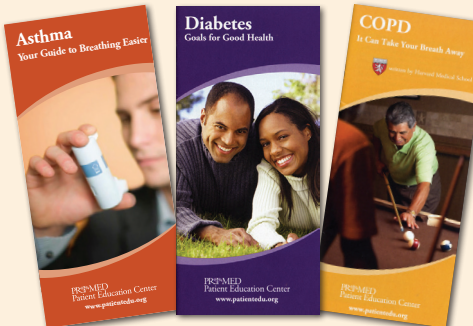
A Prior Authorization (PA) request can be submitted by the practitioner on the member’s behalf to VCHCP for consideration. Practitioners may themselves also initiate a petition for consideration of coverage. Practitioners should include relevant clinical history, previous medications prescribed and tried, contraindications or allergies to medications and any other contributory information deemed useful. VCHCP will review the information according to the PA policy. Because the PA requests are reviewed by the Plan and not the PBM, if the medication does not meet criteria on initial review by the nurse reviewer, it is reviewed by a physician reviewer and special consideration is given to the exception request based on the information received. The physician reviewers are also available by phone to discuss an exception request with the practitioner.

Population Health Management Programs

Ventura County Health Care Plan provides ongoing support of our members to meet their healthcare needs. Our goal is to empower you to take control of your health. VCHCP wants to be sure you are aware of the many programs, services, and activities offered by us to support you in your health care goals. Please visit our website at vhealthcareplan.org/members/docs/VCHCPPopulationHealthManagement.pdf to see the list of programs/services offered, how you are eligible to participate, and how you decide to participate. If you need further information or have any questions regarding the programs or activities offered, please contact our Health Services Department at (805) 981-5060 or toll-free (800) 600-8247. Guidelines, please contact Member Services at (805) 981-5050 or at (800) 600-8247.

EDUCATION MATERIALS

To access the Plan’s useful and current educational materials, please click on this link: vhealthcareplan.org/members/healthEducationInfo.aspx



A MESSAGE FROM OUR Case Management Nurse

Case Management (CM) is part of your VCHCP benefit, free of charge to all members.

I am dedicated to assist in organizing your healthcare need(s) and assist with coordinating care you may need. I can communicate between your providers to help connect your care and achieve your health goals. I am your advocate and I will help to empower you to manage your health care needs. If you are “lost” in the system of navigating your health care needs, contact CM to discuss your options. If you would like to speak directly with a nurse, please call **(805) 981-5060** and ask for a Case Manager or Disease Manager. Your call will be returned within 2 business days. Members can also self-refer to the program online on the Member page at vhealthcareplan.org/members/requestAssistanceForm.aspx and click on the box labeled “Request Case Management or Disease Management”.



Teladoc is simply a new way to access qualified doctors. All Teladoc doctors are practicing PCPs, pediatricians, and family medicine physicians with an average 20 years’ experience, U.S. board-certified and licensed in the state of California.

Nurse Advice/Health Information Line is available to Plan members 24-hours per day, 7 days/week. **Talk to a nurse anytime for FREE by calling (800) 334-9023.**

Talk to a doctor anytime for FREE by visiting Teladoc.com or calling 1-800-TELADOC (835-2362).

Nonpharmacologic Pain Management TREATMENTS

Purpose:

Assembly Bill 2585 – Nonpharmacological pain management treatment requires Ventura County Health Care Plan (VCHCP) to encourage the use of evidence-based nonpharmacological therapies for pain management.

Nonpharmacological Pain Management

The overarching goal of chronic pain management is to relieve pain and improve function. The National Pain Strategy (NPS) report recommends that management be integrated, multimodal, interdisciplinary, evidence-based, and tailored to individual patient needs. In addition to addressing biological factors when known, it is thought that optimal management of chronic pain also addresses psychosocial contributors to pain, while considering individual susceptibility and treatment responses. Self-care is an important part of chronic pain management. At the same time, the NPS points to the “dual crises” of chronic pain and opioid dependence, overdose, and death as providing important context for consideration and implementation of chronic pain management strategies. A vast array of nonpharmacological treatments is available for management of chronic pain. VCHCP’s health plan benefits include nonpharmacologic services to treat pain. These interventions include and not limited to the following:

- Physical Therapy/Occupational Therapy
- Behavioral Health Treatments for example, cognitive behavioral therapy or mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR). For more information, please visit Optum Behavioral Health’s Live Work Well website: healthwise.net/liveandworkwell/Content/StdDocument.aspx?DOCHWID=cpain
- Osteopathic Manipulative Treatment
- Acupuncture & Chiropractic Treatments*



*Chiropractic and acupuncture: When part of Plan coverage, chiropractic, and acupuncture treatments, arranged by Member, may be offset by reimbursement to the member of a portion of the practitioner’s fee incurred by the member in receiving such therapy. Reimbursements are limited to a maximum per visit and an aggregate maximum per plan year.

VCHCP encourages the use of evidence-based nonpharmacological therapies for pain management such as physical therapy/occupational therapy, osteopathic manipulative treatment, acupuncture/ chiropractic treatment and behavioral health treatments (as listed above).

Providers and Members will be made aware of the above nonpharmacological interventions via the biannual newsletters.

References

(Obtained from Optum’s live work well healthwise.net/liveandworkwell/Content/StdDocument.aspx?DOCHWID=cpain)

Case Management & Disease Management SERVICES

VCHCP has a Case Management Program to help our members who have complex needs by ensuring that our members work closely with their doctors to plan their care. Case Management is a collaborative process of assessment, planning, facilitation, and advocacy. Determination is made for the best options and services to meet a member’s individual health needs through communication and utilization of available resources to promote quality care and cost-effective clinical outcomes. The goals of Case Management are to help members get to their best health possible in the right setting; coordinate and manage healthcare resources; support the treatment plan ordered by the doctor; and to take action to improve member overall quality of life and health outcomes. As a member in Case Management, members with complicated health care issues and their family have a truly coordinated plan of care.



VCHCP identifies members for Case Management through several referral sources, including health care provider referrals and member self-referrals. Members appropriate for case management referral include those members with medical and psychosocial needs impacting their compliance with disease management and health improvement including increasing severity of condition, safety issues, decreasing functional status, new behavioral health issues, need for caregiver resources. Some examples of eligible medical conditions or events include multiple hospital admissions or re-admissions, multiple chronic conditions, major organ transplant candidates, and major trauma. A member identified for Complex Case Management is considered a participant in the program unless the member decides to opt-out (not accept the services/coordination of care offered). Once a nurse Case Manager evaluates a member, the Case Manager creates a care plan with the member and healthcare team input. The care plan is shared with the member’s doctor for his/her input and review. The care plan is monitored by the Case Manager and coordinated with the member and doctor.

The VCHCP Disease Management Program coordinates health care interventions and communication for members with conditions where VCHCP support of member self-care activities can improve their conditions. VCHCP has two Disease Management programs: Asthma and Diabetes. VCHCP has systematic processes in place to proactively identify members who may be appropriate for these disease management services. Diagnosis information on claims encounter data and pharmacy data prescription drug information are used to systematically identify members for disease management. Members and providers may also refer to the applicable Disease Management program. Once identified, the member is automatically enrolled in the program unless the member chooses to opt out. The Disease Management team works with doctors and licensed professionals to improve these chronic conditions, so members obtain the best possible quality of life and functioning. Included in the Disease Management Program are mailed educational materials, provider education on evidence-based clinical guidelines, member education over the phone (health coaching) and care coordination. VCHCP has a variety of member materials about diabetes and asthma available to help you better understand your condition and manage your chronic disease. Our goal is to improve the health of our members.

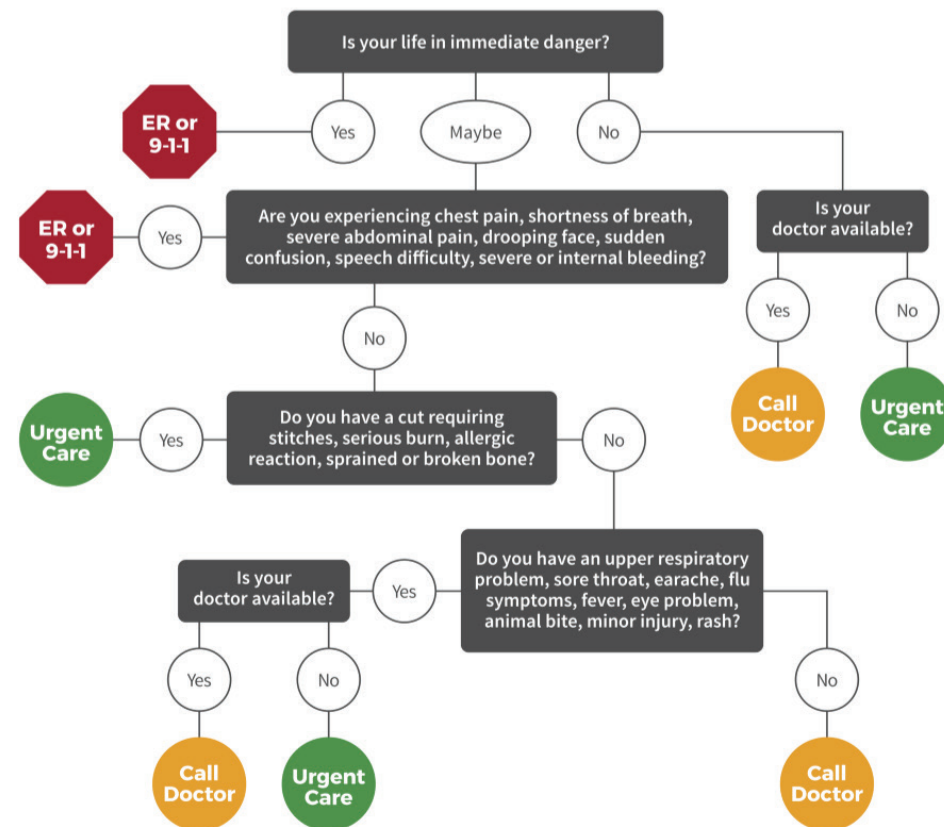
The VCHCP programs for Case Management and Disease Management are for members with severe illnesses and chronic diseases to help plan their care with their primary doctor and learn more about self-care. These programs have nurses who work with members over the phone to guide them towards the best possible health for their conditions.

Participation in these programs is free and voluntary for eligible members. Members can opt out at any time and being in these programs does not affect benefits or eligibility.

For more information or to submit a referral for the Case Management and Disease Management Program, please call (805) 981-5060. Members can also self-refer to a program online on the Member page at vhealthcareplan.org/members/requestAssistanceForm.aspx.

Emergency Room vs Urgent Care

HOW SHOULD I CHOOSE?



POST INPATIENT Discharge Follow-Up

Admission to a hospital, either planned or unexpected, can be difficult and often results in a change in your medication or treatment plan. After discharge from the hospital, it is very important that you make an appointment to see your Primary Care Provider (PCP) and specialist when applicable, as soon as possible, or within 30 days. This visit is to update your PCP and/or specialist on what occurred that required you to be admitted to the hospital, update your medication routine, and to be referred to additional care if needed. Establishing and keeping a good relationship with your PCP is vital to your health and your PCPs ability to provide care to you.

If you feel you are having medical issues related to your recent hospitalization, for continuity of care, you should contact your doctor before going to the Emergency Room or if the issues are severe, like chest pain or sudden heavy bleeding, call 911. For less severe issues, we have several Urgent Care Centers in our network.

VCHCP will send all members discharged from an inpatient stay a targeted letter instructing them to follow up with the specific time frame noted. Letters will also be sent to Providers to notify of members discharge from the hospital.

If you find that making an appointment with your PCP or specialist after an inpatient hospital stay is difficult and you can't be seen within 30 days, please notify your Ventura County Health Care Plan Member Services Department at (805) 981-5050. Your ability to access health care is important to us.

ER Room Visit FOLLOW UP & APPROPRIATE ER USE



A sudden trip to the Emergency Room (ER) can be difficult and often times results in a change in medication or treatment for your patients. After a visit to the ER, it is very important that members make an appointment to see their Primary Care Provider (PCP) and/or specialist when applicable, as soon as possible, or within 30 days. This visit is to update the PCP on what occurred that required the member to seek emergency treatment, update their medication routine, and to be referred for additional care if needed. Establishing and keeping a good relationship between the PCP and patient is

vital to their health and your ability to provide care to patients. If members find that making an appointment with their PCP or specialist after an ER visit is difficult and they can't be seen within 30 days, or if their ER visit was due to the inability to be seen by their PCP, they are asked to notify the Ventura County Health Care Plan Member Services Department at (805) 981-5050. Members are mailed Postcard reminders regarding appropriate use of ER services and the importance of following up with their PCP after the ER visit for continuity of care. The members' ability to access health care is important to us.



New Medical Technology

VCHCP'S MEDICAL DIRECTOR, or designee, evaluates new technology that has been approved by the appropriate regulatory body, such as the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) or the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Scientific evidence from many sources, specialists with expertise related to technology and outside consultants when applicable are used for the evaluation. The technology must demonstrate improvement in health outcomes or health risks, the benefit must outweigh any potential harm and it must be as beneficial as any established alternative. The technology must also be generally accepted as safe and effective by the medical community and not investigational.

For help with new medication evaluations, the Plan looks to our Pharmacy Benefit Manager, Express Scripts, for their expertise. For new behavioral health procedures, the Plan uses evaluations done by our Behavioral Health delegate, OptumHealth Behavioral Solutions of California (also known as Life Strategies).

Once new technology is evaluated by the Plan, the appropriate VCHCP committee reviews and discusses the evaluation and makes a final decision on whether to approve or deny the new technology. This final decision may also determine if any new technology is appropriate for inclusion in the plan's benefit package in the future.

FOR ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT THE VCHCP Utilization Management Department at (805) 981-5060.



Take managing diabetes into your own hands.

When paired with a OneTouch Verio Flex® blood glucose (BG) meter, the OneTouch Reveal® app:

- Makes it easy to track your progress
- May help lower your A1c and simplify glucose management decisions*
- Changes the way you see your blood sugar, so you can quickly check your readings and get back to your life

Get started today!

- 1 Visit express-scripts.com/healthsolutions and log in to see if you are eligible for the program.
- 2 Once logged in, select the “health solutions” tab on the menu bar. If you are eligible, you will select “Lifescan OneTouch Reveal®” and be provided an access code and link to enroll.
- 3 Once enrolled, your welcome kit and OneTouch Verio Flex® meter (at no charge) will be sent in the mail. Follow the instructions to download the OneTouch Reveal® mobile app and pair your meter with the app.



Questions? Call Express Scripts at 855.723.6099 and ask about diabetes remote monitoring with the OneTouch Reveal® mobile app

ONETOUCH Reveal®

*2017 clinical study conducted in the United Kingdom with 128 people with diabetes (JMIR Diabetes 2017;2 (2):e19). doi:10.2196/diabetes.7454
Express Scripts and the “E” Logo are trademarks of Express Scripts Strategic Development, Inc. Express Scripts administers your prescription plan for your employer, plan sponsor, health plan or benefit fund. Apple, App Store, and the Apple logo are trademarks of Apple Inc., registered in the US and other countries. Google Play and the Google Play logo are trademarks of Google LLC. The Bluetooth® word mark and logos are registered trademarks owned by Bluetooth SIG, Inc. and any use of such marks by Lifescan Scotland Ltd. and its affiliates is under license. Other trademarks and trade names are those of their respective owners.
© 2023 Lifescan IP Holdings, LLC. All rights reserved. US-DMV-2300012 (CRP2409_11875C)

Preventive Health Guidelines



The 2023-2024 Preventive Health Guidelines is an excellent resource where Providers can find immunization schedules, preventive health screening information, and an adult preventive care timeline.

The Preventive Health Guidelines include information from VCHCP, US Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF), Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) and are updated annually. Providers and members are given access to the Preventive Health Guidelines online at:

vchealthcareplan.org/members/docs/healthEducationInfo/preventiveHealthGuidelinesCommercial.pdf

Please contact Member Services at (805) 981-5050 if you need assistance or hard copies.

Well Child Visits

Childhood is a time of rapid growth and change, frequent well child visits are important to ensure proper growth and development and for preventive guidelines.

Special attention is paid to whether the child has met the normal developmental milestones. After the baby is born, the first visit should be within 2 weeks. There-after, visits should occur at the following points:

- By 2, 4, 6, 9 months
- 1 year
- 15 months
- 18 months
- 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 years
- Each year after until age 21

It is important that your child have at least six well child visits by 15 months old.



Contact your primary care provider to discuss the care that is appropriate for you.

You may also find this information on the Plan's website under Preventive Health Guidelines 2023-2024 at vchealthcareplan.org/members/docs/healthEducationInfo/preventiveHealthGuidelinesCommercial.pdf#page=2

Colorectal Cancer Screening

You may also see the information below about Colorectal Cancer Screenings in the Plan's Preventive Health Guidelines brochure. To view the brochure, please visit the VCHCP website at: vchealthcareplan.org/members/docs/healthEducationInfo/preventiveHealthGuidelinesCommercial.pdf#page=7

Contact your VCHCP Primary Care Provider to discuss the care that is appropriate for you.

KEY FACTS:

- The best way to reduce your colorectal cancer risk is to get screened regularly beginning at age 45.
- Colorectal cancer affects men and women of all racial and ethnic groups.
- Colorectal polyps and colorectal cancer don't always cause symptoms, especially at first.

PREVENTION TIPS:

- If you're 45 years old or older, talk to your doctor about getting screened.
- If you're younger than 45 years old but may have a higher risk of colorectal cancer, ask your doctor if you should start screening before age 45.
- Learn your family history of cancer and tell your doctor if you think you may have a higher risk.
- Don't smoke. Contact your VCHCP Primary Care Provider to discuss the care that is appropriate for you.
- Get enough physical activity and limit your alcohol consumption.
- Talk to your doctor if you have blood in or on your stool (bowel movement); stomach pain, aches, or cramps that don't go away; or are losing weight and you don't know why.
- Presently, the recommendation for colorectal screening is to begin at age 45 or older, and sooner for those who are at high risk for developing colorectal cancer. Special screening programs are used for those with family history of colorectal cancer and for those who are at high risk. There are several acceptable methods for colorectal cancer screening which includes fecal occult blood testing annually, sigmoidoscopy every 5 years or colonoscopy every 10 years.

Content source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

EARLY DETECTION IS THE BEST PRACTICE AGAINST CANCER, ESPECIALLY COLORECTAL CANCER.

In an effort to increase awareness, VCHCP has sent postcards to all members who are due for their colorectal cancer screenings. The postcards were mailed in October/November 2023. Our goal is to provide education to our members and encourage them to complete these important screenings.

You may bring this postcard to your doctor's visit to discuss more about your colorectal cancer screenings.

Colorectal Cancer Screening Postcard mailed in October/November 2023:

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Utilization Management at (805) 981-5060.

VCHCP and the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force RECOMMENDS:



COLORECTAL CANCER SCREENING
For both men and women starting at age 45

Screening is the key to prevention or early detection of colorectal cancer. Please take the time to discuss this life saving screening with your physician.

SOME PEOPLE AT HIGH RISK MAY NEED TO BE SCREENED SOONER.

Discuss with your doctor which test is right for you:

COLONOSCOPY: Allows the doctor to look inside the entire large intestine to view the tissue and look for any abnormalities. Preparation is required, and a sedative is used so you will need a ride home from the procedure. In most cases, this procedure only needs to be done once every 10 YEARS.

CT COLONOGRAPHY: Allows the doctor to look inside the large intestine using a special x-ray equipment to examine for cancer and growths called polyps. Procedure only needs to be done every 5 YEARS.

SIGMOIDOSCOPY: Allows the doctor to look inside the rectum and lower colon. The procedure is similar to the colonoscopy, and usually only needs to be done once every 5 YEARS.

FECAL OCCULT BLOOD TEST/FECAL IMMUNOCHEMICAL TEST (FIT): A lab test to check stool samples for hidden blood that cannot be seen without the use of this test. This is a noninvasive way to complete the test and simply requires a stool sample to be taken to the lab. The test is done YEARLY.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT VCHCP'S UTILIZATION MANAGEMENT TEAM AT

(805) 981-5060

10/2023

Breast Cancer Screening

You may also see this information about Breast Cancer Screenings in the Plan's Preventive Health Guidelines brochure. To view the brochure, please visit the VCHCP website at: vchealthcareplan.org/members/docs/healthEducationInfo/preventiveHealthGuidelinesCommercial.pdf#page=6

Contact one of the following providers to discuss the care that is appropriate for you:

Your VCHCP Primary Care Provider | Your VCHCP OB/GYN Provider

KEY FACTS:

- Mammograms can find breast cancer early, when it's easier to treat.
- Most breast lumps are not caused by cancer; many conditions can cause them.
- Breast cancer symptoms vary, and some women don't have symptoms.
- Men can get breast cancer, but it is not very common. For every 100 cases of breast cancer, less than 1 is in men.

PREVENTION TIPS:

- Keep a healthy weight and exercise regularly.
- Limit the amount of alcohol you drink.
- If you are taking hormone replacement therapy or birth control pills, ask your doctor about the risks and find out if it is right for you.
- Know your family history of breast cancer. If you have a close relative with breast cancer, ask your doctor how you can manage your risk.
- A mammogram can't prevent breast cancer, but it can help find it early. Talk to your health care provider about whether screening is right for you.
- Breast cancer screening means checking a woman's breasts for cancer before she has any symptoms. A mammogram is an X-ray picture of the breast. Mammograms are the best way to find breast cancer early, when it is easier to treat and before it is big enough to feel or cause symptoms.
- Most women who are 40 to 74 years old should have a screening mammogram every two years. If you think that you may have a higher risk of breast cancer, ask your doctor when to have a screening mammogram.

Content source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

EARLY DETECTION IS THE BEST PRACTICE AGAINST CANCER, ESPECIALLY BREAST CANCER.

In an effort to increase awareness, VCHCP sent mammogram post cards to those who are due for their breast cancer screening. The postcards were mailed in August/October 2023. Our goal is to provide education to you to complete this important screening.

You may bring this postcard to your doctor during your office visit to discuss more about your breast cancer screenings.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact our Health Services Department at (805) 981-5060.

EARLY DETECTION IS YOUR BEST PROTECTION AGAINST BREAST CANCER

You can now set an appointment for a screening mammogram directly with any VCHCP contracted radiology facility without a doctor's prescription or order. There is no copay for screening mammogram at any of these contracted facilities. The hours and capacity may vary per location, please make sure to call ahead and make an appointment.

GET YOUR SCREENING MAMMOGRAM DONE WHEN RECOMMENDED.

VCHCP and the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommends a screening mammogram every two years between the ages of 40 and 74.

Note: If you are having a diagnostic mammogram, copayment applies.

Bring this card with you to your mammogram appointment and give it to the radiology office.

Remember to ask the radiology office to send the result of your mammogram to your primary care physician.

10/2023

VCHCP NETWORK RADIOLOGY FACILITIES

Ventura County Medical Center Radiology (VCMC) (805) 652-6080
M-F 8AM - 3:30PM

Santa Paula Hospital Radiology Center (805) 652-6080
M-F 8AM - 3:30PM

Grossman Imaging Centers (805) 988-0616
VENTURA LOCATION T, W & F 9AM - 4PM
OXNARD LOCATION M & TH 9AM - 4:30PM

Rolling Oaks Radiology (PRESS OPTION 1) (805) 357-0067
VENTURA LOCATION M-F 8AM - 4:30PM
CAMARILLO LOCATION M-F 8AM - 4:30PM
OXNARD LOCATION M-F 8AM - 4:30PM
THOUSAND OAKS LOCATION M-F 7:15AM - 5PM

Rolling Oaks St. John's Imaging Center (805) 983-0883
M-F 8AM - 4:30PM

Palms Imaging (805) 604-9500
Mammogram available at Oxnard Location only. M-F 8AM - 5PM

Adult Preventive Care

Contact your VCHCP Primary Care Provider to make an appointment for your preventive care visit and to discuss the preventive care services that are appropriate for you. You may also see this information about Adult Preventive Health Visits/Care and a detailed list of vaccinations for adults in the Plan's Preventive Health Guidelines brochure. To view the brochure, please visit the VCHCP website at: vchealthcareplan.org/members/docs/healthEducationInfo/preventiveHealthGuidelinesCommercial.pdf#page=6.

Vaccinations for Adults – You're NEVER too old to get vaccinated!

Getting vaccinated is a lifelong, life-protecting job. Don't leave your healthcare provider's office without making sure you've had all the vaccinations you need.

VACCINE	DO YOU NEED IT?
COVID-19	YES! All adults need to be up to date on COVID-19 vaccination. Talk to your healthcare provider.
Hepatitis A (HepA)	Maybe. You need this vaccine if you have a specific risk factor for hepatitis A* or simply want to be protected from this disease. The vaccine is usually given in 2 doses, 6–18 months apart.
Hepatitis B (HepB)	YES! All adults younger than 60 are recommended to complete a 2- or 3-dose series of hepatitis B vaccine, depending on the brand. You also need this vaccine if you are 60 or older and have a specific risk factor,* or you simply want to be protected from infection. All adults should be screened for hepatitis B infection with a blood test at least one time; talk with your healthcare provider.
Hib (Haemophilus influenzae type b)	Maybe. Some adults with certain high-risk conditions,* for example, lack of a functioning spleen, need vaccination with Hib. Talk to your healthcare provider to find out if you need this vaccine.
Human Papillomavirus (HPV)	YES! You should get this vaccine if you are 26 years or younger. Adults age 27 through 45 may also be vaccinated against HPV after a discussion with their healthcare provider. The vaccine is usually given in 2 or 3 doses (depending on the age at which the first dose was given) over a 6-month period.
Influenza (Flu)	YES! You need to be vaccinated against influenza every fall or winter for your protection and for the protection of others around you.
Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR)	Maybe. You need at least 1 dose of MMR vaccine if you were born in 1957 or later. You may also need a second dose.* People with weakened immune systems should not get MMR vaccine.*
Meningococcal ACWY (MenACWY)	Maybe. You may need MenACWY vaccine if you have one of several health conditions,* for example, if you do not have a functioning spleen, and also boosters if your risk is ongoing. You need MenACWY if you are a first-year college student living in a residence hall and (1) you have not had a dose since turning 16, or (2) it has been more than 5 years since your last dose. Anyone age 19 through 21 can have a catch-up dose if they have not had one since turning 16.
Meningococcal B (MenB)	Maybe. You may need MenB if you have one of several health conditions,* for example, if you do not have a functioning spleen, and also boosters if your risk is ongoing. If you are age 16 through 23, you can discuss getting MenB vaccine with your healthcare provider, even if you don't have a high-risk condition.
Pneumococcal (PPSV23; PCV15, PCV20)	YES! Adults younger than 65 with certain underlying medical conditions (e.g., chronic heart disease) or other risk factors need pneumococcal vaccine. All adults age 65 and older also need to be vaccinated if they haven't previously received a pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (PCV). Your healthcare provider can determine what vaccine, if any, you may need.
Tetanus, diphtheria, whooping cough (pertussis) (Tdap, Td)	YES! If you have not received a dose of Tdap during your lifetime, you need to get a Tdap shot now. After that, you need a Tdap or Td booster dose every 10 years. Consult your healthcare provider if you haven't had at least 3 tetanus- and diphtheria-toxoid containing shots sometime in your life or if you have a deep or dirty wound.
Varicella (Chickenpox)	Maybe. If you have never had chickenpox, never were vaccinated, or were vaccinated but only received 1 dose, talk to your healthcare provider to find out if you need this vaccine.
Zoster (Shingles)	YES! If you are 19 or older and have a weakened immune system or are 50 or older, you should get a 2-dose series of the Shingrix brand of shingles vaccine.



*Consult your healthcare provider to determine your level of risk for infection and your need for this vaccine. Are you planning to travel outside the United States? Visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) website at wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list for travel information, or consult a travel clinic.

FOR PROFESSIONALS www.immunize.org / FOR THE PUBLIC www.vaccineinformation.org

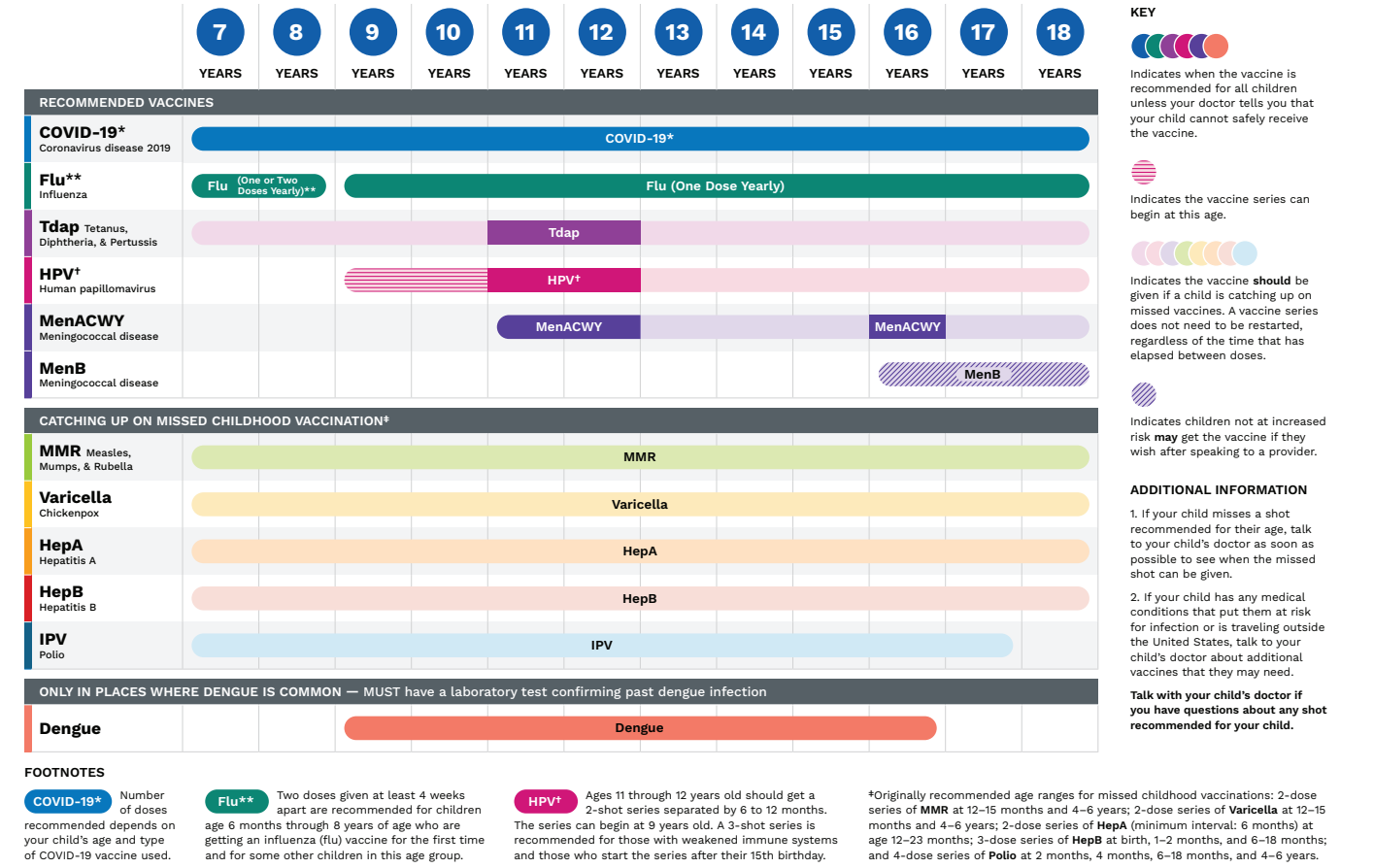
06/2023

Child Immunizations

Contact your VCHCP Primary Care Provider to discuss the vaccination that is appropriate for your child.

VACCINES PREVENT DISEASE IN PEOPLE WHO OBTAIN THEM and protect those who come into contact with unvaccinated individuals. Vaccines are responsible for the control of many communicable diseases that were once widespread in this country, including polio, measles, diphtheria, pertussis (whooping cough), rubella (German measles), mumps, tetanus, and Haemophilus influenza type b (Hib). Before vaccines, many children died from diseases that vaccines now inhibit, such as whooping cough, measles, and polio. Those same germs exist today, but babies are now protected by vaccines, so we do not see these diseases as frequently. Immunizing individual children also improves the wellbeing of our community, especially those people who are not immunized. People who are not immunized include those who are too young to be vaccinated, those who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons (example: children with leukemia), and those who cannot make a satisfactory response to vaccination.

When Do Children and Teens Need Vaccinations?





U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

FOR MORE INFORMATION
Call toll-free: **1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636)**
Or visit: cdc.gov/vaccines/parents



American Academy of Pediatrics
DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™

This information about child immunizations can be found by visiting the VCHCP's website at vchealthcareplan.org/members/docs/healthEducationInfo/preventiveHealthGuidelinesCommercial.pdf#page=2

How TEAMWORK Can Help You

Your brain is part of the rest of your body. If you are seeing a mental health specialist and your mental health specialist and medical doctor (Primary Care Physician or PCP) talk, you get better treatment. The way to make this possible is to sign a Confidential Exchange of Information Form and Authorization for Release of Information Form for each one of your providers. If you are seeing a mental health specialist, inform them how to contact your PCP and other healthcare providers. Also your PCP will want to know that you are seeing a mental health specialist.



Some reasons why working together is important:

- ❖ You may be getting medicines from your psychiatrist as well as your PCP.
- ❖ Some medicines do not work well together.
- ❖ Your doctors need to know all the medicines, including non-prescription medicines you are taking.
- ❖ Medical problems can cause mental health problems.
- ❖ Mental health problems can cause medical problems.

You can find the OptumHealth Behavioral Solutions of California Confidential Exchange of Information Form and Release of Information Form on liveandworkwell.com and also available at vchealthcareplan.org/members/grievanceForms.aspx. The information your healthcare providers share is private to the fullest extent permitted by law. Your PCP may decide to use their own Release of Information form. If so, make sure it includes the ability to exchange mental health information. List the names of all your healthcare providers. Share this list with each person you listed and ask them to work together. If you are seeing a PCP, be sure that your PCP is collaborating care with any of your other treating providers including a mental health specialist. Communication is the key for your overall health care.

VCHCP MATERNAL MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM



PURPOSE:

To ensure that maternal members are screened for maternal mental health conditions or issues including but not limited to post-partum depression during pregnancy or during post-partum period to improve diagnosis and treatment of such conditions or issues.

SCOPE:

Primary Care Providers (PCPs – including Nurse Practitioners and Physician Assistants) caring for maternal members and OB-GYN providers (including nurse midwife/midwife).

POLICY:

VCHCP contracted providers (PCPs caring for maternal members and OB-GYN) are to adhere to the Assembly Bill Bi. 2193 SEC. 2. Article 6 (commencing with Section 123640). This includes:

1. By July 1, 2019, a licensed health care practitioner who provides prenatal or postpartum care for a patient shall ensure that the mother is offered screening or is appropriately screened for maternal mental health conditions or issues.
2. For example, administration of a standardized depression screening tool such as PHQ-2 and/or the PHQ-9.
3. Results are to be recorded in the medical chart of the patient.
4. If the depression or other mental health issues screening result is negative but the maternal member and/or PCP or OB-GYN remains concerned, the PCP or OB-GYN should schedule a follow up visit and make the proper referral to Optum Behavioral Health.
5. If the depression or other mental health issues screening result is positive, refer for an appropriate comprehensive mental health evaluation.
6. The program was developed consistent with sound clinical principles and processes such as the use of standardized depression screening tools name PHQ-2 and/or PHQ-9 and Edinburg Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS).

For VCHCP members, the maternal mental health screening is done by PCPs or OB-GYN providers. VCHCP providers will use their existing process to refer members to mental health providers such as Ventura County Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and OptumHealth Behavioral Solutions of California (OHBS-CA)/plan contracted providers.

In addition, your doctor may coordinate with OHBS-CA for additional behavioral health treatment as appropriate.

Your OB-GYN or primary care doctor will be trained regarding compliance with VCHCP's Maternal Mental Health Program via email/fax blast and VCHCP Provider Newsletter.

EVALUATION OF COMPLIANCE:

In order to ensure that the above policy is followed and that all maternal members are appropriately screened for mental health conditions/issues including but not limited to post-partum depression, VCHCP will conduct a provider's medical record audit to capture of data related to mental health issues screening(s) done, screening results, treatment and follow up. Any provider who is not compliant with this activity may receive additional educational information regarding the screening procedure, follow up limited audit and possible corrective action plan (CAP) if warranted. If a CAP is requested, a Quality Assurance team member will monitor activities until the CAP details are addressed satisfactorily.

VCHCP contracts with OptumHealth Behavioral Solutions (Life Strategies) for Mental/Behavioral health & substance use services. For more information about this valuable resource, please visit the VCHCP's website under Member page and click "Mental/Behavioral Health and Substance Use" at vchealthcareplan.org/members/memberIndex.aspx or you may also access the OptumHealth Behavioral Solutions website liveandworkwell.com/default.asp?programpin=vencohp.

For the Substance Use Helpline, please call **1 (855) 780-5955** and they are available 24/7 to answer your questions, which may include your personal health, care for a family member, coverage, cost of care, and more.



Mental health emergency? Call 988.



Life can be challenging. If you or someone you care about is struggling, know that help is available 24 hours a day.

Call or text 988 if you have:¹

- Thoughts of suicide
- A mental health crisis
- A substance use crisis

The **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline** connects you to caring support from a trained crisis counselor.

There is hope. Call or text **988** today.



Prefer to chat?
Visit **988lifeline.org**.

Every 11 minutes
someone in the U.S. dies by suicide.²

1 of 5
high school students in the U.S.
have seriously considered suicide.³

More than 50%
of people in the U.S. will be
diagnosed with mental illness
during their lifetime.⁴



1. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. 988 key messages. samhsa.gov/find-help/988/key-messages. Last updated April 22, 2022. Accessed May 5, 2022.
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Facts about suicide. cdc.gov/suicide/facts/index.html. Last reviewed April 6, 2022. Accessed May 5, 2022.
3. Ivey-Stephenson AZ, Demissie Z, Crosby AE, et al. Suicidal ideation and behaviors among high school students – youth risk behavior survey, United States, 2019. *cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/su/su6901a6.htm?s_cid=su6901a6_w.MMWR Suppl.* 2020;69(1):47-55. Last reviewed August 20, 2020. Accessed May 5, 2022.
4. CDC. About mental health. cdc.gov/mentalhealth/learn/index.htm. Last reviewed June 28, 2021. Accessed May 5, 2022.

Frequently asked questions about 988

What is 988?

Dialing **988** connects you to the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline. It’s available 24/7, and interpretation services are available in 150 languages. 1-800-273-TALK (8255) is still another way to reach the Lifeline.

When should I call 988? Do I have to be suicidal to call?

You can call **988** anytime you or a loved one is experiencing a mental health crisis. A crisis can look very different for everyone, so whatever feels like a mental health crisis to you is the right reason to call. Common reasons to call include having thoughts of suicide, feeling depressed or anxious, feeling overwhelmed or agitated, feeling like you cannot cope with the stress in your life, or needing advice on how to help a family member. Some callers need help with substance use, self-harm or feelings of wanting to hurt others.

Is calling 988 the same as calling 911?

Not exactly. When you call 911, you speak to a 911 operator who then sends help to you and gets off the phone. When you call **988**, you are connected right away with the crisis worker who will help you during that call. Think of calling **988** as more like contacting someone to help you in the moment, not just as a person who will send someone else to help you. Nearly 90% of crisis calls to the Lifeline are resolved over the phone. If you or someone else is in life-threatening danger or has already caused self-harm, please call 911 so help can be sent right away.

What happens when I call 988?

When you dial **988**, you will hear a message saying that you have contacted the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline. You will be told to press 2 for Spanish and press 1 for veterans/service members. If you don’t select either option, your call will be routed to the Lifeline center nearest to you, based on your phone’s area code.

What if I don’t want to talk to someone on the phone?

You can text **988** and you will be given a short survey so the crisis center can understand what you’re going through, and then you’ll be connected with a counselor. If you’re more comfortable using a chat feature, visit **suicidepreventionlifeline.org/chat**. Similar to texting, you’ll be given a short survey so the crisis center can understand what you’re going through. You’ll then be connected with a counselor.

If you have thoughts of hurting yourself or others – or you know someone having those thoughts – seek help right away. If you or someone you know is in immediate danger, call 911 – or go to the closest emergency room.
To reach a trained crisis counselor, call the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (previously known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) at 988 or 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255). You may also text 988 or chat at 988lifeline.org. The lifeline provides 24/7 free and confidential support.*
*The Lifeline provides live crisis center phone services in English and Spanish and uses Language Line Solutions to provide translation services in over 250 additional languages for people who call 988.
Optum does not recommend or endorse any treatment or medications, specific or otherwise. The information provided is for educational purposes only and is not meant to provide medical advice or otherwise replace professional advice. Consult with your clinician, physician or mental health care provider for specific health care needs, treatment or medications. Certain treatments may not be included in your insurance benefits. Check your health plan regarding your coverage of services.
Optum® is a registered trademark of Optum, Inc. in the U.S. and other jurisdictions. All other brand or product names are trademarks or registered marks the property of their respective owners. Because we are continuously improving our products and services, Optum reserves the right to change specifications without prior notice. Optum is an equal opportunity employer.
© 2022 Optum, Inc. All rights reserved. WF7297820 219453-052022

Prenatal Care in your First Trimester

Pregnancy is an exciting time, but it can also be stressful. Knowing that you are doing all you can to stay healthy during pregnancy and give your baby a healthy start in life will help you to have peace of mind.

THE 1ST VISIT

When you find out you're pregnant, make your first prenatal appointment. Set aside time for the first visit to go over your medical history and talk about any risk factors for pregnancy problems that you may have.

MEDICAL HISTORY

Your health care provider might ask about:

- ▶ Your menstrual cycle, gynecological history and any past pregnancies
- ▶ Your personal and family medical history
- ▶ Exposure to anything that could be toxic
- ▶ Medications you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medications, vitamins or supplements
- ▶ Your lifestyle, including your use of tobacco, alcohol, caffeine and recreational drugs
- ▶ Travel to areas where malaria, tuberculosis, Zika virus, mpox — also called monkeypox — or other infectious diseases are common

Share information about sensitive issues, such as domestic abuse or past drug use, too. This will help your health care provider take the best care of you — and your baby.

DUE DATE

Your due date is not a prediction of when you will have your baby. It's simply the date that you will be 40 weeks pregnant. Few people give birth on their due dates. Still, establishing your due date — or estimated date of delivery — is important. It allows your health care provider to monitor your baby's growth and the progress of your pregnancy. Your due date also helps with scheduling tests and procedures, so they are done at the right time.

To estimate your due date, your health care provider will use the date your last period started, add seven days and count back three months. The due date will be about 40 weeks from the first day of your last period. Your health care provider can use a fetal ultrasound to help confirm the date. Typically, if the due date calculated with your last period and the due date calculated with an early ultrasound differ by more than seven days, the ultrasound is used to set the due date.



PHYSICAL EXAM

To find out how much weight you need to gain for a healthy pregnancy, your health care provider will measure your weight and height and calculate your body mass index.

Your health care provider might do a physical exam, including a breast exam and a pelvic exam. You might need a Pap test, depending on how long it's been since your last Pap test. Depending on your situation, you may need exams of your heart, lungs and thyroid.



LAB TESTS

At your first prenatal visit, blood tests might be done to:

- ▶ Check your blood type. This includes your Rh status. Rh factor is an inherited trait that refers to a protein found on the surface of red blood cells. Your pregnancy might need special care if you're Rh negative and your baby's father is Rh positive.
- ▶ Measure your hemoglobin. Hemoglobin is an iron-rich protein found in red blood cells that allows the cells to carry oxygen from your lungs to other parts of your body. Hemoglobin also carries carbon dioxide from other parts of your body to your lungs so that it can be exhaled. Low hemoglobin or a low level of red blood cells is a sign of anemia. Anemia can make you feel very tired, and it may affect your pregnancy.
- ▶ Check immunity to certain infections. This typically includes rubella and chickenpox (varicella) — unless proof of vaccination or natural immunity is documented in your medical history.
- ▶ Detect exposure to other infections. Your health care provider will suggest blood tests to detect infections such as hepatitis B, syphilis, gonorrhea, chlamydia and HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. A urine sample might also be tested for signs of a bladder or urinary tract infection.



TESTS FOR FETAL CONCERNS

Prenatal tests can provide valuable information about your baby's health. Your health care provider will typically offer a variety of prenatal genetic screening tests. They may include ultrasound or blood tests to check for certain fetal genetic problems, such as Down syndrome.



LIFESTYLE ISSUES

Your health care provider might discuss the importance of nutrition and prenatal vitamins. Ask about exercise, sex, dental care, vaccinations and travel during pregnancy, as well as other lifestyle issues. You might also talk about your work environment and the use of medications during pregnancy. If you smoke, ask your health care provider for suggestions to help you quit.

DISCOMFORTS OF PREGNANCY

You might notice changes in your body early in your pregnancy. Your breasts might be tender and swollen. Nausea with or without vomiting (morning sickness) is also common. Talk to your health care provider if your morning sickness is severe.

OTHER 1ST TRIMESTER VISITS

Your next prenatal visits — often scheduled about every four weeks during the first trimester — might be shorter than the first. Near the end of the first trimester — by about 12 to 14 weeks of pregnancy — you might be able to hear your baby's heartbeat with a small device, called a Doppler, that bounces sound waves off your baby's heart. Your health care provider may offer a first trimester ultrasound, too.

Your prenatal appointments are an ideal time to discuss questions you have. During your first visit, find out how to reach your health care team between appointments in case concerns come up. Knowing help is available can offer peace of mind.



Prenatal care: 1st trimester visits - Mayo Clinic
Sources: [mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/pregnancy-week-by-week/in-depth/prenatal-care/art-20044882](https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/pregnancy-week-by-week/in-depth/prenatal-care/art-20044882)
During Pregnancy Home - CDC - [cdc.gov/pregnancy/during.html](https://www.cdc.gov/pregnancy/during.html)

VCHCP Member Behavioral Health and Substance Abuse RESOURCES

Member Website and Provider Directory:
[LiveandWorkWell.com](https://liveandworkwell.com)

**Optum Intake and Care Management
For Intake and Referrals: (800) 851-7407**

**Substance Use Disorder
Helpline: 1-855-780-5955**
**A 24/7 helpline for VCHCP
Providers and Patients**

Optum covers all Substance-Use-Disorder services identified in the American Society of Addictions Medicine (ASAM) criteria, and as of January 1, 2021, this includes ASAM levels 3.1 and 3.2 WM services.

If you have paid for these services out of pocket, you can submit claims for retrospective review to the following address:

Optum Claims Processing
P.O. Box 30755
Salt Lake City, UT 84130-0755

ANTI-DEPRESSANT Medication Management

Members who are diagnosed with depression and prescribed medication should work closely with their physician to ensure proper treatment. To achieve maximum results from anti-depressant medication, it is important to remain on the medication consistently for at least 6 months, or for the duration prescribed by your physician. VCHCP contracts with Express Scripts for prescription medications. If you have any questions about the services you may need, please contact your physician.

In addition, for Behavioral Health services that you may need, please contact OptumHealth Behavioral Solutions of California “Life Strategies” Program at (800) 851-7407 or visit the website at liveandworkwell.com/content/en/public.html.

If you are seeing a primary care physician (PCP), be sure that your PCP is collaborating care with any of your other providers, especially your mental health specialist. Communication is the key for your overall health care.

For more information, please visit the VCHCP website at vhealthcareplan.org/members/docs/healthEducationInfo/ClinicianBrochure.pdf.

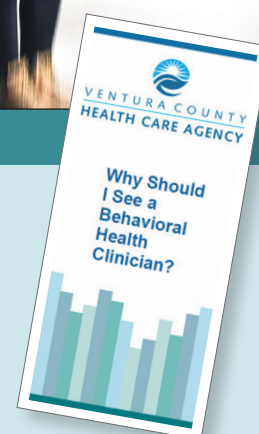
Depression is a chronic disease that requires long-term management, typically with medication.



DEPRESSION EDUCATION MATERIALS AVAILABLE

Depression is a common mental illness that can be very limiting. When members are well informed and seek treatment, they can successfully work through life problems, identify coping skills, and retain a sense of control. VCHCP has created a brochure of depression information and resources available to members. This valuable resource is available on the VCHCP website at vhealthcareplan.org/members/docs/healthEducationInfo/ClinicianBrochure.pdf.

If you do not have access to the website or would like further information, please call (805) 981-5060 and ask to speak with a Disease Management Nurse.



ACCESSING Behavioral Healthcare SERVICES

Contact OptumHealth Behavioral Solutions of California “Life Strategies” Program at (800) 851-7407 or visit the website at liveandworkwell.com/content/en/public.html.

Contact VCHCP Member Services at (805) 981-5050 to request an EOC copy or go to the Plan’s website at vhealthcareplan.org/members/programs/docs/countyemployees/EOCCountyAndClinicEmp2023.pdf.

Information on authorization of Plan Mental Health and Substance abuse benefits is available by calling the Plan’s Behavioral Health Administrator (BHA) at (800) 851-7407. A Care Advocate is available twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week to assist you in accessing your behavioral healthcare needs. For non-emergency requests, either you or your Primary Care Provider may contact Life Strategies for the required authorization of benefits prior to seeking mental health and substance abuse care.

Further information may also be obtained by consulting your Ventura County Health Care Plan Commercial Members Combined Evidence of Coverage (EOC) Booklet and Disclosure Form.

Gender Affirming PROCEDURES AND SERVICES

Members should have access to affordable, high-quality health care, regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, or disability. Health plan benefits for transgender services are part of our commitment to the transgender community.

Ventura County Health Care Plan (VCHCP) adheres to the guidelines of the World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH) for gender-affirming care benefits. VCHCP does not limit sex-specific recommended preventive services based on your gender identity or recorded gender.

To access VCHCP’s Medical Policy on Gender Affirming Procedures, please visit: vhealthcareplan.org/providers/docs/medpolicies/GenderAffirmingProcedures.pdf.

To access the Nonprofit Professional Society, Standards of Care developed by the World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH) through VCHCP, please visit: vhealthcareplan.org/providers/medicalPolicies.aspx and it is found under Medical Policies - Gender Affirming Procedures.

To access the Standards of Care developed by the World of Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH), please visit the website at wpath.org/media/cms/Documents/SOC%20v7/SOC%20V7_English2012.pdf.

To access Optum Health’s Behavioral Health Clinical Criteria, please visit the website at: public.providerexpress.com/content/ope-provexpr/us/en/clinical-resources/guidelines-policies.html.

Adopted Behavioral Health Clinical Criteria:

- American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) Criteria®, Third Edition
- Child and Adolescent Service Intensity Instrument (CASII)
- Level of Care Utilization System (LOCUS)
- Early Childhood Service Intensity Instrument (ECSII)

If you have questions, concerns, or would like a copy mailed to you at no cost, please contact Ventura County Health Care Plan at **(805) 981-5050** or **(800) 600-8247**.

VENTURA COUNTY HEALTH CARE PLAN
CONTRACTS WITH
OptumHealth Behavioral Solutions (LIFE STRATEGIES)



FOR MENTAL/BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICES

Optum's Live and Work Well website is packed with valuable information for healthy living. For easy access to this information, look for Optum's icon on the VCHCP website – click on it and you are on your way to learning more about healthy living! You can also access it through liveandworkwell.com/member.

Following are two examples of articles available for members to help with common behavioral health issues.

Attention Deficit
Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

What is attention deficit hyperactivity disorder?

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is a condition in which a person has trouble paying attention and focusing on tasks, tends to act without thinking, and has trouble sitting still. It may begin in early childhood and can continue into adulthood. Without treatment, ADHD can cause problems at home, at school, at work, and with relationships. In the past, ADHD was called attention deficit disorder (ADD).

What causes ADHD?

The exact cause is not clear, but ADHD tends to run in families.

What are the symptoms?

The three types of ADHD symptoms include:

- **Trouble paying attention.** People with ADHD are easily distracted. They have a hard time focusing on any one task.
- **Trouble sitting still for even a short time.** This is called hyperactivity. Children with ADHD may squirm, fidget, or run around at the wrong times. Teens and adults often feel restless and fidgety. They aren't able to enjoy reading or other quiet activities.
- **Acting before thinking.** People with ADHD may talk too loud, laugh too loud, or become angrier than the situation calls for. Children may not be able to wait for their turn or to share. This makes it hard for them to play with other children. Teens and adults may make quick decisions that have a long-term impact on their lives. They may spend too much money or change jobs often.

How does ADHD affect adults?

Many adults don't realize that they have ADHD until their children are diagnosed. Then they begin to notice their own symptoms. Adults with ADHD may find it hard to focus, organize, and finish tasks. They often forget things. But they also often are very creative and curious. They love to ask questions and keep learning. Some adults with ADHD learn to manage their lives and find careers that let them use those strengths.

The Basics:
Autism Facts

What is Autism?

Autism is a developmental disorder. The disorder makes it hard to understand the world. Communication is especially challenging. It is hard for people with autism to attach meaning to words and facial expressions. Individuals with the disorder have trouble interacting with others. They may seem as if they are in their own world. People with autism tend to engage in repetitive or obsessive behavior. They often do self-harming things. They may bang their heads on the wall or do things like repeatedly pinch themselves.

What are the Symptoms?

Autism is usually noticed in the first three years. Sometimes the symptoms are apparent when comparing the development of your child to others their age. Other times the symptoms may come on all at once. Some signs to look for are:

Communication symptoms:

- Talks late or not at all; speaks loudly or with flat tones
- Points or uses other motions to indicate needs
- Repeats words or phrases without understanding the meaning
- May talk at length about something even if no one is listening



Social interaction symptoms:

- Likes to be alone
- Dislikes being held or touched
- Does not know how to interact; poor listener
- May stare at something for a long time, ignoring the rest of the world
- Poor eye contact
- Does not understand the feelings of others

Behavior symptoms:

- Likes routine; is upset by change
- Does not pretend or use his or her imagination
- May have tantrums or show aggression
- May become very attached
- May engage in repetitive movements like rocking
- May bang his or her head or hurt self
- May be sensitive to noises that others tolerate
- May have an unusual reaction to the way things smell, taste, look, feel or sound

Not everyone experiences autism in the same way. Some may have severe trouble with some things and not be as challenged by others. If you suspect that your child may have autism, trust your instincts. Take your child to a doctor and have them examined.

Additionally, VCHCP has a Case Management Program specific to the needs of those with Autism. Contact the VCHCP Case Management Department for more information (805) 981-5060 or visit vhealthcareplan.org and click on "Request Case Management or Disease Management".

Autism Screening
FOR ALL CHILDREN

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is the name for a group of developmental disorders. Studies show that when children with ASD are diagnosed early and receive early intervention, they have improved long-term outcomes. With this in mind, VCHCP has in place a Screening for Autism Policy that all Family Practitioners and Pediatricians caring for children age 2 and younger are to follow. Your child's provider will administer a standardized screening and surveillance of risk factors at age 18 and 24 months. Also, your provider will perform a general observation at every well-child visit. Please understand that these screenings are to be provided for all children at age 18 and 24 months. If you have concerns about the screening or the results, contact your child's provider.

If you have any questions about the Autism Screening Policy, please contact VCHCP Utilization Management department at (805) 981-5060.

Autism Spectrum
DISORDERS

Members now have an opportunity to seek assistance for Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). VCHCP recommends all members with ASD or parents of children with ASD participate in our Autism Case Management Program. Visit vhealthcareplan.org/members/memberIndex.aspx, and on the right side of the site, click "Request Case Management or Disease Management". You will be prompted to enter member specific information. You will then submit this form to a secure email. A nurse will evaluate your request and call you within 2 business days.

**REQUEST
Case Management or
Disease Management**

If you would like to speak directly with a nurse, please call (805) 981-5060 and ask for a Case Management Nurse.



EVERYONE DESERVES TO HAVE A HEALTHY, SMOKEFREE HOME!

DID YOU KNOW?

People living in apartments are more likely to be exposed to secondhand smoke.¹

- » Smoke can enter your home through vents, electrical outlets, windows, and even tiny cracks in walls.



65% Up to 65% of the air in an apartment can come from other units in the building.²



ANY AMOUNT OF SECONDHAND SMOKE CAN BE HARMFUL

- » **41,000 nonsmokers die** from secondhand smoke each year in the U.S.³



It is especially dangerous for children and can cause permanent damage to growing lungs.⁴



YOUR LUNGS CAN'T TELL THE DIFFERENCE

- » **Marijuana secondhand smoke is harmful just like cigarette smoke.**⁵ It has many of the same toxic chemicals that cause cancer and other diseases.
- » Vaping produces tiny droplets of harmful chemicals, including lead. **It's NOT just harmless water vapor!**⁶



TO FULLY PROTECT YOUR HOME FROM SECONDHAND SMOKE, YOUR ENTIRE APARTMENT COMPLEX NEEDS TO BE SMOKEFREE

This includes:

- » Inside units
- » On patios and balconies
- » Outdoor common areas such as pools, parking lots, stairways, and courtyards.



Free help to quit tobacco is available from the Kick It California.

Visit kickitca.org

Call **1-800-300-8086**

Text **"Quit Smoking"** or **"Quit Vaping"** to **66819**

Download the free **No Butts** or **No Vape** mobile apps

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

- » Apartment owners have the legal authority to make their property entirely smokefree. Contact your local health department for resources to offer managers and landlords about the benefits of a smokefree property.
- » Share information with neighbors about the harms of all forms of secondhand smoke. Try posting information on bulletin boards or in laundry rooms.
- » Reach out to city officials about local laws that would require apartments and other multi-unit housing to be smokefree.
- » Check the strength of your city's smokefree policies and take action at www.secondhanddangers.org



Tobacco Education and Prevention Program

805-201-STOP (7867)
callitquits@ventura.org

REFERENCES:

- » Tsai, J., et al. (2018). Exposure to Secondhand Smoke Among Nonsmokers - United States, 1988-2014. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 67(48), 1342-1346.
- » Center for Energy and Environment. (2004). Reduction of Environmental Tobacco Smoke Transfer in Minnesota Multifamily Buildings Using Air Sealing and Ventilation Treatments.
- » U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2014). The health consequences of smoking – 50 years of progress: A report of the surgeon general. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health.
- » Ibid.
- » Graves, BM, et al. (2020). Comprehensive characterization of mainstream marijuana and tobacco smoke. *Scientific Reports*, 10(1), 7160. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-020-63120-6>
- » National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. (2018). Public Health Consequences of E-Cigarettes.

© 2021. California Department of Public Health. Funded under contract # 21-10001. J999 - 09/21.

TOP 10 TIPS TO QUIT SMOKING

Counselors from the California Smokers' Helpline provide their top 10 tips to quit for good.



Enroll online at
www.nobutts.org

This material made possible by the California Department of Public Health and First 5 California.

- 1. FIND A REASON TO QUIT**
Do you want to breathe easier? Be around longer for your family? Save money? Whatever gets you fired up, write it down. A strong reason can get you started. And it will help you stay quit when you're tempted to smoke.
- 2. MAKE A PLAN**
Think about what triggers you to smoke. Is it stress? Being around smokers? Alcohol? Or something else? Plan to get through those times without smoking. Keep your hands busy and your mind off cigarettes. Examples: drink water, wash the dishes, talk to a nonsmoker.
- 3. CALL 1-800-NO-BUTTS**
People who call the Helpline are twice as likely to quit for good. A trained counselor will help you make a personal plan and offer support along the way. It's free, and it works!
- 4. GET SUPPORT**
Research shows that support while quitting can really help. Talk with your family and friends about your plan to quit. Let them know what they can do to help you.
- 5. USE A QUITTING AID**
Quitting aids, like nicotine patches and gum, and other FDA-approved medications are helpful. They can cut withdrawal symptoms and increase your chance of quitting for good. Your health plan or Medi-Cal benefits may cover these products. Talk with your doctor about which quitting aids are right for you.
- 6. MAKE YOUR HOME & CAR SMOKE-FREE**
Having smoke-free areas can help you stop smoking. And your friends and family will enjoy cleaner air and a longer, happier life - with you still in it!
- 7. SET A QUIT DATE**
Choose a date when you will quit. This shows you're serious. And you're more likely to give it a try.
- 8. QUIT ON YOUR QUIT DATE**
Sounds obvious, right? But what good is a quit date unless you actually try to stop smoking? Planning is good, doing is even better.
- 9. PICTURE BEING A NONSMOKER**
After you quit, you have a choice to make. Are you a smoker who's just not smoking for now? Or are you a nonsmoker? For nonsmokers, smoking is not an option in any situation. Choose to see yourself as a nonsmoker.
- 10. KEEP TRYING**
Most people try several times before they quit for good. Slips don't have to turn into relapses - but if they do, remember each time brings you closer to your goal.

If you keep trying, you will succeed!

STANDARDS FOR MEMBERS' RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

Ventura County Health Care Plan (VCHCP) is committed to maintaining a mutually respectful relationship with its Members that promotes effective health care.

Standards for Members Rights and Responsibilities are as follows:

- 1** Members have a right to receive information about VCHCP, its services, its Practitioners and Providers, and Members' Rights and Responsibilities.
- 2** Members have a right to be treated with respect and recognition of their dignity and right to privacy.
- 3** Members have a right to participate with Practitioners and Providers in decision making regarding their health care.
- 4** Members have a right to a candid discussion of treatment alternatives with their Practitioner and Provider regardless of the cost or benefit coverage of the Ventura County Health Care Plan.
- 5** Members have a right to make recommendations regarding VCHCP's Member Rights and Responsibility policy.
- 6** Members have a right to voice complaints or appeals about VCHCP or the care provided.
- 7** Members have a responsibility to provide, to the extent possible, information that VCHCP and its Practitioners and Providers need in order to care for them.
- 8** Members have a responsibility to follow the plans and instructions for care that they have agreed upon with their Practitioners and Providers.
- 9** Members have a responsibility to understand their health problems and participate in developing mutually agreed-upon treatment goals, to the degree possible.

For information regarding the Plan's privacy practices, please see the "HIPAA Letter and Notice of Privacy Practices" available on our website at:
vchealthcareplan.org/members/memberIndex.aspx.

Or you may call the Member Services Department at (805) 981-5050 or toll free at (800) 600-8247 to have a printed copy of this notice mailed to you.



SAFE MEDICATION DISPOSAL

SAFE AND SECURE RX DRUG DISPOSAL

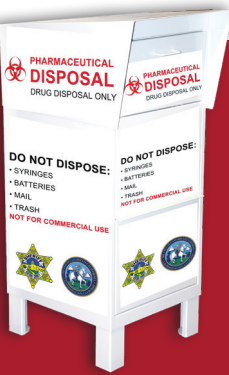
Ventura County is actively engaged and committed to preventing prescription drug misuse and abuse. One of the ways the County works to address the issue locally is by reducing access, especially to teens. The Ventura County Sheriff's Office (VCSO), in collaboration with Ventura County Behavioral Health (VCBH), established a countywide Rx disposal program that allows residents to safely dispose of unused, unwanted, or expired Rx medication via secure, confidential disposal bins.

- Recent data continue to support the need for ongoing and expanded availability of Rx drug disposal programs.
- 1 in 5 Ventura County teens have abused prescription drugs.
- Over 50% get them for free from friends and family.
- 73% of Ventura County residents surveyed indicated that prescription drugs, for uses not as prescribed, are "fairly easy" or "very easy" for teenagers to obtain.

Since 2009, over 19 tons of Rx drugs have been collected and destroyed by the Ventura County Rx Abuse & Heroin Workgroup partners in the Ventura County Sheriff's Office. The VCSO announced the annual results of its collection of unused and expired prescription medications for 2017. The agency collected 6,813 pounds over the course of the year, the highest annual total since it began collecting prescription drugs in 2009. Nearly 1 in 5 Ventura County residents have dropped off unused or expired Rx drugs at a county disposal bin.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Commit to safely disposing of your prescription drugs
- Get the facts on Rx & OTC drug abuse
- Dispel the myth that Rx drugs are safe to abuse
- Know the signs and symptoms of drug use
- Monitor and secure all medications



MEDICATION DISPOSAL DROP-OFF LOCATIONS

Please visit:
venturacountyresponder.org/medication-safety/safe-medication-disposal
This information can also be found on the VCHCP website Member page under Pharmacy at vhealthcareplan.org/members/pharmacy.aspx.

PHARMACY UPDATES

Ventura County Health Care Plan updates the formulary with changes and gets re-posted monthly on the VCHCP's member website. Here is the direct link of the electronic version of the formulary posted on the Ventura County Health Care Plan's website on the Member page, click "Pharmacy" then National Preferred Formulary Exclusions: vhealthcareplan.org/members/programs/docs/NationalPreferredFormularyExclusions.pdf#page=3.



A list of additions and deletions for the Ventura County Health Care Plan's formulary was recently approved by the Plan's Pharmacy & Therapeutics Committee and can be found by visiting the Plan's website at vhealthcareplan.org/members/programs/docs/ProviderNotificationAddsAndDeletes.pdf.

Additional information regarding the National Preferred Formulary is available thru Express Scripts (ESI) at express-scripts.com. Logging in is required.

Note: The Plan's Drug Policies, updated Step Therapy, Drug Quantity Limits, and Preferred Medication list can be accessed at VCHCP's website - Member page under the "Preferred Medications List" and "Prior Authorization Drug guidelines": vhealthcareplan.org/providers/providerIndex.aspx.

- Plan's Drug Policies**
vhealthcareplan.org/providers/priorAuthDrugGuidelines.aspx
- Step Therapy**
vhealthcareplan.org/providers/docs/padg/steptherapy/StepTherapyCheatSheet.pdf
- Drug Quantity Limit**
 - vhealthcareplan.org/members/programs/docs/DQMAvantage.pdf
 - vhealthcareplan.org/members/programs/docs/DQMAvantagePlus.pdf
 - vhealthcareplan.org/members/programs/docs/DQMLimited.pdf
- Preferred Medications list**
vhealthcareplan.org/members/programs/docs/ProviderDrugList.pdf

A member or a member's designee can request that the original step therapy exception request, formulary exception request, prior authorization request and subsequent denial of such requests be reviewed by an independent review organization, by submitting an exception via online request available in the VCHCP member website (vhealthcareplan.org/members/requestPharmacyExceptionForm.aspx) or by calling the Plan at (805) 981-5060. For more information about the Step Therapy, the policy can be found at the Plan's website vhealthcareplan.org/providers/docs/padg/steptherapy/StepTherapyCheatSheet.pdf.

2024 National Preferred Formulary Exclusions

The excluded medications are not covered by the National Preferred Formulary beginning January 1, 2024, unless otherwise noted. Please note that members filling prescriptions for one of these excluded drugs may pay the full retail price. Please discuss the alternative preferred medications with your patients and provide a new prescription for one that you feel is right for the patient. To access the list of National Preferred Formulary Exclusions, please visit our website at vhealthcareplan.org/members/programs/docs/NationalPreferredFormularyExclusions.pdf#page=3.



If you have any questions or need to reach an Express Scripts Representative, please call (800) 811-0293.

The Ventura County Health Care Plan provides pharmacy coverage through Express Scripts. Members have the ability to create an online Express Scripts profile account at express-scripts.com or you may also access Express Scripts by visiting the Plan's website on the Member page at vhealthcareplan.org/members/pharmacy.aspx and click on Express Scripts. Members have access to the following services and information once their profile is established.

- Manage Prescriptions – Refill/Renew
- Determine Financial Responsibility for a Drug
- View Recent Orders & Status
- View Prescription History – Ability to Search by RX Number
- View Health and Benefit Information
- View Account Information
- Find the location of an in-network Pharmacy – Ability to Search by Zip-code

For a full list of participating providers please see our website: vchealthcareplan.org/members/physicians.aspx or contact Member Services at **(805) 981-5050 or (800) 600-8247**.

NEW TO THE NETWORK

3M Medical Solutions, a DME supplier for Negative Pressure Wound Therapy Pump and Supplies, has been added effective September 2023.

Adam Shellito, M.D., a General Surgeon at Anacapa Surgical Associates (VCMC) in Ventura, has been added effective October 2023.

Alexander De Castro-Abeger, M.D., an Ophthalmologist at Miramar Eye Specialists Medical Group in Camarillo, Thousand Oaks and Ventura, has been added effective September 2023.

Anastasia Warde, M.D., an OB/GYN at Sierra Vista Family Medical Clinic (VCMC) in Simi Valley, has been added effective October 2023.

Artur Fahradyan, M.D., a Plastic Surgeon at Anacapa Plastic, Reconstructive, and Hand Surgery (VCMC) in Ventura, has been added effective August 2023.

Ashwinee Condon, M.D., a Gastroenterologist at Genesis Healthcare Partners in Camarillo and Oxnard, has been added effective October 2023.

Ashwinee Condon, M.D., a Gastroenterologist at Genesis Healthcare Partners in Camarillo and Oxnard, has been added effective October 2023.

Bavand Youssefzadeh, D.O., an Ophthalmologist at Access Eye Institute in Oxnard and Westlake Village, has been added effective August 2023.

Carmen Stellar, M.D., a Family Medicine physician at Academic Family Medicine Center (VCMC) in Ventura, has been added effective August 2023.

Casey Whipple, M.D., a Family Medicine physician at Magnolia West (VCMC) in Oxnard, has been added effective December 2023.

Cedar Wilkening, P.A.-C., a Physician Assistant at Ideal Women's Health Specialist in Ventura, has been added effective August 2023.

Celeste Cole, P.A.-C., a Physician Assistant at Cardiology Associates Medical Group in Oxnard and Ventura, has been added effective August 2023.

Christine Weber, P.A.-C., a Physician Assistant at Main Street Obstetrics & Gynecology in Ventura, has been added effective January 2024.

Clark Wilkey, D.O., a Family Medicine physician at Dignity Health Medical Group in Ventura, has been added effective August 2023.

David Blitzer, M.D., a Vascular Surgeon at Pacific Cardiovascular & Vein Institute in Oxnard and Ventura, has been added effective September 2023.

Dhruv Verma, M.D., a Gastroenterologist at Medicine Specialty Center West (VCMC) in Ventura, has been added effective August 2023.

Ellen Monaco, F.N.P., a Nurse Practitioner at Clinicas Del Camino Real Inc., El Rio in Oxnard, has been added effective September 2023.

Hailey Eisner, D.O., a Female Pelvic and Reconstructive surgeon at Anacapa Urology (VCMC) in Ventura, has been added effective August 2023.

James Caines, D.O., a Family Medicine physician at Clinicas Del Camino Real Inc., Roberto S. Juarez Health Center in Oxnard, has been added effective January 2024.

Jennifer Steen, M.D., an OB/GYN at Main Street Obstetrics & Gynecology in Ventura, has been added effective November 2023.

Jonathan Casillas, P.A.-C., a Physician Assistant at Clinicas Del Camino Real Inc., in Simi Valley, has been added effective November 2023.

Justin Mikesell, P.A.-C., a Physician Assistant at California Dermatology Institute in Ventura, has been added effective October 2023.

Kaitlyn Phelps, P.A.-C., a Physician Assistant at California Dermatology Institute in Thousand Oaks, has been added effective October 2023.

Kenisha Thomas, F.N.P., a Nurse Practitioner at Clinicas Del Camino Real Inc., La Colonia in Oxnard, has been added effective January 2024.

Keyi Jiang, M.D., a Pediatrician at Conejo Valley Family Medical Group (VCMC) in Thousand Oaks and Mandalay Bay Women & Children's Medical Group (VCMC) in Oxnard, has been added effective September 2023.

Kristen Motley, P.A.-C., a Physician Assistant at Clinicas Del Camino Real Inc., in Moorpark, has been added effective September 2023.

Krystine Jimenez Eusebio, P.A.-C., a Physician Assistant at Clinicas Del Camino Real Inc., Roberto S. Juarez Health Center in Oxnard, has been added effective January 2024.

Larissa Larsen, M.D., a Dermatologist at Medicine Specialty Center West (VCMC) in Ventura, has been added effective August 2023.

Laura Farhat, F.N.P., a Nurse Practitioner at Clinicas Del Camino Real Inc., Ojai Valley Community Health Center, has been added effective September 2023.

Lauren Rotkis, N.P., a Nurse Practitioner (PCP services) at Mandalay Bay Women & Children's Medical Group in Oxnard and (Gastroenterology specialty services) at Pediatric Diagnostic Center in Ventura, has been added effective September 2023.

Linnea Rietkerk, R.D.N., a Registered Dietician Nutritionist at 360 Nutrition Consulting in Camarillo, has been added effective January 2024.

Logan Horejsi, P.A.-C., a Physician Assistant at California Dermatology Institute in Ventura, has been added effective October 2023.

Mauricio Vargas, M.D., an Ophthalmologist at Access Eye Institute in Westlake Village, has been added effective August 2023.

Meaghan Pinheiro, M.D., an OB/GYN at Main Street Obstetrics & Gynecology in Ventura, has been added effective November 2023.

Megumi Sugimoto, M.D., a Family Medicine physician at Clinicas Del Camino Real Inc., in Ventura, has been added effective October 2023.

Mina Ananth, M.D., a Family Medicine physician at Santa Paula Medical Clinic (VCMC), has been added effective November 2023.

Mohammad Khan, M.D., a Gastroenterologist at Genesis Healthcare Partners in Camarillo and Oxnard, has been added effective October 2023.

Nada Sarsour, P.A.-C., a Physician Assistant at Ideal Women's Health Specialist in Ventura, has been added effective August 2023.

Nicole Abell, D.O., an OB/GYN at Main Street Obstetrics & Gynecology in Ventura, has been added effective November 2023.

Nikkee Amin, M.D., a Child Neurologist at Sierra Vista Family Medical Clinic (VCMC) in Simi Valley, has been added effective November 2023.

Olivia Granger, P.A.-C., a Physician Assistant at Clinicas Del Camino Real Inc., Karen R. Burnham Health Center in Oxnard, has been added effective November 2023.

Olivia Low, M.D., a Pediatrician at Clinicas Del Camino Real Inc., Karen R. Burnham Health Center in Oxnard, has been added effective January 2024.

Patti Wicklund, F.N.P., a Nurse Practitioner at Ojai Valley Family Medicine Group in Ojai, has been added effective January 2024.

Priscilla Lee, N.P., a Nurse Practitioner at Conejo Valley Family Medical Group (VCMC) in Thousand Oaks, has been added effective September 2023.

Rahil Dharja, M.D., a Dermatologist at Pacifica Center for Dermatology in Camarillo, has been added effective August 2023.

Rebecca Richmond, F.N.P., a Nurse Practitioner at Alta California Medical Group in Simi Valley, has been added effective January 2024.

Robin Quinn, F.N.P., a Nurse Practitioner at West Ventura Medical Center (VCMC) in Ventura, has been added effective September 2023.

Roseann Tibbs, C.N.M., a Certified Nurse Midwife at Ideal Women's Health Specialist in Ventura, has been added effective August 2023.

Roze Room Hospice of the Valley, a Palliative Medicine facility in Reseda, has been added effective July 2023.

Roze Room Hospice of Ventura, a Hospice Care facility in Ventura, has been added effective July 2023.

Sara Tom, F.N.P., a Nurse Practitioner at Sierra Vista Family Medical Clinic (VCMC) in Simi Valley, has been added effective September 2023.

Scott Bourns, D.O., a Family Medicine physician at Clinicas Del Camino Real Inc., in Moorpark, has been added effective December 2023.

Sean Pearson, D.P.M., a Podiatrist at Scot L. Roberg, D.P.M., in Ventura, has been added effective June 2023.

Second Wave Physical Therapy in Fillmore, has been added effective August 2023.

Shawnie Pascall, M.D., a Family Medicine Physician at Clinicas Del Camino Real Inc., in Oxnard, has been added effective September 2023.

Sherri Tysch, D.O., a Pediatrician at Community Pediatrics Medical Group in Moorpark and Westlake Village, has been added effective November 2023.

Srisawai Pattamakom, M.D., an Obstetrics and Gynecology specialist at Ideal Women's Health Specialist in Ventura, has been added effective August 2023.

Stephanie Cekov, P.A.-C., a Physician Assistant at Santa Paula West Medical Group & Pediatrics (VCMC) in Santa Paula, has been added effective October 2023.

Stephanie Pyatkovskiy, N.P., a Nurse Practitioner at Moorpark Family Care Center (VCMC) in Moorpark, has been added effective October 2023.

Sterling Adams, D.O., a Family Medicine physician at Clinicas Del Camino Real Inc., Ojai Valley Community Health Center, has been added effective November 2023.

Sydney Tang, P.A.-C., a Physician Assistant at California Dermatology Institute in Thousand Oaks, has been added effective October 2023.

Tessa Tejero-Bingham, P.A.-C., a Physician Assistant at Ventura Orthopedics Medical Group in Camarillo, Simi Valley, and Thousand Oaks, has been added effective January 2024.

Victoria Moor, F.N.P., a Nurse Practitioner at Clinicas Del Camino Real Inc., Roberto S. Juarez Health Center in Oxnard, has been added effective November 2023.

Wendy-Ann Sylvester, M.D., a Family Medicine physician at Clinicas Del Camino Real Inc., Roberto S. Juarez Health Center in Oxnard, has been added effective September 2023.

Zachary Sharfman, M.D., an Orthopedic Surgeon at Ventura Orthopedic Medical Group in Simi Valley and Thousand Oaks, has been added effective September 2023.

LEAVING THE NETWORK

Anya Trumler-Sebring, M.D., a Pediatric Ophthalmologist at Miramar Eye Specialists Medical Group in Camarillo, Oxnard, Santa Paula, Simi Valley, Thousand Oaks and Ventura, has left effective August 2023.

Dipti Sagar, M.D., a Gastroenterologist at Magnolia Family Medical Center (VCMC) in Oxnard and Medicine Specialty Center West (VCMC) in Ventura, has left effective December 2023.

Gary Hawkins, P.A.-C., a Physician Assistant at Dignity Health Medical Group Ventura in Oxnard, has left effective July 2023.

Ira Silverman, M.D., an OB/GYN at Academic Family Medical Center (VCMC) in Ventura and Mandalay Bay Women & Children's Medical Group (VCMC) in Oxnard, has left effective January 2024.

Jodi Watson, C.N.M., a Certified Nurse Midwife at Santa Paula Hospital Clinic (VCMC) and West Ventura Medical Clinic (VCMC) in Ventura, has left effective December 2023.

John Thacher, M.D., a Dermatologist at Ventura Dermatology Medical Clinic in Ojai and Ventura, has left effective October 2023.

Kristen Motley, P.A.-C., a Physician Assistant at Clinicas Del Camino Real Inc., in Moorpark, has left effective December 2023.

Larissa Larsen, M.D., a Dermatologist at Medicine Specialty Center West (VCMC) in Ventura, has left effective December 2023.

Lisabeth Carlisle, M.D., a Family Medicine physician at Magnolia Family Medical Clinic West (VCMC) in Oxnard, has left effective October 2023.

Manvir Sohal, M.D., a Family Medicine physician at Clinicas Del Camino Real Inc., in Simi Valley, has left effective June 2023.

Martin Weiss, M.D., a Rheumatologist at Conejo Valley Family Medical Group (VCMC) in Thousand Oaks and Magnolia Family Medical Center (VCMC) in Oxnard, has left effective December 2023.

Nabeel Hameed, M.D., a Family Medicine physician at Moorpark Family Care Center (VCMC) in Moorpark, has left effective July 2023.

Nicholas Campbell, P.A.-C., a Physician Assistant at Ventura Orthopedic Medical Group in Oxnard, has left effective June 2023.

Nima Nassiri, M.D., a Urologist at Anacapa Urology Clinic (VCMC) in Ventura, has left effective September 2023.

Noel Vierma, P.A.-C., a Physician Assistant at West Ventura Medical Clinic (VCMC) in Ventura, has left effective August 2023.

Paul Silverman, M.D., a Urologist at Anacapa Urology Clinic (VCMC) in Ventura, has left effective December 2023.

Peter Soliman, M.D., a Family Medicine physician at Clinicas Del Camino Real Inc., in Moorpark, has left effective August 2023.

Rosalva Romero, F.N.P., a Nurse Practitioner at Rose Avenue Family Medical Group in Oxnard, has left effective December 2023.

Sarah Patronete, F.N.P., a Nurse Practitioner at Dignity Health Medical Group Ventura County in Oxnard, has left effective January 2024. (Not listed in Directory)

Sathy Bhavan, M.D., an Ophthalmologist at Jeffrey K. Luttrull, MD in Ventura, has left effective June 2023.

Sheryl Dickstein, M.D., a Family Medicine physician at Academic Family Medicine Center (VCMC) in Ventura, has left effective August 2023.

Soraida Rodriguez, N.P., a Nurse Practitioner at Anacapa Neurosurgery (VCMC) in Ventura, has left effective September 2023.

Stephanie Cekov, P.A.-C., a Physician Assistant at Clinicas Del Camino Real Inc. Karen R. Burnham Health Center in Oxnard, has left effective September 2023.

Subeer Wadia, M.D., an Interventional Cardiologist at Cardiology Associates Medical Group in Oxnard and Ventura, has left effective June 2023.

Timothy Williamson, M.D., a Pediatrician in Ojai, has left effective October 2023.

Wendy-Ann Sylvester, M.D., a Family Medicine physician at Clinicas Del Camino Real Inc., Roberto S. Juarez Health Center in Oxnard, has left effective September 2023.

CHANGES

Access Eye Institute in Oxnard, has moved to a new location within Oxnard, effective July 2023.

Adventist Health Physicians Network - Alamo Hills in Simi Valley, has moved to a new location within Simi Valley, effective November 2023.

Alta California Medical Group in Simi Valley has moved to a new location in Simi Valley, effective November 2023.

Cardiology Associates Medical Group in Ventura has moved to a new location in Ventura, effective January 2024.

Channel Islands Medical Group in Ventura has changed their name and is now called Dean W. Smith, MD a Medical Corporation, effective November 2023.

Coastal Allergy Care in Simi Valley has permanently closed their doors, effective November 2023.

Magnolia Family Medicine Center West (VCMC) has updated their name to Magnolia West (VCMC), effective January 2024.

Mission Home Health of Ventura LLC, a Home Health facility in Ventura has moved to a new location in Oxnard, effective August 2023.

Solar Urgent Care in Ventura has permanently closed their doors, effective September 2023.



VENTURA COUNTY
HEALTH CARE PLAN

A Department of Ventura County Health Care Agency

2220 E. Gonzales Road, Suite 210-B
Oxnard, CA 93036

PRSRT MKTG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
COUNTY of
VENTURA

