Congratulations! You have health insurance. Now what?

Health insurance isn’t only important when you are sick. It can also help you stay well.

Health insurance means:
- You will have a regular doctor who knows you and your health care needs.
- You will be able to see a doctor when you need to.
- You won’t have to go to the emergency room for regular medical care.

Start now! Take these 4 steps to better health, and getting the care you need to live a long, healthy life.

Step 1: Understand your health insurance.

Your health insurance is Medi-Cal. Your Medi-Cal health plan is called Central California Alliance for Health (the Alliance for short). The Alliance pays for your health care services, as long as you follow the rules of the plan. Call the Alliance Member Services Department at 800-700-3874 if you have questions.

Remember to:
- Always carry and show your Medi-Cal Benefits Identification Card (BIC) and Alliance ID cards at the doctor’s office and pharmacy.
- Read your Alliance Member Handbook to find out how your plan works and what benefits you are covered for.

Step 2: Your primary care provider – Having a medical home.

You will have a primary care provider (PCP) for all your regular medical care. Your PCP will be your medical home. This is the first place you call when you are not feeling well or need medical advice. Your PCP and the office or clinic care team will work with you to make sure you get the care you need. This includes check-ups and immunizations (shots) when you are well. It also includes visits when you are sick.

If you need to see a specialist, your PCP will refer you.

Having a medical home means:
- All your information is in one place - Your PCP will have your health records. He or she will work with you for any health conditions you have like diabetes, asthma or high blood pressure.
- You are treated as a whole person - Your PCP will check other areas of your health, not just the problem you came in for that day.
- Your care is coordinated - If you need to see other doctors or need tests or medicine, your PCP can help you make a plan. Your PCP will prescribe medicine, schedule follow-up visits and refer you to specialists.
Congratulations! You have health insurance. Now what?

Schedule a new patient visit.

Call your PCP to make an appointment. You will be entered in a raffle for a $50 gift card if you get this visit in your first 3 months as an Alliance member! But if you are sick or need care sooner, call and let your PCP’s office know. They can see you even before your new patient visit.

At this visit, your PCP will ask about:
- Your medical history
- What medicines you take and
- How you feel

He or she will make sure you are up to date on your shots and may order lab work. Tell your PCP if you are seeing another type of doctor on a regular basis. Let him or her know if you have questions or concerns about your health.

After your appointment, you will see your PCP for regular check-ups, help managing your ongoing health conditions and when you feel sick. Even if you see a specialist, you will come back to your PCP. If you have questions or concerns between visits, call your PCP. Ask when your next visit should be. Make an appointment and write it down where you will remember it.

Partner with your PCP.

Your PCP can provide better care if you talk with him or her about your health and share any questions or concerns you have. If your PCP says something you don’t understand, speak up!

You should be able to answer these questions before you leave your PCP’s office:
- How is my health?
- What can I do to stay healthy?
- If I have a health condition, what are my treatment options?
- What are the benefits and concerns for each option?
- What will happen if I don’t take care of it?
- If I need to take medicine, when do I take it and how much do I take?
- Are there any side effects?

Don’t wait – Get started on the road to good health now!