

family health




Winter • 2017





NEW MEMBER PORTAL! Access your health plan information online


Visit kernfamilyhealthcare.com, click on "Member Login" and follow the steps to sign up for your online account.


In minutes, you'll have access to your health plan information—PLUS, you'll be able to:


 View and print your member ID card.

 Confirm your eligibility with Kern Family Health Care and find out who your primary care provider is.

 Receive important health care reminders about immunizations or medical exams you need.

 Change your primary care provider.

 Sign up for free health education.

 Learn more about your health plan.

**Create your online account
today!**

New member benefits

Starting Jan. 1, 2017, Kern Family Health Care (KFHC) enhanced its member benefits. These new benefits include respite care for homeless members and pulmonary rehabilitation. KFHC must approve these services before you can receive them.

What is respite care? Respite care is a place where homeless members can stay on a short-term basis to get better after leaving the hospital. Respite care also includes:
» Meals. » On-site nursing care.
» Transportation. » Counseling.
» Start of treatment for substance use. » Housing assistance.

What is pulmonary rehabilitation? Pulmonary rehabilitation will improve the lung function of members with chronic

lung disease. Services may include:

- Respiratory therapy.
- How to manage your medication.
- Physical and occupational therapy.
- Nutrition services.
- How to quit smoking.
- Disease education.

Where can I learn more about these enhanced member benefits? To learn more about these benefits, you can call the KFHC Member Services Department at **661-632-1590** (Bakersfield) or **800-391-2000** (outside Bakersfield).

Stay tuned! KFHC will also start sending rewards to members for going to certain health care visits, such as yearly checkups and prenatal care visits. To learn more, visit the KFHC member portal at kernfamilyhealthcare.com.

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

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So you are pregnant!

CARING FOR YOURSELF AND YOUR BABY

It's official! You've got a baby on the way. Taking care of your health just took on a new meaning.

Luckily, there's a great way to make sure you and your baby get off to a healthy start. Visit your health care provider. You should have several visits during the first trimester. That's the first 12 weeks of pregnancy.

At these visits, called prenatal visits, you'll get tests and exams to

make sure things are going well. And you'll be able to ask your provider questions. You may want to learn what to do about:

- **Fatigue.** Get plenty of rest. Try sleeping in a little. Or take a short nap during the day.
- **Morning sickness.** You may need to skip eating certain foods. Or stay away from some odors.
- **Weight gain.** You should gain 1 to 4½ pounds in the first trimester.

Electronic smoking devices: Not as harmless as you think

Electronic smoking devices include e-cigarettes; e-hookahs; and vape pens, or vapes. These contain nicotine, which can cause harm to you and your baby if used while you are pregnant. Some of the bad effects of nicotine include:

- Bleeding from the placenta.
- Cervix being covered by the placenta.
- Pregnancy outside the womb.
- Early birth.
- Low birth weight.
- Problems with growth and brain development in the baby.
- Nicotine withdrawal symptoms in the baby.

The best thing to do when you are pregnant is to quit smoking. This is best for you and best for your baby. If you would like help quitting, call **800-NO-BUTTS (800-662-8887)**.

Sources: Kern County Department of Public Health; Perinatal Substance Abuse Prevention Partnership

You'll be at your best if you eat a healthy diet. And you'll protect your baby if you don't use alcohol and tobacco.

A common concern in the first trimester is vaginal bleeding. There are many reasons for light bleeding or spotting during this time. Most aren't serious. However, you should call your provider if you have any vaginal bleeding.

Sources: American Academy of Family Physicians; March of Dimes; Office on Women's Health



You're HIV positive—now what?

If you have tested positive for HIV, there are many resources that can help you.

The Health Education and Linkage Program (HELP) and the Kern Lifeline Program both work to help you access the services you need and create a care plan for you. Below is the contact information for both programs:

Kern County Public Health Services, HELP Program
1800 Mount Vernon Ave.
Bakersfield, CA 93306
661-321-3000

Clinica Sierra Vista, Kern Lifeline Project
2000 Physicians Blvd., second floor
Bakersfield, CA 93301
661-324-3262



HIV: Get tested!

Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) is a serious disease. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that everyone between the ages of 13 and 64 be screened for HIV. If you are older or younger than these ages, you may also need to be screened. A simple blood test is all it takes! How often

you get screened depends on your level of risk. Since Kern County has high rates of HIV, you may need to get screened more often.

Talk to your doctor if you aren't sure what your risk is. You can request an HIV test from your doctor at any time.

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Kern County Department of Public Health; Martha Warriner; U.S. Preventive Services Task Force

“When I was 70 years old, I tested positive for HIV. By that time, I had full-blown AIDS, but nobody had ever thought to test me. HIV/AIDS can come from anywhere, even if you don't think you're at risk. And even though it's now a manageable disease, it's not something you want as your companion for the rest of your life. Please, get tested. Today.”

Be PrEPared: Prevent HIV

PrEP, or Pre-exposure Prophylaxis, is a new medication that helps prevent people from becoming infected with HIV. This medication is used for people who have a high risk of getting HIV, like those who:

- Have sex with multiple partners.
- Have sex without condoms.
- Are men who have sex with other men.
- Use drugs that are injected.

- Have a partner who has HIV.
- Have had another sexually transmitted disease (STD).

Talk to your doctor about PrEP if you feel that you are at risk of becoming infected with HIV. A person who is taking PrEP should still use condoms at all times. If you inject drugs, never share or reuse needles.

Sources: AIDS.gov; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Make the connection

CHANGING HOW YOU THINK MAY CHANGE HOW YOU FEEL

Can your mental state affect the health of your body?

Doctors have long thought there is a strong tie between mind and body. And recent studies prove them right. We now know that unhealthy levels of stress, depression and anxiety can cause problems with your:

- Hormones.

- Immune system.

- Heart health.

- Blood pressure.

Other effects of stress can be:

- Back pain.

- Chest pain.

- Headaches.

- Extreme fatigue.

- Diarrhea.

- Stiff neck.

- Racing heart.

Caring for your emotional health can improve your quality of life. It also may help your body fight disease.

What helps the mind-body balance grow strong? Thankfully, research has answered that question too. These top the list:

1 Getting a move on. Exercise changes how the body responds to stress. It improves mood too.

2 Finding healthy ways to relax. Some people use music, art, prayer, woodworking, reading or even 10-minute walks to lower stress in their life.

3 Expressing yourself. Bad feelings and fears that are bottled up may flow out as aches, pains and problems. A trusted friend, partner or religious adviser may be able to help you work through challenges. Some people keep a gratitude journal or write down goals. Counseling is advised if you are stuck or feeling overwhelmed.

Finally, remember these words of wisdom: Be honest with your doctor about the stresses and challenges you face. Ask for help if you think you're feeling depressed. Your doctor can suggest many ways to improve your health and wellness—both mental and physical.



Sources: American Academy of Family Physicians; American Psychological Association; National Institutes of Health



Feeling ill? Antibiotics may not help

No one enjoys being sick. But taking antibiotics won't always make you better.

Antibiotics kill bacteria, not viruses. And many illnesses are caused by viruses.

The common cold is caused by a virus. So is the flu. Most coughs? Virus. Most sore throats? Virus. Even some fevers are caused by a virus.

Time is the best cure for these illnesses. Most of them go away in a week or two. So what are antibiotics good for? Bacterial infections only.

To find out if bacteria are making you sick, you'll need to see your provider.

Sometimes he or she can do a quick test to find out which kind of germ you have. For instance, a fast swab of a sore throat can tell

if you have strep. Strep throat is caused by bacteria. Antibiotics can help.

Virus? Feel better. So how can you feel better if you have a cold, flu or other sickness caused by a virus? Try these soothing tips for adults:

- Use a pain reliever to lessen aches and fever.
- Suck on a lozenge to ease a sore throat. Or gargle with warm salt water.

Keep in mind that a virus can lead to more serious illness. So call your provider if you start feeling worse.

But don't ask for antibiotics if you have a virus. Save these drugs for when you need them.

Sources: American Academy of Family Physicians; American Academy of Pediatrics; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

FLU FACTS: Don't let the flu get you down

Germs can travel as far as 6 feet when a person coughs or talks.

Flu viruses can survive on surfaces for **2-8 hrs.**

5-20% of the people in the U.S. get the flu each year.



The flu sends **200,000+** PEOPLE to the hospital each year.

YOUR BEST PROTECTION: A YEARLY FLU VACCINE.

Nearly everyone older than 6 months should get one.



MORE STAY-HEALTHY TIPS:

Wash your hands often.
Avoid touching your face.
Steer clear of people who are sick.

Have you gotten your flu shot?
Call your doctor to make an appointment.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

We speak your language

When you're sick, it often helps to see a doctor. And the easier the doctor is to talk to, the better.

But talking with a doctor can be hard if he or she doesn't speak the language you know best. Check your Provider Directory for information about the languages spoken by our providers and their staff. Our Member Services staff can help you find a doctor's office that speaks your language. They can also get you an interpreter so you can talk to your doctor or to Kern Family Health Care (KFHC).

It is important that you do not use family members, friends or especially children as interpreters.

If you cannot find a doctor who meets your language needs, we can help. We offer:

- Staff members who are bilingual in English and Spanish.
- Over-the-phone language interpreters for more than 2,400 languages 24/7.
- Sign language interpreters. This must be scheduled five business days in advance for regular appointments and as soon as possible for urgent appointments.

By offering these services to you, we make sure the doctor knows

what you're saying and you know what the doctor is saying. With an interpreter's help, you can get answers to all of your questions.

It is also important that you read all the materials we mail you. All our written materials are available in English or Spanish. If KFHC sends you something in English and you need it in Spanish, please call us. If you receive an important

letter from us and you cannot read it, please call us and we can have somebody help you read it.

» IT'S FREE! These services are free and easy to use. Just call us at 661-632-1590 (Bakersfield) or 800-391-2000 (outside of Bakersfield), day or night.



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FAMILY HEALTH is published as a community service for the friends and patrons of KERN FAMILY HEALTH CARE, 9700 Stockdale Highway, Bakersfield, CA 93311, telephone 800-391-2000.

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