

A Legacy *of Good Health*

SPRING 2016



SPRING FWD ▶

A GREAT TIME TO MAKE HEALTHY CHANGES

MANY of us launch the new year with resolutions to improve ourselves. Those resolutions often fizzle in a few weeks or months. But that doesn't mean you have to wait until next January to get a fresh start.

The beginning of daylight saving time, with brighter, warmer days, is a great time to make a fresh start. Spring into better health with one of these bright ideas.

Give your kitchen a makeover. Take time to say out with the old and unhealthy and in with fresh, new food options. You can get some spring cleaning in at the same time.

First, go through the fridge and pantry. Start by discarding anything that's spoiled or expired. Next, take stock of sugary or salty foods, and toss most of them. You might keep one or two of your favorite snacks, though, for an occasional indulgence.

Finally, do a little menu planning. What does your family enjoy? What types of colorful produce are in season? Plan simple, nutritious meals, and then go shopping to stock your newly cleared kitchen.

Optimize those ZZZs. When it comes to sleep, both quality and quantity count. If you're dragging through your days, take a look at your sleep habits. It might help to:

- ▶ Create a cozy, relaxing sleep environment. Think quiet, dark and cool.
- ▶ Put electronics to sleep early. The type of light emitted from laptops and other screens can stimulate the brain, making it difficult to fall asleep.
- ▶ Find a soothing bedtime ritual, like reading a book, taking a bath or listening to quiet music.

If you have ongoing sleep problems, talk to your doctor.

Commit to fit. Let longer days and the improving weather beckon you to get out and moving. It's time to enjoy long walks on balmy spring days, for example, or dig into yardwork and gardening.

Being active can boost mood and ease anxiety. It can also lower blood pressure, improve cholesterol levels and help you sleep better. The list goes on and on.

And exercise doesn't have to be a chore—you're more likely to stick with it when it's fun. Check your local recreation center for a sports league to join. Head to a local park that has volleyball nets or horseshoe pits set up. Or train for a 5K walk or run.

Sun-proof your skin. While it's not summer yet, protecting skin is a year-round endeavor. Let the brighter days of spring be a reminder to step up your game. Cover up with long sleeves, long pants, sunglasses and a brimmed hat. And use sunscreen when you'll be outside. Remember, damaging UV rays can reach you even on gray, overcast days.

Sources: American College of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology; American Heart Association; American Institute for Cancer Research; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute; National Sleep Foundation



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Safeguard your heart

YOU probably know by now that heart disease is not only a man's problem. Just look at the facts:

- Each year, 1 in 4 deaths among U.S. women is from heart disease.
- Heart disease, stroke and other cardiovascular diseases kill more American women each year than the next three leading causes of death combined.
- Women are less likely than men to survive a heart attack.

Several factors can increase your risk of heart disease. Among them are smoking, having high blood pressure or abnormal cholesterol levels, being overweight, or having diabetes.

If early heart disease runs in your family or you're older than 55, your risk increases too. The age-related rise in risk is later for women than it is for men. That's partly because estrogen gives premenopausal women some heart disease protection.

To understand your risk—and how to lower it—have a heart-to-heart with your doctor. You can also discuss other factors that may affect your heart, such as using birth control pills if you're older than 35 and a smoker.

Know the signs

Indications of heart disease and heart attack can be different for men and women. A common symptom of heart disease in everyone is chest discomfort (angina). In women, however, angina is often a sharp, burning pain that may be felt in other areas, such as the back, neck or jaw.

Pain in any of these areas can also be a heart attack—a medical emergency. Women may have other heart attack warnings as well, such as shortness of breath or nausea.

Man or woman, don't ignore any of these signs of a possible heart attack. Call 911 right away if you have any of these symptoms. Even if symptoms disappear after a few minutes, get medical help.



To learn more about heart disease, visit the American Heart Association website. Go to www.heart.org.

You're covered

Don't ignore any of these signs of a possible heart attack (at right). Call 911 right away.

Whether you are in Bakersfield, other areas of Kern County or traveling out of town, Kern Legacy Health Plan covers you for true emergent conditions. If you have questions about your emergency benefits, call Member Services at 661-868-3280 or 855-308-5547.

Remember that emergency room services have a \$150 co-pay no matter what hospital you receive your care in. For nonemergent conditions, go to your local contracted urgent care or any urgent care outside of Kern County. There is a \$15 co-pay for all urgent care visits.

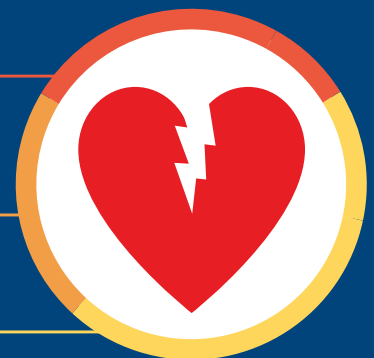
HEART ATTACK: Know the warning signs

If you see these in yourself or someone else, don't wait. **CALL 911.**

Chest pain, pressure, fullness or squeezing that lasts more than a few minutes or comes and goes

Sudden lightheadedness, shortness of breath, nausea or cold sweat

Pain in the arms, shoulder, back, neck, jaw or stomach



Source: American Heart Association

It's a new year for Kern Legacy Health Plan 'Network Plus'

WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO LOOK FORWARD TO THIS YEAR?



KERN LEGACY would like to welcome all of our new members and thank our existing members for their continued support. It is our goal to continuously provide you with quality health care and customer service with a personal touch.

Kern Medical is our partner, functioning as the only EPO-level hospital in the Bakersfield area. Kern Medical provides quality care and is working to continue to improve and expand services to make accessing care convenient. Kern Medical is dedicated to being your hospital of choice.

New ID cards for the new year

All members should have received new ID cards. Please be sure to present your new ID card when accessing care to prevent any delays in billing for services provided.

What's changed on the ID card?

- New logo and design for the new benefit structure.
- Co-pay changes: specialty visits \$20; emergency room (ER) \$150; MRI, CT and PET \$25 (this is not on the card but is a new co-pay).
- New PPO benefit:
 - ▷ \$250/individual; \$500/family deductible.
 - ▷ 20 percent co-insurance per PPO-level service.
- New pharmacy benefit manager—WellDyneRX (no longer using Catamaran, aka Optum)
- Prescription co-pays:
 - ▷ Employee plan:
 - Kern Medical pharmacies: \$0/\$15/\$35
 - Retail pharmacies: \$5/\$30/\$60

▷ Retiree plan:

Kern Medical pharmacies:

\$0/\$20/\$40

Retail pharmacies: \$5/\$45/\$65

If you did not receive an ID card, it is possible that you:

- Did not select a primary care provider (PCP).
- Selected an out-of-network PCP.
- Have a PCP that is no longer in-network.

If you have not received your new ID card, please call Member Services at **661-868-3280, options 1 and then 5.**

Do you need help transitioning to Kern Legacy? Member Services is available to help facilitate services and answer your questions. Call 661-868-3280 or 855-308-KLHP (5547), options 1 and then 5.

Continuity of Care

A Continuity of Care (COC) is a request to continue care through transition from another County of Kern Health Plan to Kern Legacy Health Plan. The goal is not to hinder care through transition and ensure that you are able to safely transition to in-network providers.

If you have submitted a COC and have questions regarding the process, Member Services will be happy to guide you through the process or to assist in explaining the determined plan of care.

EPO and PPO benefit options

Are you still confused about what the EPO and PPO benefits options are?

These options are two levels of benefits offered to you as members of Kern Legacy. Having these benefit options allows you to receive care with the specialty providers and facilities you choose.

All your primary care, mental health, urgent care and ER services will be provided to you at the EPO-level benefit, where you will be able to access services for little to no co-pay.

When you need care outside of your PCP, you can either have your PCP refer you to an EPO specialty provider, or you can choose a specialty provider or facility from the PPO-level listing. If you choose to use a PPO-level provider, you:

- Do not need a referral from your PCP for the initial consult. (Follow-up and additional procedures will need plan authorization.)
- Must meet your deductible and will be liable for a 20 percent co-insurance for any PPO service.

Feedback

Kern Legacy started as the plan with a restrictive network. Over the years, we've asked you how we can make the plan better meet your needs. As a result, we came up with a plan design that allows you to have more choices: "Network Plus." We are the plan that listens to you. Tell us how we are doing. Your opinion matters. You can email us at **KLHP@kernlegacyhp.com**.

Don't shrug off shoulder pain

THE shoulder is the most flexible joint in your body. You use it to reach, lift and throw. But because the shoulder is so flexible, it tends to be unstable—which can lead to a variety of problems.

Your shoulder joint is made up of bones held in place by muscles, tendons and ligaments. Many shoulder problems are caused by the breakdown of soft tissues in the shoulder—usually because of overuse.

Injuries often result from athletic activities that involve excessive, repetitive overhead motion, such as swimming or tennis. But you can also hurt your shoulder performing everyday tasks like washing walls or gardening.

Shoulder problems can happen at any age. But they're more likely to occur as you get older, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

Types of shoulder injuries

The HHS says common shoulder injuries include:

► **Dislocation**—when the ball at the top of the upper arm bone pops out of the socket. It usually occurs if your shoulder

is twisted or pulled very hard.

► **Separation**—when the ligaments between the collarbone and the shoulder blade are torn. It is most often caused by a blow to the shoulder or by falling on an outstretched hand.

► **Rotator cuff tear**—when the tendons that connect shoulder muscles to bones wear down and tear. Sports or jobs with repetitive overhead motion can cause rotator cuff problems, as can wear and tear from aging.

► **Fracture**—when a bone is cracked or broken. Fractures are often caused by a fall or blow to the shoulder.

Signs of trouble

The American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons advises you to see a doctor if you have pain and your shoulder:

- Is stiff and doesn't rotate normally.
- Feels like it is loose or could pop out of place.
- Lacks strength to perform daily activities.

If you are concerned about your shoulders, a doctor may be able to prescribe exercises that can strengthen your shoulder muscles and prevent injury.

Don't push through the pain. If you have persistent pain or weakness in your shoulders, see your primary care provider to discuss your symptoms.

Consulting with an orthopedic surgeon

If your primary care provider (PCP) decides that it is medically necessary for you to consult with an orthopedic surgeon, he or she will refer you to an EPO-level Kern Medical specialist.

After a consultation, if the EPO-level specialist determines that it is necessary to refer you out for additional care not available at Kern Medical, Kern Legacy will direct your care to another contracted provider. For all services that can be provided by a Kern Medical specialist, the health plan will continue to review and approve care as necessary at Kern Medical.

You have the option of using your PPO benefit to consult with an orthopedic surgeon outside of the EPO level without a referral from your PCP. For a list of PPO-level providers, see Kern Legacy's PPO-level directory at www.kernlegacyhp.com. A deductible and coinsurance will apply to any PPO-level services.

For questions, call Member Services at 661-868-3280, options 1 and then 5.



Young athletes: Cheer them on to safety

EVERY kid's a winner when it comes to playing sports. Game time can boost a youngster's social skills and provide plenty of healthful exercise that's also a lot of fun.

But every sport poses at least some risks. As a parent, you can work together with coaches and your young athlete to help reduce these risks.

What goes wrong?

Most often, youth athletes are sidelined by:

- ▶ Sprains and strains. These involve injuries to ligaments or muscles and tendons.
- ▶ Growth-plate injuries. These occur when the developing tissues at the ends of children's long bones get hurt.
- ▶ Overuse injuries. These are the result of repetitive motions—pitching in baseball, for instance—that stress and strain bones and soft tissues.

Overuse injuries are especially common when eager athletes don't take time off from a sport.

Stay off the injured list

Luckily, sports injuries usually aren't severe—and they're often avoidable. To help your child score in safety, consider the following advice:

Ask questions. Learn what your child's sports program is doing to prevent and respond to injuries, such as ensuring conditioning for players and safety training for coaches.

Schedule a physical. A preseason exam from a doctor will help confirm that your youngster is healthy enough to play.

Get equipped. Depending on the sport, a helmet, body padding, mouthguards or shinguards,



eye protection, and proper shoes may be needed.

Play by the rules. From football to soccer, many sports have rules designed to prevent injuries. Make sure your child knows—and follows—them.

Beat the heat. Give your child a water bottle—and encourage frequent intake.

Warm up. Encourage warm-up exercises before and cooldown exercises after both practices and games.

Don't downplay concussions. In general, players with a concussion shouldn't get back in the game until medically evaluated and cleared to play.

Encourage rest. Athletes need breaks in between seasons and during practices and games.

Speak up. Teach your child to speak up if he or she is sick or hurt. And remember to check with your child's doctor should you suspect an injury.

Sources: American Academy of Pediatrics; National Institutes of Health; Safe Kids Worldwide

62,000

The approximate number of concussions that occur each year in the U.S. among high school athletes who take part in contact sports. Some of these sports include football, hockey, lacrosse, soccer, basketball and softball.

American Association of Neurological Surgeons

A LEGACY OF GOOD HEALTH is published as a community service for the friends and members of KERN LEGACY HEALTH PLAN, 1115 Truxtun Avenue, First Floor, Bakersfield, CA 93301, telephone 661-868-3280 or 855-308-5547.

Information in A LEGACY OF GOOD HEALTH comes from a wide range of medical experts. If you have any concerns or questions about specific content that may affect your health, please contact your health care provider.

Models may be used in photos and illustrations.

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The plan and the hospital of choice

“I have been with Kern Legacy from the start of the plan and with Kern Medical for 14 years. I have been able to experience the day-to-day operations of both the plan and the hospital. We, at Kern Legacy and at Kern Medical, strive to be the best we can be. It has been amazing over the past couple years to watch the hospital transform—from the attitude to the looks of the hospital. Everyone taking part in that change is so passionate about what is being accomplished. Kern Medical holds a special place in my heart, not only for the career I have been able to grow into working for the hospital, but also for the services provided to my children and me during a tragic car accident. We were treated quickly and with the compassion and efficiency needed to save our lives. Through my work at Kern Legacy, I am able to partner with my Kern Medical family and provide my County family with the same compassion and efficiency I needed when I was seeking health care services. Every year, Kern Legacy is improving what we do to make sure that this is your plan of choice, just as Kern Medical is working hard to be your hospital of choice, and I am proud to be a part of making it all happen.”

—Joslyn Reyes, Health Plan Administration Coordinator, Kern Legacy Health Plan

Quick, convenient, compassionate care

“Whoever came up with the concept of Kern Legacy Health Plan deserves a medal. Problems or questions get answered within 24 hours and usually the same day. When the County was unable to get the flu vaccine last year, I was still able to get my flu shot through Kern Legacy. Getting blood drawn for lab work is quick and convenient at the CAO building and without having to wait in line. I’m looking forward to seeing the changes to the plan that 2016 is bringing.

Over the past six months, I’ve been hospitalized three times at Kern Medical Center—once for major surgery. I couldn’t have asked for better care! Everybody, from the medical staff to the housekeeping staff, was friendly, attentive, responsive and helpful. The KMC medical staff took very good care of me, and the food isn’t bad either!”

—Pamela Goodchild, Kern Legacy Health Plan member

