



KERN LEGACY HEALTH PLANS

A Legacy *of Good Health*

SUMMER 2021

County employees helping our community

It has truly been amazing to see how during these challenging times, the departments of Kern County have come together to help keep our community safe. Since the release of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine to Kern County, Public Health—in collaboration with other

County departments—has designed and operated the Mass Vaccination Clinic (MVC) at the Kern County Fairgrounds. Staff have demonstrated their flexibility as operations have transitioned from outdoors to indoors and back outside as weather permits.

The MVC began operations by vaccinating approximately 300 County residents in the 65 and older tier per day. Currently, the MVC is providing approximately 10,000 vaccinations per week. As of April 20, there have been more than 70,000 vaccines administered at the site.

Neighbors helping neighbors

The feedback given by those vaccinated at the MVC has been overwhelmingly positive. These results would not be possible without the help

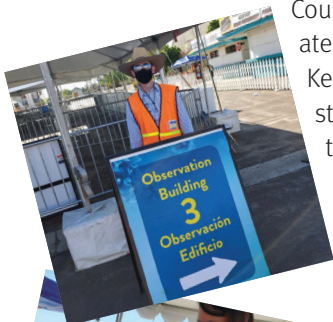
of our fellow Kern County employees. On any given day, our Kern County residents will be greeted, screened, directed, vaccinated and observed by employees from Public Health, Kern County Human Resources, Department of Human Services, Behavioral Health and Recovery Services, Probation, Public Works, Aging and Adult Services, County Counsel, and the Public Defender's office, just to name a

few. We continue to see employees from all departments take time away from their workload and their weekends to come out and serve the community. Every department's efforts are noticed and vital to maintaining the success of the MVC. Thank you to everyone who has volunteered at the site assisting the community.

Due to the opening of the MVC drive-thru option, we have a need for more County employees to staff and maintain efficiency at the MVC. If you can volunteer, please notify your department's human resources contact. To assist in scheduling an appointment anywhere within Kern County, please visit My Turn—California COVID-19 Vaccine Scheduling & Notifications at myturn.ca.gov.

Just as we strive to keep our community safe and in good health, Kern County Health Benefits, in partnership with Kern Medical, is also working to vaccinate our County employees. Kern Medical has administered over 3,000 vaccines to County employees. To get your vaccine, notify your department's human resources contact. Your department will provide a list to Health Benefits to get your appointment scheduled at Kern Medical.

Keep up the good work! Every day is one step closer to a safer and healthier Kern County!



Inside

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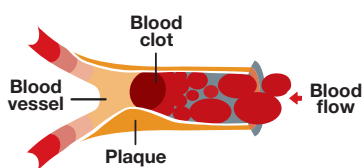
5 How to keep your skin healthy

WHAT IS A STROKE?

A stroke occurs when blood flow to part of the brain is interrupted—or when a vessel breaks and bleeds into the brain. In either case, within minutes, brain cells begin to die.

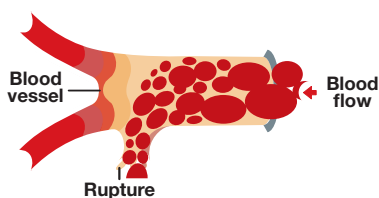


TWO TYPES OF STROKE



Ischemic strokes are the most common type. They result from blockages in blood vessels in the brain or in the neck arteries that carry blood to the brain.

Often they are caused by a clot that forms in an artery that already has a buildup of fatty deposits called plaque. In some cases, a blood clot can form in another part of the body and then travel to the brain.



Hemorrhagic strokes

occur when a blood vessel in the brain becomes weak and then ruptures, flooding the surrounding tissue with blood.

Source: American Heart Association

Be stroke smart

What you can do to control three major risk factors

In the next 40 seconds, someone in the U.S. will have a stroke. It might be deadly or cause a severe disability. Strokes are largely preventable with lifestyle changes and other safeguards that decrease your risk.

It's true that you can't control every risk factor, such as a family history of stroke or simply growing older. But here are three major risk factors you can control, along with proven ways to do so.

1 Atherosclerosis. This buildup of plaque in your arteries—especially the carotid arteries in your neck—can bring on a stroke.

Take charge: To help keep plaque from clogging your arteries, stick to a well-balanced, reduced-sodium diet; maintain a healthy weight; and be more physically active.

Do you smoke? Then talk to your doctor about products and programs that can help you quit. Lighting up damages your blood vessels and raises your atherosclerosis risk.

Unhealthy cholesterol levels can cause atherosclerosis. So if your levels aren't good, your doctor may prescribe medication to control or lower your cholesterol. Be sure to follow your doctor's orders for taking the medication.

2 High blood pressure. This is a leading cause of stroke—most people who have a first stroke have blood pressure that is too high.

Take charge: High blood pressure rarely causes symptoms. So get yours checked regularly. The American Heart Association (AHA) says high blood pressure starts when systolic blood pressure (the top number) is 130 mm Hg or diastolic blood pressure (the bottom number) is 80 mm Hg. Work with your doctor to keep your blood pressure below 120/80 mm Hg, the AHA says. Steps like these can help:

Eat a well-balanced, salt-smart diet.

Focus on fruits and vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy products, skinless poultry and fish, and nuts and legumes. Avoid palm and coconut



oils. And cut down on salt, which can raise blood pressure. Check nutrition labels to see how much sodium—a component of salt—a food has before buying it. If you have high blood pressure, you may need to eat even less sodium.

Know the risks of alcohol. Drinking too much makes blood pressure climb.

Move more. Aim to get at least 2 hours and 30 minutes of moderately intense aerobic activity, such as brisk walking, each week. If that seems like a lot, know that any exercise is better than none. Check with your doctor before significantly increasing your activity level.

Watch your weight. As your weight creeps up, so can your stroke risk.

Take any blood pressure medicine exactly as prescribed. But remember: Medicine is never a substitute for any lifestyle changes your doctor also advises.

3 Atrial fibrillation (AFib). This irregular heartbeat significantly raises your stroke risk. If you have it, you're five times more likely to have a stroke than someone without it.

Take charge: Many people with AFib have no noticeable symptoms. But you might notice a racing, fluttering or irregular heartbeat, or you may be short of breath or feel light-headed. If so, tell your doctor. If he or she does diagnose AFib, you may need anticoagulant medicine or other treatments to reduce your stroke risk.

High blood pressure is a major risk factor for AFib. So keeping your blood pressure in a healthy range can also help prevent AFib.

Additional sources: American Stroke Association; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



Don't wait. Call 911 if you are having symptoms of a stroke or other life-threatening emergency. Most Kern Legacy Health Plans have a \$150 emergency room co-pay, with the exception of Kern Legacy Classic Choice, which has a \$75 emergency room co-pay (co-pays waived if admitted).

Don't delay: Get help for a stroke

If you suspect you or someone else is having a stroke, think F.A.S.T.

Why F.A.S.T.? Because the word is an acronym for an easy way to remember some of the signs and symptoms of stroke and when to get medical help:

- **F**ace drooping.
- **A**rm weakness.
- **S**peech difficulty.
- **T**ime to call 911.

F.A.S.T. also reminds you that stroke is an emergency, and you need to get help quickly.

Why do you need help quickly?

A stroke occurs when blood flow to the brain is interrupted, either by a clot or by a ruptured blood vessel. As soon as blood flow is blocked, cells in the brain start to die because they aren't getting the oxygen and blood they need to survive. Dead brain cells can't be brought back to life.

Damage from the most common type of

stroke often can be stopped by a medication called Alteplase IV r-tPA, which can bust open a clot. But the medication must be given within a three-hour window (or up to 4½ hours for certain patients). To leave time for evaluation and diagnosis, someone having a stroke must get to a hospital within 60 minutes of when they first started having symptoms.

Additional signs and symptoms

In addition to the F.A.S.T. symptoms, other signs of stroke can include:

- Sudden severe headache with no known cause.
- Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body.
- Sudden confusion.
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes.
- Sudden dizziness, trouble walking, or loss of balance or coordination.

May is National Stroke Awareness Month

If you experience any of these signs or symptoms of a stroke—or spot them in someone else—call 911. Remember: Stroke is a medical emergency.

Sources: American Stroke Association; National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke



DID YOU KNOW?

Your Kern Legacy Health Plan covers preventive care visits with no cost-sharing when obtained by a network provider. For Plan details, visit www.kerncountyhealthbenefits.com.

Act F.A.S.T. Know the sudden signs of stroke



FACE DROOPING.

Does one side of the face droop? Is it numb? Ask the person to smile. Is the smile uneven?



ARM WEAKNESS.

Is one arm weak or numb? Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?



SPEECH DIFFICULTY.

Is speech slurred or hard to understand? Can the person repeat back a simple sentence?



TIME TO CALL 911—

even if the signs go away. Getting fast treatment may help limit damage to the brain.

OTHER STROKE SYMPTOMS

Sudden:

- Numbness or weakness, especially on one side of the body.
- Difficulty seeing with one or both eyes.
- Confusion.
- Trouble walking or dizziness.
- Severe headache.

Source: American Stroke Association

The other skin cancers

What to know about basal and squamous cell cancers

You've probably read a few stories about melanoma, the deadliest skin cancer. But you may not have read much about two far more common skin cancers.

Basal and squamous cell skin cancers (or carcinomas) are the most prevalent types of skin cancer. They start in the top layer of skin and are usually caused by sun exposure.

Basal cell carcinomas

These skin cancers make up about 8 out of 10 skin cancer diagnoses. They usually develop on sun-exposed areas of the body—often the face, head or neck.

Basal cell carcinomas usually grow slowly. Rarely do they spread to other parts of the body. But if not treated, a basal cell carcinoma can invade bone or other tissues beneath the skin.

Squamous cell carcinomas

About 2 out of 10 skin cancers are squamous cell carcinomas. Like basal cell cancers, squamous cell carcinomas appear on sun-exposed parts of the body, including the face, ears, neck, lips and backs of the hands.

Squamous cell cancers are more likely than basal cell carcinomas to spread to other parts of the body.

What do these cancers look like?

Skin cancer looks like an abnormal area of skin. It can be:

- Pink.
- Red and swollen.
- Peeling.
- Bleeding or looking like an open sore.
- Thick or crusty.

It's important to remember that not all skin changes are cancer. But it's best to show your health care provider any changes to your skin that you think might be abnormal.

Risk factors

As mentioned before, the biggest risk factor for basal and squamous cell skin cancers is exposure to ultraviolet (UV) rays of the sun. Tanning beds also use UV rays. That's why tanning beds are not a safe alternative to suntanning.

Other risk factors include:

- Having fair skin. People who have light-colored skin that freckles or burns easily, blue or green eyes, and naturally red or blonde hair are at especially high risk.
- Being male.
- Being older. The risk of both cancers goes up with age.
- Having been previously diagnosed with either basal or squamous cell skin cancer.

Smoking also has been linked to an increased risk of squamous cell skin cancer.

Treatment options

Different types of surgery are often used to treat both basal and squamous cell cancers, depending on the size and locations of the tumor.

Other possible treatments for these cancers include:

- Radiation therapy. This is often a good option for patients who can't have surgery and for tumors that are on areas that are hard to treat surgically, such as the eyelids, nose or ears.
- Skin creams that can kill cancer cells.
- Photodynamic therapy. A doctor uses a special light and special cream to destroy the cancer.

After treatment your skin will have to be checked regularly to be sure the cancer doesn't return. Both you and your health care provider can keep checking your skin to look for any new changes.

Sources: American Cancer Society; UpToDate

THE ABCDEs of melanoma

Melanoma is the most deadly form of skin cancer. These ABCDEs can help you tell if you should see a doctor about a mole or spot. Even one of these signs is a reason to see a doctor right away.



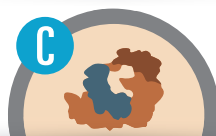
ASYMMETRY

Half of the mole or spot is unlike the other half.



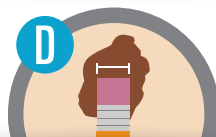
BORDER

It has an irregular or undefined border.



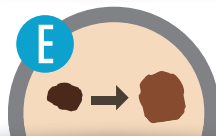
COLOR

The color changes from one area to another.



DIAMETER

The mole or spot is larger than a pencil eraser. (Can be smaller.)



EVOLVING

It looks different from others on your body or is changing.

Source: American Academy of Dermatology



NEED A DERMATOLOGIST?

Visit www.kerncountyhealthbenefits.com or call the customer service number on the back of your member ID card.

Everyone needs to wear sunscreen

Are you going outside today? Then you should wear sunscreen.

Why? Because sunscreen protects your skin from the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays, which are present even on cloudy days. These rays not only can cause skin cancer, they also can trigger wrinkles, skin sagging and age spots.

What should you look for in a sunscreen?

The American Academy of Dermatology (AAD) recommends using a sunscreen that:

- Offers broad-spectrum protection. This means it protects against both UVA and UVB rays.
- Has an SPF—sun protection factor—of 30 or higher.
- Is water-resistant.

How should you apply sunscreen?

Most people don't apply the correct amount of sunscreen, according to the AAD.

You should put on enough sunscreen to cover all of your skin not protected by clothing. Most adults need about 1 ounce of sunscreen—two tablespoons—to fully cover their body.

In addition:

- Apply sunscreen about 15 minutes before going outdoors.
- Be sure to apply it to the tops of your feet, your neck, your ears and the part-line at the top of your head.
- Reapply about every two hours. You should also reapply after swimming or sweating. Follow the directions on the sunscreen bottle.

Does the type of sunscreen matter?

Sunscreens come in many forms, from sprays to sticks to lotions. The best type to use is the one you'll apply over and over again.

Creams and lotions are best for dry skin and the face, according to the AAD. Sticks are good to use around the eyes.

Sprays are convenient, especially for use on kids. But keep in mind that it can be hard to know if all areas of the skin have been covered when you use a spray.

Sunscreens are sometimes sold as a mix of sunscreen and insect repellent. The AAD recommends against using these products. You want to use sunscreen generously and insect repellent sparingly. So it's best to buy these products separately.



Protect the whole family from the sun

Young or old. Wrinkled or smooth. Freckled or plain. No matter what condition their skin is in, all members of your family need sun protection.

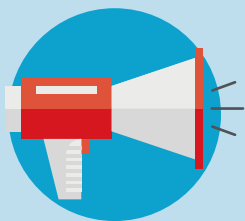
Let's face it: The sun doesn't discriminate. Ultraviolet (UV) rays can cause sunburns, lead to future wrinkles and raise the risk for skin cancer, no matter a person's age.

So have a sun safety plan ready for the whole family. Start with these three steps from the American Academy of Dermatology and other experts.

1 Shun the sun. Try to stay out of it during the most intense hours of sunlight, about 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. If you do go outside, cover up with long sleeves, long pants and a wide-brimmed hat. Aim to stay in the shade, and encourage kids to play in the shade as well.

2 Keep eyes under wraps. UV light can damage eyes and increase the chance of cataracts developing later in life. The corneas can also get a sort of sunburn—a temporary but painful condition. Make sure everyone in the family has a pair of sunglasses that block 100% of UV light. That includes even the youngest members of the family, whose sunglasses should be the real deal—not toy sunglasses.

3 Use plenty of sunscreen. Choose a broad-spectrum sunscreen, which protects against both UVA and UVB rays. Also, be sure it has a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 30. Apply it to exposed skin about 15 minutes before you head outside, and reapply it at least every two hours or after swimming or sweating. Check with your child's doctor before putting sunscreen on a baby younger than 6 months old.



Kern Medical Pharmacy closures temporarily halted

Kern Medical's planned shutdown of its two outpatient retail pharmacies, originally set to stop operations on March 1, 2021, due to Medi-Cal funding changes, has been temporarily halted. The pharmacies will continue to operate until they receive further direction from the state. Once a new closure date has been determined, our team will post the information on our website: www.kerncountyhealthbenefits.com.

For questions regarding your pharmacy benefit, contact WellDyne Rx at **888-479-2000**.

A LEGACY OF GOOD HEALTH is published as a community service for the friends and members of KERN LEGACY HEALTH PLANS, 1115 Truxtun Ave., First Floor, Bakersfield, CA 93301, telephone 661-868-3182.

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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How can I be a wise consumer of health care and get the most value out of my medical plan?

Use Network providers. They charge less, and you pay less. In addition, preventive care is free when provided by Network providers.

Choose generic drugs, and use the mail-order service when possible. Ask your doctor if a generic drug is appropriate for you. You will pay less for generic drugs than for brand-name drugs in most situations.

Have a chronic health condition like diabetes, asthma, arthritis or heart disease? One of the best things you can do for that condition is to take the medication your doctor recommends for you. Make medication compliance your habit for a healthier life.

Keep current with your preventive/wellness care to help identify any health risk factors (like high blood pressure, high blood sugar, weight gain), get tips on how to reduce your health risks, and stay current on recommended



immunizations and cancer screening tests.

Not feeling well? Call your Network doctor's office for help. Or use a Network urgent care facility instead of an emergency department, if medically appropriate.

Seek prior authorization of your elective hospital admission, certain outpatient drugs and a variety of outpatient services, as explained in the Prior Authorization chapter, to help avoid a financial penalty.

Review your medical bills. If something on a medical bill just doesn't look right, contact the Medical Plan Claims Administrator if you think there might be an error on a bill.

These tips will help you make the most of your medical plan benefits.

For detailed information about your health plan, view your Summary of Benefits & Coverage chart at www.kerncountyhealthbenefits.com.

DID YOU KNOW? Consultations and routine follow-up visits with a contracted specialist do not require prior authorization; however, services for procedures and imaging, such as MRI, CT and PET scans, do. Services requiring prior authorization must be submitted and approved prior to obtaining service. Retrospective review requests will not be accepted, unless in emergency situations, and will be denied. As such, claims for unauthorized services will be the member's responsibility.