We speak your language

When you are sick, it often helps to see a doctor. But it can be hard to talk with your doctor if he or she does not speak the language you know best. When that is the case, we can help.

We have interpreters to help you. They know and speak many languages. Sign language is one of them. And what if we don’t have someone who speaks your language? We’ll find someone who does.

Interpreters make sure the doctor knows what you are saying and you know what the doctor is saying. With their help, you can get answers to all of your questions.

No cost to you. This service is free. All you have to do is ask for an interpreter. So next time you see a doctor and you think you could use an interpreter, ask for one.

If you have any problems getting an interpreter, call Member Services. Call 877-661-6230 (press 2).

We’re 40 years old!

Come celebrate with us! Find out more at our website. Go to www.contracostahealthplan.org.

Kids under 5 now qualify for WIC

Good news! More families can now get WIC services. That stands for Women, Infants, and Children.

Many kids under 5 years old who had Healthy Families and are now part of Medi-Cal may qualify for WIC. Many working families may also qualify.

Are you caring for a child under 5 years old? Call 800-414-4WIC (800-414-4942).

What is WIC? WIC is a healthy food program that helps:

- Pregnant women.
- Women who have just had a baby.
- Children under 5 years old.

WIC offers families:

- Nutrition and health education.
- Support for breastfeeding.
- Help finding health care or other services.
- Checks to buy healthy foods.

To learn more, please call 800-414-4WIC (800-414-4942). Or visit www.cchealth.org/wic.
A word about water wings

Your child isn’t a strong swimmer yet. So it may seem like a good idea to have your little one wear water wings. These armbands will keep your child safe in the water. Right?

No, that’s not right at all. In fact, just the opposite is true. Unlike life jackets, water wings aren’t designed to keep swimmers afloat. Water wings can lose their air and deflate. That means children can drown while wearing them.

The bottom line: Water wings and other pool toys like foam noodles can give parents a false sense of security. And they should never be used in place of a life jacket.

Sources: American Academy of Pediatrics; Safe Kids USA

POSTPARTUM VISIT

New moms need checkups too

As a brand-new mom, you are very busy. You are tending to your baby 24 hours a day. At the same time, your body is still healing. It’s hard work to give birth. So be sure to tend to your own needs too.

Eat well and rest. Those things are more important than ever. So is seeing your provider for a checkup.

A must-have visit. You’ll need a postpartum checkup about 4 to 6 weeks after you give birth. Or did you have a cesarean section? If so, you may need to see your provider earlier. You’ll want to do that about 1 to 2 weeks after the surgery. Then you’ll need to go again at 4 to 6 weeks after the surgery.

Either way, this is a chance for your provider to:
- Be sure you’re recovering well from giving birth.
- See if you can get back to normal activities.

Your turn to talk. This is also your chance to bring up any concerns. You might ask about your recovery and how you are feeling. You can also ask your provider about:
- Breastfeeding.
- Birth control.
- Weight loss.
- Your diet and staying fit.
- Your emotions.

Feeling low? Some women become depressed after having a baby. This can happen to any mom. So it’s nothing to feel shy about.

If you feel sad, tell your provider. He or she can help you feel like yourself again.

There’s nothing you can’t share with your provider.

Source: Office on Women’s Health

Health Plan members

Check out our new Health Education web page! Go to www.contracostahealthplan.org. Look under “Member Services.” We have added new information.

Call us at 877-661-6230
5 tips for when you leave the hospital

Having to stay in the hospital is likely not your idea of a good time. And when you get to leave, chances are you don’t want to return.

It’s too bad, then, that many people who get out of hospitals come back within 30 days for the same problem. The government wants to bring that number down. That’s one goal of the Affordable Care Act. We need your help to reach this goal.

Here are some tips and questions to ask before you leave the hospital. These will help make sure you are ready to go home.

1. **Make sure you understand your condition.** Don’t be afraid to ask questions. You’ll want to ask:
   - What can I do to get better?
   - Are there things I should not do? For instance, you might need to stay off your feet or not lift heavy things.
   - What should I do if I have any problems?
   - Are there any medical tasks that I or my family needs to do? For instance, you might need to change a dressing or clean a wound.

2. **Review your medicines.** It’s a good idea to keep a list of all your drugs. Ask how to take any new ones and all your old medicines that you need to take.

3. **Keep your appointments.** Often follow-up tests or doctor visits are scheduled before you leave the hospital. It’s important that you keep them. If you can’t keep one, please call to schedule a new one.

4. **Speak up if you need help.** Are you able to shower, dress and cook food? If you are concerned that you can’t care for yourself or do other tasks, ask for help.
   - Or you might have concerns about how to pay for your medicines or get to your doctor visits. Ask about those too.

5. **Get a name and number.** Ask whom you should call if you have questions or concerns after you leave the hospital. You can always call an Advice Nurse too, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Call 877-661-6230. Then press 1.

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**What is the CCHP Utilization Management (UM) Unit’s role?**

UM’s role is to look over all medical requests sent to us by your doctor. These include requests such as the need to see a specialist and approval getting a wheelchair or hospital bed.

We make decisions based on what care is needed to best support your health and what is covered through your insurance plan. Clinical guidelines are used to make these decisions and are available to you. Our doctors and staff are **not** rewarded or given incentives to deny or to cover any of these requests.

The UM Unit’s office hours are Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. If you have a question regarding a request, please call the UM department at 877-661-6230 (press 4).

If you call after work hours or on weekends or holidays, stay on the line to be directed to the Advice Nurse Unit.

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Visit us at [www.contracostaehealthplan.org](http://www.contracostaehealthplan.org)
A bad mix: Grapefruit and some drugs

Has your doctor prescribed you a drug? Know that you should not eat grapefruit if you take some drugs. This fruit can change the way some drugs work. And that can cause health problems. It can even cause death.

There are lots of drugs you should not mix with grapefruit. Some of these drugs are used to:
- Fight infections.
- Lower cholesterol.
- Treat high blood pressure.
- Treat heart problems.

There are chemicals in grapefruit. These can block the normal way your body breaks down some drugs. So the drug may stay in your body for too short or too long a time.

CHECK WITH YOUR DOCTOR.
Play it safe. Ask your doctor or pharmacist about any new drug. Ask if you should not take it with some kinds of foods or some other drugs. Then follow his or her orders.

You can find a list of drugs that are bad to mix with grapefruit on our website. Go to www.contracostaehealthplan.org.

Energy: Healthy bites for snack time

You feel weak and you’re about to get grumpy. It’s snack time—right now. Should you grab an energy bar? Gulp down an energy drink? You could. These foods do give you a quick boost. But they may also contain a lot of sugar or caffeine.

Why is that a problem?

Ups and downs. Foods high in sugar give you energy. But the boost doesn’t last very long. And you still may not feel full. That’s why sugary foods are called empty calories. And those calories can add up to weight gain.

And caffeine? Too much might give you the jitters. Or you may be unable to get a good night’s rest.

Pure power. But healthy snacks can add variety to your diet. Plus they give you the pick-me-up you may need between meals. Try these tasty bites:
- Apple slices dipped in natural peanut butter.
- Tomato soup with whole-grain crackers.
- Instant oatmeal, nonfat milk and peach slices.
- Low-fat yogurt topped with berries and granola.
- A whole-grain roll filled with deli turkey, low-fat cheese and mustard.
- Fat-free vanilla pudding layered with fresh fruit.
- A small baked potato topped with salsa and low-fat cheese.
- A mix of almonds, raisins and sunflower seeds.

Thirsty? What you drink between meals matters as much as what you eat. The same as with food, try to steer clear of sugary drinks. Reach for water instead.

Tap water sound boring? Drop a mint leaf or slice of lemon into your glass. Or fill most of a glass with sparkling water, and top it off with 100% fruit juice. Be creative and enjoy!

Sources: Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics; American Institute for Cancer Research
TAKE ACTION. If you call the Helpline, it doubles your chance of quitting! So call now: 800-NO-BUTTS (800-662-8887).
A plan for better asthma control

On a good day, your asthma is under control. But on a bad day, it’s controlling you. You may have trouble breathing. You may cough or wheeze. It may be hard to do your normal activities.

On those days, you’ll want to feel better fast. You’ll need to know exactly what to do and when to do it.

An asthma action plan can help. It’s a written plan that you and your provider make. It takes the delay and guesswork out of asthma control.

HOW AN ASTHMA ACTION PLAN WORKS. For good days, it tells you how to control asthma with daily treatment. It tells what medicines to take each day and when.

For not-so-good days, the plan tells you when and how often to take your quick-relief drugs and how much to take. It also tells you when to call your provider and when to go to the hospital.

Your plan will also list your asthma triggers—and give tips for how to avoid or reduce them. And, if you use a peak flow meter, the plan will cover when and how to use it.

Once you have your plan, be sure to let your provider know when it’s not working. He or she can make changes as needed.

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; National Institutes of Health

How to keep kids’ teeth healthy

Gummy grins—that’s what you’ll be seeing until baby’s first tooth shows up. But long before (and after) it does, you can help make sure your little one’s smile will one day frame a full set of healthy teeth. Here’s how:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timing</th>
<th>Home care</th>
<th>Provider’s care</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Birth to first tooth</td>
<td>■ Wipe baby’s gums with a clean, moist cloth.</td>
<td>■ Being fussy is normal during teething, but fever is not. Call your child’s provider if baby has a fever or diarrhea when teething.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>■ If your baby takes a bottle to bed, give only water. Milk, juice or sugary drinks can lead to tooth decay.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| First tooth to 2 years old | ■ Clean teeth with a soft cloth or a toothbrush made for babies. Use only water—no toothpaste yet. Wherever 2 teeth meet, floss between them every day. | ■ Take baby to the dentist as soon as the first tooth arrives. After that, go every 6 months.  
  ■ Ask whether your child needs extra fluoride. |
| 2 to 5 years old        | ■ Brush all your child’s teeth twice a day.                                | ■ Visit the dentist every 6 months.                                              
  ■ Floss once a day between any teeth that touch each other. |  ■ Ask the dentist to explain to your child why tooth care is important. |
|                         | ■ Choose a soft kids’ toothbrush.                                         |                                                                                   |
|                         | ■ Use no more than a pea-sized dab of toothpaste.                          |                                                                                   |
|                         | ■ Teach your child to spit out, not swallow, the toothpaste.               |                                                                                   |
|                         | ■ Supervise—even after your child can use the toothbrush alone.           |                                                                                   |
| 5 years and older       | ■ Watch as kids brush twice a day. Be sure they are thorough and use only a small amount of toothpaste. | ■ Visit the dentist every 6 months.                                              
  ■ Teach them to floss once a day. |  ■ Ask the dentist about protecting teeth from decay with a thin coat of plastic called a sealant. |

Sources: American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry; American Dental Association
There are many ways to stay in good health as you get older.

Screening for colorectal cancer is one of them. That’s because getting tested could save your life.

Testing can help find early signs of this serious disease. Then it can usually be treated.

Colorectal cancer starts in the colon or rectum. Without treatment, it can spread to other parts of the body.

It’s possible to have this kind of cancer and not know it. It doesn’t always have symptoms.

But if there are symptoms, they may include:

- Blood in your stool.
- Stomachaches that don’t go away.
- Weight loss for no reason.

Once you turn 50, you should be tested. But you may need to get tested before then. For example, you may need to get tested if someone in your family has had the disease.

There are different kinds of screening tests. Some, like stool tests, you can do at home. Others must be done at a clinic or hospital. For those tests, a doctor looks inside your colon.

Some tests are done every 1 to 2 years. Others are done every 5 to 10 years.

Your provider will know which test is right for you.

It’s most common after age 50. You are also at higher risk if you:

- Smoke.
- Have family members who have had the disease.

COLORECTAL CANCER
Screening saves lives

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SUGAR
3 ways to beat the sweet

Sugar piles on calories and has no nutrients. So it doesn’t give you much in return.

That’s why it’s best to limit sugar. Here’s how:

Sip smart. Cut back on sugary sodas. Try water, fat-free milk or sugar-free drinks instead.

Cut back when baking. Reduce the sugar in cakes and other sweets by a fourth or more.

Try fruit for dessert. Enjoy a baked apple or fruit salad. Save cake, cookies and candy for special occasions.

Visit us at www.contracostahealthplan.org
Chunky cranberry dip

Good for spreading on half a whole-wheat bagel.

**Ingredients**
- 1 8-ounce package reduced-fat cream cheese
- 1 to 2 tablespoons low-fat milk
- ½ cup chopped dried cranberries
- ¼ cup chopped blanched almonds
- ½ teaspoon orange zest, preferably fresh

**Directions**
- In medium bowl, place cheese and allow to soften at room temperature. Mash and work with fork until texture is light enough to combine easily with other ingredients.
- Gradually add milk until cheese becomes soft and spreadable. Mix in remaining ingredients.
- Cover and refrigerate up to 2 days ahead or let stand at room temperature 1 hour before serving to allow flavors to blend.

**Nutrition information**
Makes about 1½ cups. Amount per serving (1 tablespoon): 29 calories, 2g total fat (<1g saturated fat), 3g carbohydrates, 1g protein, <1g dietary fiber, 35mg sodium.

Source: Adapted from American Institute for Cancer Research

Tomato and red pepper dip

**Ingredients**
- 1 jar (12 ounces) roasted red peppers, rinsed and drained
- 1 can (15 ounces) white beans, rinsed and drained
- ¼ cup tomato paste, preferably reduced sodium
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 3 tablespoons low-fat mayonnaise
- 1 teaspoon dry oregano
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- ¼ teaspoon ground chili powder or a pinch of cayenne pepper
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

**Directions**
- Coarsely chop peppers. Place in food processor or blender and puree. Add beans, tomato paste, garlic, mayonnaise, oregano, cumin, and chili powder or cayenne. Process to smooth puree.
- Season to taste with salt and pepper.
- Let stand 1 hour before serving. Keeps up to 3 days, tightly covered and refrigerated.

**Nutrition information**
Makes 2¼ cups. Amount per 2-tablespoon serving: 32 calories, 2g total fat (<1g saturated fat), 6g carbohydrates, 1g protein, 1g dietary fiber, 120mg sodium, 190mg potassium.

Source: Adapted from American Institute for Cancer Research