

New to Medi-Cal? It Covers More Than You Might Think



What is Medi-Cal?

Medi-Cal is a state-sponsored health insurance that provides free care for many common health issues, regardless of your immigration status. In addition to physical health care from your doctor, you can get mental health support, vision and dental care through Medi-Cal. You also have access to free transportation for your appointments, and help from members of your community such as a Community Health Worker or Promotora in understanding how to improve your health.

Services Covered Through Medi-Cal



Mental Health

Free mental health services may include a therapist or trained person to talk to, medication, or support groups.



Problems

Sometimes you might have problems getting what you need. When this happens, there are people to help you.



Dental Care

Medi-Cal will pay for a dentist to look at your teeth, do a cleaning, and other services that may be necessary.



Transportation

If you need help with transportation to an appointment, Medi-Cal will pay for it.



Help Managing Your Health

Managing all your appointments and understanding how to take care of yourself can be hard. Medi-Cal has people to help you for free.

Your Health Plan

In Medi-Cal, a company or organization called a health plan is responsible for making sure you get everything you need. Some common names of health plans are Contra Costa Health Plan, Alameda Alliance, LA Care, Partnership, CalViva, Health Net, Anthem, Kaiser and CalOptima. There are others as well.

Your Medi-Cal card tells you which health plan you have and how to contact them. If you don't have your card or can't find this information, call (800) 541-5555 for assistance.



Mental Health

Mental health is just as important as our physical health for our overall wellbeing. Many of us need help with identifying and processing our feelings like sadness and anxiety. Medi-Cal can provide this help. Free mental health services may include a therapist or trained person to talk to, medication, or support groups.

If you need mental health services, there are several ways to find the right care:

1. Talk to your primary doctor or clinic about your feelings and that you want mental health support.
2. Call your Medi-Cal health plan and ask for mental health services.
3. Look up available mental health professionals on your health plan's website and call to schedule an appointment.

Remember: You have the right to interpreter services when getting mental health care. You can request an interpreter when you call to schedule an appointment. You also have the right to confidentiality. Medi-Cal will not tell your family or your employer that you are receiving mental health support.

Dental Care

Everyone should see a dentist at least once a year. With Medi-Cal, this annual service is free or low cost. If you have not visited a dentist in long time, it is important to your overall health that you get care now. Oral health is linked to whole body care. Taking good care of one's teeth, gums, and mouth can help prevent disease and infection in the head, neck, heart, lungs, and other organs.

Medi-Cal will pay for a dentist to look at your teeth, do a cleaning, and other services that may be necessary for you. It is normal to feel scared. Your dentist will help you. If you need an interpreter, one will be provided either at the dental office or over the phone.

To make an appointment to see a dentist, call Medi-Cal at (800) 322-6384. You can also look online to find a dentist near you and schedule an appointment: <https://smilecalifornia.org/find-a-dentist/>.

Transportation

Regardless of where you live, getting to your health care providers can be challenging. If you need help with transportation to an appointment, Medi-Cal will pay for it. What is important is that you get the care you need.

If you need support with transportation, call your health plan and ask for non-emergency medical transportation. You will need a prescription from your provider. Your health plan might send a car or van to pick you up or might pay for a bus or Lyft/Uber ride.

Help Managing Your Health

Managing all your appointments and understanding how to take care of yourself can be hard. Everyone needs a little help. Medi-Cal has people to help you for free. Community Health Workers or Promotoras are people just like you. They are part of your community and speak your language. And they are trained to help you be as healthy as you can be. Community Health Workers and Promotoras can help you:

- Understand how to take care of your health and manage your medical conditions.
- Navigate the health care system and advocate for yourself.
- Connect to services and supports in your community.

If you want to have a Community Health Worker or Promotora to help you, talk to your doctor or clinic. Let them that you want assistance with your health from someone who understands your community, your language, and your culture. You can also call your health plan and ask for a Community Health Worker or Promotora.

Problems

Medi-Cal is a big program. Sometimes you might have problems getting what you need. When this happens, there are people to help you.

First, call your health plan. If this doesn't resolve your problem, call the Health Consumer Alliance, a free program to assist you, at (888) 804-3536.

Some common problems include:

- I can't find a provider who takes Medi-Cal
- I was asked to pay money for a service, even though Medi-Cal is supposed to be free
- I don't know how to get to my appointment
- I need an interpreter and didn't get one
- I need a referral to a specialist
- It is taking too long to get the appointment I need
- I am confused about how to manage my health

Share Your Experience



The California Pan-Ethnic Health Network (CPEHN) works to make Medi-Cal better for you and others. We want to hear from you! Did you have a good experience getting health care? Did you run into a problem? Do you have a suggestion for how to make Medi-Cal work better?

Email us at info@cpehn.org