



Western Health Advantage

SUMMER 2019

ADVANTAGE

Your resource for health and wellness

LIVE AND LEARN

History-rich outings throughout California offer glimpses of our past

KIDS' HEALTH: PREPPING FOR FALL SPORTS
DIABETES: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW
DEPRESSION: SIGNS TO WATCH FOR

advantage > you

Livability Poll Offers Regional Insights



When Capital Region community members were asked in a recent poll what they loved most about their region, respondents indicated health and wellness factors such as walkable neighborhoods and access to parks.

The Livability Poll—produced by Valley Vision in partnership with CSU Sacramento's Institute for Social Research—looked at attitudes on regional issues related to quality of life like land use and development, civic engagement, education and public health. Western Health Advantage (WHA) was a sponsor of the Livability Poll with the Sierra Health Foundation.

At WHA, we believe in the vital role the health care services industry plays in improving our communities. WHA's work is rooted in our commitment to serve the local communities where we live and work. By listening to our members' needs today, we can better deliver quality health care and access to valuable preventive and wellness services in the future.

You can find all the poll results at livability.valleyvision.org.

Garry Maisel

CEO, Western Health Advantage



TIDBITS

How to Build a Better Smoothie

When it comes to summer treats, you can't go wrong with smoothies. These refreshing drinks pack a fruity punch, but for maximum nutrition, consider the following.

Do it yourself is best. Yes, you can pick up a boosted drink at your neighborhood smoothie spot or the grocery store, but blending your own at home allows you to strike the right balance of nutritious ingredients and control the amount of calories, sodium and sugar in your glass.

Mix and match. Most people reach for fruit when it comes to smoothies, but including a handful of dark green leafy veggies such as spinach, Swiss chard or kale in your drink will add fiber, vitamins and antioxidants. (Veggie-phobic kids might not even notice the greens under the fruit taste.) Stick to one cup of fruit per smoothie to avoid extra calories or carbs.

Don't skip the protein. Tossing in nut butters, chia seeds or flaxseeds (with bonus omega-3s), plain nonfat yogurt, or nut milk increases protein and healthy fats—and will also help fill you up. If you go the protein powder route, look for options without sweeteners.

Great grains. Add a scoop of oats or other whole grains for extra fiber.

Spice it up. Consider a sprinkle of cinnamon, ginger or turmeric for added flavor and even health benefits (for example, some studies have connected cinnamon with reduced inflammation and blood sugar levels).

**Western
Health
Advantage**



ADVANTAGE MAGAZINE

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On the cover: Visitors get a sense of state history at the Oakland Museum of California. Photo by Shaun Roberts.

3 Questions

Bea Pennington of WHA Member Services answers your WHA-related questions



How can I get medical advice after hours?

You can call your primary care physician's office and the doctor on call can direct your care, or you can use WHA's 24/7 medical advice line, Nurse24, provided through our partnership with Optum. Registered nurses are available to answer questions about your medical needs, including how to handle symptoms you are experiencing, and to

direct referrals to disease management nurses. You can reach Nurse24 by calling 877.793.3655 or chat online with a nurse at mywha.org/nurse24.

My child is starting recreational sports; is there a charge for the required physical?

Exams specifically for sports (or employment) are not a covered benefit. Members are encouraged to ask their provider about when to schedule an annual physical exam to allow the provider to complete any documents needed for sports without the need for a second exam.

Does WHA have a Wellness Program?

Yes. WHA offers a very comprehensive Wellness Program and provides many tools to assist you in leading a healthy and productive life. With the WHA Wellness Program, you may take an assessment to personalize your needs in order to improve your lifestyle. Visit mywha.org/wellness or log in to your MyWHA account and select "MyWHA Wellness" under "MyResources" to begin your confidential assessment and get on the road to a healthier life.



HOT TICKET

RIDE FOR CLEAN AIR

Join Western Health Advantage and cool off in beautiful Petaluma during the Breathe California Bike Trek. Take part in three days of cycling and two nights of camping—all for one incredible cause. Enjoy delicious catered meals, unbelievable routes, entertainment and more. The Trek is not a race; each day offers pleasant routes for beginning cyclists, as well as more challenging and adventurous options for intermediate and advanced riders.

WHA supports Breathe California and its mission to ensure that California maintains healthy air quality. The Breathe California Bike Trek is held Sept. 6–8. If you have questions on how to be part of WHA's team, email us at community@westernhealth.com.

DID YOU KNOW?

WHA Welcomes St. Joseph Health Medical Network

On April 1 St. Joseph Health launched its own medical group, St. Joseph Health Medical Network (SJHMN). Providers in this new medical group continue to have admitting rights at St. Joseph hospitals such as Queen of the Valley, Santa Rosa Memorial and Petaluma Valley, as well as Healdsburg District Hospital. SJHMN has over 50 PCPs and 350 specialists. Welcome to the WHA family!

TEEN VAPING ON THE RISE

Tech advances can make everyday life easier, but they can also affect our health in bad ways. Take electronic cigarettes, now the most popular tobacco source for teens in the United States. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, there has been an alarming rise in vaping among middle and high school students; vaping increased by 48 percent and 78 percent, respectively, from 2017.

The rise can be tied, at least in part, to candy- or fruit-flavored e-cigarettes. They also come in small shapes, making them easy to hide. Vaping is less harmful than smoking cigarettes, but it is still not safe. Many e-cigarettes (even those that say they don't) have a high level of nicotine, which can make kids moody, impulsive and easily distracted and can hurt brain development. Like smoking regular cigarettes, vaping may lead to cancer and lung disease. The vape liquid is unstable and usually made from mixing nicotine with a solvent. The chemical makeup changes even without heat, creating highly concentrated byproducts that reach the airways and lungs during vaping.

Ask your pediatrician for advice and visit mywha.org/quit to learn about WHA's smoking cessation services.

Sources: American Cancer Society, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Expert Advice for Smart Workouts

Pediatrician Danton Kono, M.D., on prepping children for fall sports



The start of a new school year also kicks off sporting season for many young athletes. Mercy Medical Group's Dr. Kono offers tips to keep kids happy, healthy and in the game.

What are the main things kids and their parents need to consider when starting up fall sports?

Active kids are to be applauded, but we want to make sure children are doing sports for the right reasons—that they are having a good time. Even at a young age, sports can be very competitive, which can impact enjoyment and burn kids out fairly quickly. You also want to make sure your children are physically fit, and work with them on sports-specific skills before they step onto the playing field. If they are going to be playing soccer, kick the ball around together. If you are playing with your kids, you are not only setting an active example for them, you are also setting them up for success. It's important that kids are properly warmed up and stretch before the game starts. This can prevent a lot of injuries. Both parents and coaches should also know the signs of concussion. If a kid gets knocked around playing soccer and comes home with a really bad headache, that's not normal. If your child is having a headache, is tired, or seems out of it after a game, he or she may have a concussion and should see a doctor.

What about proper hydration?

Hydration should be happening throughout the day, but in terms of prepping for practices or games, younger children should drink 8 to 10 ounces of water at least two to three hours before exercising; for teens, it's 12 to 20 ounces of water several hours before. It's also important to eat before exercising, mainly carbs and a little protein. Make sure children have fuel and have digested it well before they step onto the field. During exercise, they should be drinking every 15 minutes—more if it is a hot day and in a sport where they are running a lot.



Time for Back-to-School Checkups

From the desk of Gary Plundo, D.O., M.P.M., FCOFP, medical director

Along with buying pencils and paper for the new school year, now is a good time for your child's annual well visit. The doctor can give your child a head-to-toe checkup and talk about things like immunizations, behavior problems, learning disabilities, and even bullying and depression. Whether your child is starting kindergarten or heading to high school, a trip to the doctor helps make for a healthy year.

PRESCHOOLERS

Even if your child isn't in school, you may still want to schedule an annual wellness visit this time of year. Your pediatrician will check your child's development and give any recommended shots.

If you notice any signs of behavior or learning problems—such as late speech or difficulty pronouncing words—tell the doctor.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

If your child is in elementary school, your doctor can keep him or her up to date with immunizations, including annual flu shots.

If your child has special health needs such as asthma or allergies during the school day, the doctor can also help you prep the school nurse, teacher or administrators. If your child takes medication, your physician may need to write a prescription or note to take to school.

Your doctor can also talk about sports injuries, sleep habits and limiting video game time, and offer advice on issues like bullying.

ADOLESCENTS

As kids enter the preteen years and beyond, stay up on immunizations—including both the Tdap and HPV

vaccines for 11- to 12-year-olds—as well as yearly flu shots.

The doctor can also talk with your child about making healthy lifestyle choices when it comes to physical activity, drinking, smoking, drugs and sex. Checking in on a yearly basis helps the doctor get to know your child and track any changes.

Before the checkup, think of three to five questions (anything from asking for flu shots to worries about eating problems) to talk about with the doctor so all your big concerns get answered before you leave the office. If you need help figuring out what to ask the doctor, go to ahrq.gov and search for "Question Builder" for a list of sample questions you can use before your child's next visit.

A Golden State of Mind

FROM HISTORY-RICH PARKS TO GOLD RUSH SITES, YOU DON'T HAVE TO GO FAR
TO DISCOVER THE TREASURES OF CALIFORNIA'S PAST



The Bale Grist Mill State Historic Park in St. Helena features a partially restored 36-foot water wheel.

Visit our region's museums and historic sites to get the inside story of the people and places that shaped our state. Watching history come to life is a great way to stretch the minds of everyone in your family and get young learners excited about the upcoming school year. (Call ahead to confirm hours and pricing.)

EARLY CALIFORNIA

Coyote Hills Regional Park (Fremont)

Take a guided tour of a 2,000-year-old Tuibun Ohlone village on July 21 (10 a.m.–noon, 1:30–3:30 p.m.) and Aug. 18 and 31 (1:30–3:30 p.m.). Public access to the site, which includes a reconstructed family house, sweat house and shade shelter, is available by reservation only or during special programs. Learn more about the Ohlone way of life at the following park events:

- Ohlone People & Culture: Aug. 4, 1:30–3 p.m. For ages 8 and up.
- Knap-In: Stone Tool Making: Aug. 24–25, 10 a.m.–3 p.m. For ages 16 and up; younger children may watch.

- Gathering of Ohlone Peoples: Oct. 6, 10 a.m.–4 p.m. Enjoy music, dance and storytelling by Ohlone tribes; village site tours; basket- and jewelry-making demos; games; refreshments; and more. \$5/vehicle.

For more info, visit ebparks.org and search for Coyote Hills. To reserve a tour, call 510.544.3220.

Mission San Francisco de Asís

Founded in 1776, California's sixth mission—best known as Mission Dolores—is San Francisco's oldest intact building. The mission, which was established by Spanish priests and constructed by Native Americans, has adobe walls, redwood roof beams and an awe-inspiring altar. Pick up a

brochure in the gift shop and explore the chapel, museum, cemetery (the final resting place of Miwok and Ohlone people and California pioneers) and gardens at your own pace. Open daily. \$5–\$7. Visit missiondolores.org/64 for more info.

Museum of the American Indian (Novato)

Learn about Native American cultures including the Coast Miwok, whose territory covers Marin and southern Sonoma County. Outdoors, visit a replica Miwok village featuring a grass house, a redwood bark house and a granary and enjoy a picnic in Miwok Park. On Sept. 14, the Trade Feast features dances, stories, songs, art, basketry demos, kids activities and food (11 a.m.–5 p.m., free admission). Open Fri.–Sun., 12:30–4:30 p.m. Suggested donations: \$3–\$5/person or \$10/family. For more info, visit marinindian.com or call 415.897.4064.

Sonoma State Historic Park

There's a lot of history in the heart of Sonoma, which was founded by Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo in 1835. In Sonoma Plaza, explore historic sites, including:

- Mission San Francisco Solano (established in 1823), California's northernmost mission and the only one founded after Mexico gained independence from Spain in 1821.



Get a sense of the Ohlone people and their way of life at the 2,000-year-old Tuibun Ohlone village site located in Fremont's Coyote Hills Regional Park.



Visitors can take part in the interactive Gold Fever! Game at the Sacramento History Museum (above) or pan for nuggets at the Gold Rush Museum in Auburn (right).



Inside, a collection of watercolors shows what the missions looked like in the early 1900s.

- Sonoma Barracks, which hosted Vallejo's troops, Bear Flag Republic members after they arrested Vallejo and raised the flag over the Plaza in 1846, and U.S. forces after they replaced the Bear Flag with the American flag a few weeks later. (From the Plaza, walk less than a mile to Lachryma Montis, the Victorian home and vineyard where Vallejo retired.)
- Toscano Hotel, an 1850s storefront that later operated as a hotel and served many Italian immigrant agricultural workers.

Open daily, 10 a.m.–5 p.m. On weekends, docents lead tours of each of these historic sites. \$2–\$3; free for ages 5 and younger. Admission is good for a same-day visit to Petaluma Adobe State Historic Park, Vallejo's 67,000-acre rancho. For more info, call 707.938.9560 or visit sonomaparks.org.

LAND OF OPPORTUNITY

Old Sacramento

Pretend you're a Gold Rush-era character and try your luck in the Sacramento History Museum's Gold Fever! Game, an interactive tour highlighting Old Sacramento landmarks including elegant Second Street, California's first theater, the Delta King riverboat and the railroad. Discover Sacramento's hidden history on the Underground Tour. Both tours include admission to the recently renovated museum, which has lots of kid-friendly activities. Gold Fever! tickets are \$8–\$12; free for children 5 and younger. Underground Tour tickets are \$12–\$18; free for children 5 and younger (though the tour is not recommended for this age group). For more info (including tour schedule), visit sachistorymuseum.org/tours or call 916.808.7059.

Gold Rush Museum (Auburn)

Located in Auburn's historic railroad depot, the recently updated Gold Rush Museum features an indoor gold-panning stream, mining tunnel, portrait station and a Twitter wall imagining tweets from Gold Rush figures. Outside, visit a statue of a Chinese railroad worker or the historic rail cars. Open Thurs.–Sun., 10:30 a.m.–4 p.m. Free admission. For more info, call 530.889.6500 or visit placer.ca.gov (search for "Gold Rush Museum"). If you want to add on to your trip, take a guided walking tour of Old Town Auburn on Saturdays at 10 a.m. The free tour meets at the Placer County Museum (first floor of the courthouse), where you can admire the county's gold collection and make your own "Wanted" poster. Don't miss the quirky Gold Country Medical History Museum (goldcountrymedicalmuseum.com). To see where gold was first discovered at Sutter's Mill in 1848, head to Marshall Gold Discovery State Historic Park (less than 20 miles away in Coloma). Hike, pan for gold and attend Living History events (July 13, Aug. 10, Sept. 14 and Oct. 10–13). For more info, visit parks.ca.gov/marshallgold.

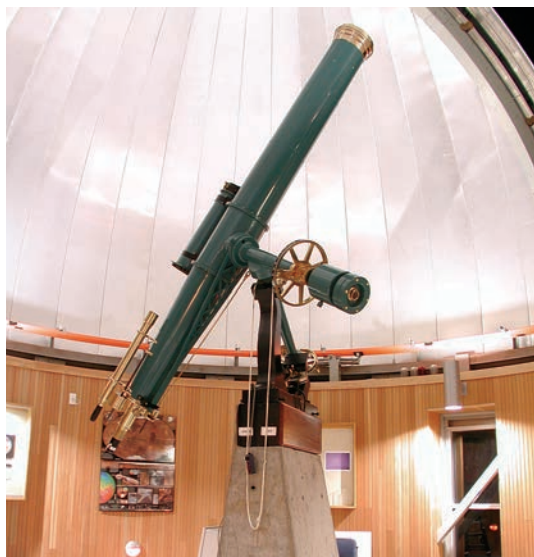
Bale Grist Mill State Historic Park (St. Helena)

On weekends, millers in period dress lead tours and grind grain into flour at this 1846 water-powered grist mill. Souvenir bags are available for purchase (though not for eating). Special events include Fiesta en el Molino (Sept. 14), a celebration

of Mexican Independence Day and the Latino community's contributions to Napa Valley, and Old Mill Days (Oct. 19), featuring butter making, apple pressing, rope making, blacksmith demos and more. Open Saturday and Sunday, 10 a.m.–5 p.m.; last tour at 3:30 p.m. \$2–\$5; free for children under age 6. For more info, visit napaoutdoors.org or call 707.963.2236 (weekends) or 707.942.4575 (weekdays).

NATURAL HISTORY

Roberts Regional Recreation Area (Oakland)



The Chabot Space & Science Center in Oakland offers an up-close-and-personal look at the stars.

& Science Center's observatory for free on Friday and Saturday nights (after dark until 10:30 p.m.). In addition to its modern research-quality telescope, the observatory has two historic telescopes, including the original 1883 telescope. Park in Chabot's garage to access both sites. For more info, visit chabotspace.org or call 510.336.7373.

John Muir National Historic Site (Martinez)

Learn about famed naturalist John Muir, who lived with his family in Martinez and managed his father-in-law's fruit ranch. Explore the family's 17-room Victorian mansion on your own or join a tour (daily at 2 p.m., plus Sat. and Sun. at 11 a.m.). The grounds include fruit trees (you can even pick a single piece of ripe fruit); hiking trails on Mount Wanda, where Muir walked with his daughters; and the Martinez Adobe, which features exhibits about Spanish Lt. Col. Juan Bautista de Anza's 1775 expedition along the California coast. Kids also enjoy filling out the Junior Ranger activity booklet and joining in summertime Camp Fire Programs. Open daily, 10 a.m.–5 p.m. Free admission. For more information, visit nps.gov/jomu or call 925.228.8860.

By the 1860s, most old-growth redwoods in the East Bay were lost to logging, but a new exhibit in Roberts Regional Recreation Area offers a sense of how large those trees were. Located along the Roberts Ridge Trail in Redwood Bowl, a viewing deck and interpretive exhibit show off the 18-foot-wide footprint of an old-growth giant and highlight the role of redwoods in our environment. For more info, visit ebparks.org/parks/roberts.

If you are at Roberts late in the day, you can visit neighboring Chabot Space



State Treasure

Visit the Oakland Museum of California's Gallery of California History to discover stories of the state's native people and those who came later from all over the world. Sit for a portrait in the Gold Rush Daguerrotype Studio, make your own Hollywood movie sound effects and explore the History Hangout. In the Gallery of California Natural Sciences, wiggle through a lava tube and learn about the grizzlies that once roamed the wilderness. Through Sept. 1, *Pushing West* in the Gallery of California Art shows off Andrew J. Russell's dramatic photos of the region during the Transcontinental Railroad's construction, which was completed 150 years ago in 1869. Friday Nights @ OMCA offer fun for all ages. Open Wed.–Sun. \$7–\$16 (+\$5 for the Great Hall exhibit); free for ages 8 and younger. For more info and hours, visit museumca.org or call 510.318.8400.

The ABCs of DIABETES

What you need to know about living
with type 2 diabetes

Diabetes can be a sneaky problem. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 30.3 million people in the United States are living with diabetes, and more than 7 million of them don't even know they have it.

The majority of diabetes cases are type 2, which means the body resists the effects of insulin, a hormone that helps keep blood sugar levels under control, or doesn't make enough of it. Symptoms take time to develop, so talk with your doctor about your risk and getting screened; early diagnosis and treatment can help prevent complications.

SCREENING TIME

Type 2 diabetes screening involves a simple blood test. A common method is the A1C test, which determines your average blood sugar level for the past two to three months. A normal reading is below 5.7 percent and the prediabetes range is 5.7 percent to 6.4 percent; anything higher is considered diabetes. Other screening methods include the fasting blood sugar test, oral glucose tolerance test and random blood sugar test. Typically, you need to be tested on two different days to confirm diagnosis.

FIRST STEPS AFTER DIAGNOSIS

If your blood sugar level is in the prediabetes range, you can take action to prevent diabetes.

If you find you have diabetes, make these your first steps:

- Become a diabetes expert. Study up on type 2 diabetes and ask your doctor to refer you to a diabetes education program.
- Get to know your diabetes care team, which includes your doctor, nurse, dietitian, pharmacist, diabetes educator and, most importantly, yourself.
- Involve your family and friends. Ask them to attend your appointments and diabetes classes and join you in adopting a healthier lifestyle.

Your care team will help you develop a personalized plan for managing diabetes. Usually this includes lifestyle changes—such as healthy eating and being active—along with medications

or insulin, if prescribed by your doctor. You'll also need to stay up on medical appointments and, if your doctor recommends it, monitor your blood sugar at home. As team captain, you're in charge of following your care plan, keeping track of your health, and getting in touch with your care providers if you have questions or concerns.

AVOIDING COMPLICATIONS

Sticking with your care plan will help you stay healthy and avoid complications like skin, foot and eye issues and heart disease and stroke.

Be sure to:

- Care for your skin. Keep it clean and dry—but avoid chapped skin. Use moisturizer (skipping between your toes to avoid fungus growth) to prevent cracked skin and infection.

Clean and treat minor cuts immediately and seek medical care for serious cuts, burns and infections.

- Treat your feet. Call your doctor if a foot issue, such as a sore or cut, does not get better.
- Visit your eye doctor regularly.
- Control your cholesterol and blood pressure.
- Quit smoking.

Adjusting to life with diabetes can be hard. Remember to reach out to your care team when you need support.

Sources: American Diabetes Association; American Heart Association; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Mayo Clinic; National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute; National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases

SMART STEPS FOR PREVENTION

More than 1 in 3 adults in the U.S. have prediabetes, which means blood sugar levels are higher than normal but not high enough to be considered diabetes. You can lower your risk for type 2 diabetes with healthy lifestyle choices.

Whether your blood sugar level is in the normal or prediabetic range, here are some smart strategies for prevention:

- Get moving. Aim for 30 minutes of exercise daily, five days a week. Brisk walking is a simple way to get started. Keep it fresh by changing up activities and exercising with family and friends. Throughout the day, get up and move every 30 minutes.
- Eat well. Adopt a low-fat diet with plenty of vegetables, fruits and whole grains.
- Manage your weight. Studies show that if you're

overweight, losing 5 to 10 percent of your body weight can significantly lower your risk.

- Monitor and manage your blood sugar, blood pressure and cholesterol. Ask your doctor for helpful tips. If you have prediabetes, you should get screened for diabetes every year or two.
- Quit smoking.
- Tell your doctor if you have a family history of diabetes. People over age 45 and African-Americans, Mexican-Americans, American Indians, Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders and Asian-Americans all have an increased risk. Focus on making a few small changes, which can add up to big results over time. For more prevention and healthy living tips, visit diabetes.org.

BEYOND THE PRE- AND POST-BABY BLUES

Depression can affect both expectant and new mothers

PERINATAL DEPRESSION

For many women, expecting a child is a time of joy and anticipation. Yet, for some, it can also be a challenging period. From morning sickness to swollen ankles, pregnancy stresses a woman's body in many ways, including her emotional well-being.

Changes in mood, sleep patterns and energy levels are common during pregnancy. However, these along with feelings of anxiety and insomnia are signs of a more serious condition known as perinatal depression, which affects 1 in 7 pregnant women. Screening women for depression after birth, known as postpartum depression, is a common practice, but perinatal depression often goes unrecognized because the symptoms are similar to those of a normal pregnancy.

POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION

Symptoms of postpartum depression may include crying too much and feelings of anger; feeling numb or disconnected from the baby; withdrawing from loved ones; and having doubts about caring for the baby.

Other symptoms that last for at least two weeks include extreme



sadness, guilt or feeling not up to the job; being overwhelmed; no longer enjoying things that used to bring joy; worrying too much about the baby; and mood swings. Serious symptoms such as hallucinations or thoughts of harming oneself or the baby could be signs of an emergency and require immediate medical attention. Women who have a history of depression, no social support, and are dealing with an unwanted or tough pregnancy are at greater risk for depression.

Untreated, depression can lead to poor diet, smoking, and alcohol or drug use. Women who are depressed are not as likely to show love to their

babies, may stop breastfeeding sooner and seek less preventive care. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists recommends that physicians screen patients for depression at least once during pregnancy and for 12 months following the child's birth.

WHERE TO FIND HELP

Depression is very treatable, and getting the right help is key. In February 2019, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force said that counseling helps prevent perinatal depression. If you are concerned about yourself or a loved one, talk to a health care provider about treatment options, including support groups, medication and therapy.

As a WHA member, you have access to mental health care; visit mywha.org/BH to learn more. To find a mental health care provider, call Magellan Health Services at 800.424.1778 or search the directory at magellanassist.com. UC employees should call Optum at 888.440.8225.

Sources: American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, JAMA Network

Helping Kids Deal With Depression

WHAT CONCERNED PARENTS NEED TO KNOW

Parents support their children during many big moments, whether it is guiding their first steps or cheering for them at high school graduation. However, sometimes the best way you can support your kids is knowing when they need help from someone else.

Depression affects how teenagers think, feel and behave, and it can cause emotional, functional and physical problems. Although depression can occur at any age, symptoms may differ between teens and adults. While situations such as parental divorce or conflict with peers may play a big role (as can medical issues such as thyroid conditions), other risk factors include a family history of depression or other mental illness and exposure to violence and early childhood trauma, says Shareh Ghani, M.D., vice president and chief medical director for Magellan Healthcare.

Among the risk factors for developing or triggering adolescent depression are having issues such as obesity, peer conflicts, long-term bullying or academic problems; having low self-esteem or being overly dependent, self-critical or pessimistic; abusing alcohol, nicotine or other drugs; being gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender in an unsupportive environment.

Suicide is often associated with depression. If you think your

child may hurt himself or herself or attempt suicide, call 911 right away.

Symptoms to Watch For

Signs of depression include changes in attitude and behavior that can cause major problems at school, at home or in other areas of life. Be alert for emotional changes, such as feelings of sadness (which can include crying spells for no reason); frustration or feelings of anger, even over small matters; feelings of hopelessness; irritability; and loss of interest or pleasure in usual activities.

Watch for changes in behavior such as:

- Tiredness and loss of energy
- Insomnia or sleeping too much
- Increased or lessened appetite
- Spending more time alone
- Poor schoolwork or frequent absences
- Not paying attention to personal hygiene or appearance
- Angry outbursts, disruptive or risky behavior
- Self-harm (for example, cutting, burning, or excessive piercing or tattooing)
- Making a suicide plan or attempt

But how do parents know that their child is depressed and not just going through a phase or in a bad mood? The best thing you can do is talk with your teen. Try to figure out whether he or she seems able to deal with difficult feelings, or if life seems overwhelming.



"Depression is an episodic illness, and the emphasis is on a change in the teenager's 'usual' behavior and 'personality style' and the above symptoms in combination with each other," explains Dr. Ghani.

"It's important to have children between the ages of 12 and 18 see their pediatrician once a year," he adds. "Pediatricians and PCPs commonly screen for depression, anxiety and substance use during the annual exam, but parents should let the doctor know if they are especially concerned."

Depression is a treatable condition. Mild to moderate forms can be treated with counseling or talk therapy; for moderate to severe depression, medications with or without therapy can be very effective. Left untreated, depression can result in emotional, behavioral and health problems for your teen.

WHA members can find a mental health professional at mywha.org/BH.

ENSURING ACCESS FOR ALL THROUGH LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE SERVICES

Western Health Advantage (WHA) is committed to improving the health and well-being of our community by expanding access to health care while delivering the highest level of customer services with integrity, accuracy and sincerity.

In keeping with this commitment, WHA provides a variety of language assistance services to our members—free of charge.

For Spanish, you may speak to a certified bilingual WHA Member Services representative. For other languages, WHA contracts with a vendor that provides interpretation services. Should you have a need for an interpreter on the phone or face to face, call 916.563-2250 or 888.563.2250.

For the hearing-impaired, TDD/TTY service is available Monday–Friday, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. in either

English or Spanish. The phone number is 888.877.5378.

In addition to interpretation services, WHA also offers the following alternate format and translation services:

- American Sign Language
- Alternate formats for the blind or visually impaired
- Document translation

To better serve you, it is helpful if you let us know your preferred spoken and written language. Log in to your WHA account and choose "Language Preference" under the MyTools menu. You'll be brought to a Language Preferences survey where you can submit your preference. Your information will be kept confidential and be used only for official and legitimate health plan purposes.

WHA Seeks Your Input on Public Policy



WHA, as a California health plan, invites all enrollees to share your ideas and recommendations about WHA public policy. Public policy means acts performed by a plan to ensure the comfort, dignity and convenience of patients who rely on the plan's facilities to provide health care services to them, their families and the public.

If you wish to provide public policy input, you may send written comments

to the address below. All comments and recommendations will be shared with the Public Policy Committee, which reports its final recommendations to the WHA board of directors.

Attn: Public Policy Committee
Western Health Advantage
2349 Gateway Oaks Drive, Suite 100
Sacramento, CA 95833



Avocado and Mango Kick-Starter Smoothie

Start your day out right with this creamy yet fruity drink that is Heart Check Certified by the American Heart Association.

4 servings

INGREDIENTS

1 ripe, fresh avocado, peeled, pitted and cubed
1 large ripe mango (about 1 cup), peeled, pitted and cubed, or 1 cup frozen
1 cup chopped pineapple (fresh or frozen)
3 tablespoons pineapple juice
1 cup almond milk
1 cup ice

DIRECTIONS

In a blender, add avocado, mango, pineapple, pineapple juice, almond milk and ice.

Blend until smooth. Serve immediately.

NUTRITION INFORMATION (PER SERVING)

Calories: 176
Total fat: 9 g
Saturated fat: 1 g

Polyunsaturated fat: 1 g
Monounsaturated fat: 6 g
Sodium: 46 mg
Carbohydrate: 24 g
Dietary fiber: 6 g
Sugar: 17 g
Protein: 2 g

Source: Hass Avocado Board

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American Heart Association®

Heart and Stroke Walk™

Have Heart Sacramento!

Western Health Advantage is proud to be a local sponsor of the American Heart Association and its **SACRAMENTO HEART & STROKE WALK.**

Saturday, September 28, 2019

William Land Park

Meet at the corner of Freeport & Sutterville

8:30 a.m. Opening Ceremonies

9:00 a.m. Walk Begins

WHA encourages our members [plus family and friends] to join together to have fun, get inspired and support the fight against heart disease and stroke. The heart walk includes a 5K course as well as a 1-mile survivor route.



WHA is heart healthy > mywha.org/hearthealth



Western Health Advantage

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