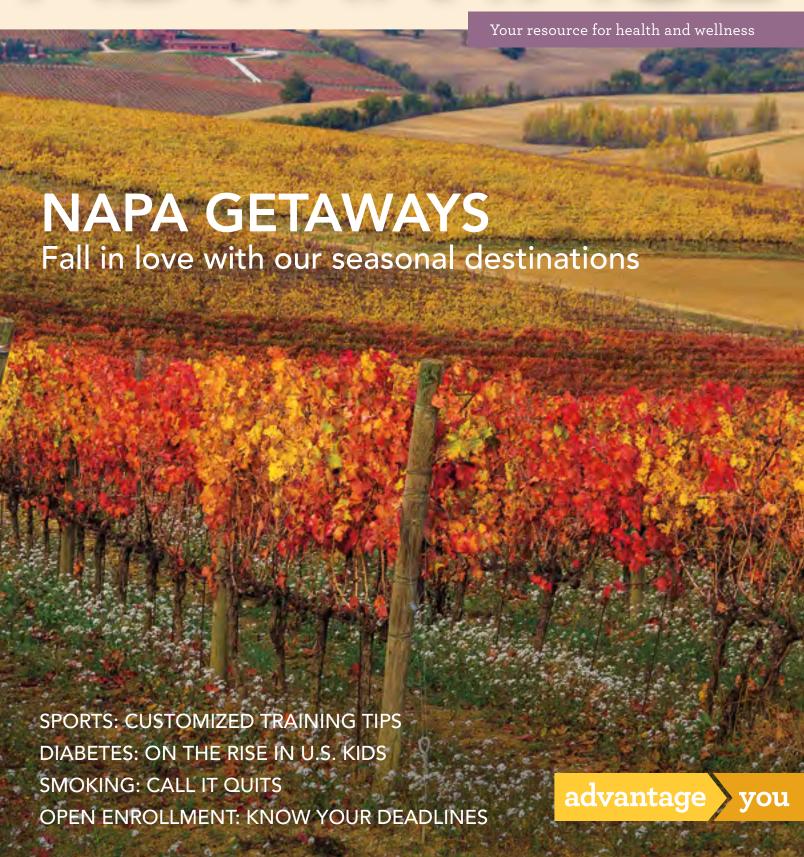


ADVANTAGE



On the Pulse

WHA Is Investing in You



WHA is making a large investment in our systems and applications to continue improving service to our members. We will have many new features and tools soon.

During this transition, it may take a little longer to reach us, but this

delay will be only temporary as we work out the kinks of these new systems.

For example, WHA's call center will be more of a contact center with new ways to reach us. We'll have new capabilities for handling customer calls and should be able to resolve your calls the first time you contact us. Members can interact more easily with WHA by email, voicemail and chat, too.

Our goal is to have a more integrated perspective that will improve the WHA member experience. We want to understand your health care needs and provide you the best possible experience. You will have a very personal, one-to-one relationship when interacting with WHA.

Attending to members' concerns will be easier and faster and your questions will be answered quickly and satisfactorily. With WHA, everything begins with our members.

Garry Maisel

CEO, Western Health Advantage



TIDBITS

Could You Be a Flexitarian?

Have you ever thought about becoming vegetarian but weren't sure you could give up ALL meat? How about becoming a flexible vegetarian instead, better known as a flexitarian.

Flexitarians make the choice to go meatless for a variety of reasons, one of which is improving their health. Flexitarians have lower rates of heart disease, diabetes and cancer; weigh about 15 percent less than meat eaters; and live an average of 3.6 years longer.

Flexitarians, like vegetarians, consume mostly plant-based proteins such as whole grains, nuts, seeds, beans, lentils and vegetables. Eggs and low-fat dairy products are also included, and occasionally they eat meat.

Worried you won't get enough protein? As long as you are including the plant-based proteins mentioned above, you will be good to go.

Start small! As with any change, slow and steady will ensure greater success. Start with just one meatless day per week, such as Meatless Mondays. Then you can try three days without meat and later six meatless days if you wish.

Remember, the key to being a healthy flexitarian has less to do with how many meatless days you mark on the calendar and more to do with eating healthy vegetarian snacks and meals in place of meat.



ADVANTAGE MAGAZINE

Chief Medical Officer® Don Hufford, M.D. Manager, Health Promotion & Disease Management® Laura Monteil, R.N. Chief Marketing and Brand Officer® Rick Heron Content Developer® Phil Boerner Contributors® Karen Bennett, Mark Gilroy, Alicia Lowe, Elena Medrano Produced by

2349 Gateway Oaks Drive Suite 100 Sacramento, CA 95833 916.563.2250 westernhealth.com twitter.com/westernhealth, facebook.com/westernhealth, blog: mywha.org/blog

2016 by Western Health Advantage. Advantage magazine is published quarterly as a health resource exclusively for WHA members and employer groups. Questions and comments may be directed to Western Health Advantage at the address and phone number provided or by email to Advantage@westernhealth.com. The information in this publication is not intended for the purpose of diagnosing or prescribing. Consult your physician before undertaking any form of medical treatment or adopting any exercise program or dietary guidelines.

On the Pulse

3 Questions

Lisa Angst of WHA Member Services gives the 411 on getting flu vaccination



If I want a flu vaccine, where do I go?

All WHA members should contact their primary care physician (PCP) to get a flu vaccine. Members will be charged according to the services they obtain. If members go in for an office visit and the flu vaccine, they will be responsible for their designated copayment and/or deductible for the office visit. Members can contact

their provider to see if they can come in to obtain the flu vaccine; members who obtain only the flu vaccine will be responsible for their immunization copayment.

TIP: Go to mywha.org to view your copayment summary for office visits and immunizations.

What about FluMist?

The CDC recommends that everyone age six months and up receive the flu vaccine every year by the end of October, if possible. For the 2016–2017 season, the CDC recommends only injectable influenza vaccines. The nasal spray is not recommended because of concerns about its effectiveness.

If I am pregnant, how do I know if I should obtain the flu vaccine?

If you are currently pregnant, we recommend you contact your PCP or OB-GYN for their professional recommendation. You and your doctor can decide together if the flu vaccine is right for you.





HOT TICKET

A DISCOUNT ON HOLIDAY FUN WHA members can save \$5 on ice skating outings

This year marks the 25th season of the Downtown Sacramento Holiday Ice Rink. The three-month event brings smiles to the faces of many people. Situated on St. Rose of Lima Park at the corner of 7th and K streets, the outdoor ice rink is at the doorstep of the new Golden 1 Center. The rink is open from Nov. 4, 2016, to Jan. 16, 2017. Western Health Advantage members receive a \$5 discount on skate sessions. For more information about the Downtown Sacramento Holiday Ice Rink, please visit GoDowntownSac.com. Come and lace up some skates!

DID YOU KNOW?

NorthBay Healthcare Is Now Part of the Mayo Clinic Care Network

NorthBay Healthcare, which serves Solano County, has joined the Mayo Clinic Care Network. The move gives NorthBay access to the Mayo Clinic's medical expertise and will promote collaboration among physicians to provide the best possible care. The Mayo Clinic, based in Rochester, Minnesota, has more than 3,300 physicians, scientists and researchers and is considered one of the best hospitals in the world.

Healthy Holiday Feasting

From October through the end of the year, the holidays are synonymous with food. Indulge safely with these tips.

- Remind little trick-or-treaters not to sample Halloween goods until they get home and you've checked everything.
 To boost their willpower, fuel them with a snack before they head out.
- If you're serving turkey for any holiday gathering, be sure it's thoroughly cooked by using a meat thermometer to check for an internal temperature of 165°F.
 Refrigerate any leftovers so they stay safe for gobbling up the next day.

For more advice about holiday safety, go to nsc.org and search "holiday safety."

Pump Iron, Live Longer?

Consider picking up those barbells, seniors—strength training can be a factor in a longer, healthier life. A study published in *Preventive Medicine* found that people 65 years of age and older who did strength training twice a week were 46 percent less likely to die prematurely from any cause. This doesn't prove cause and effect, but other studies have shown that strength training may improve muscle mass and chronic conditions such as osteoporosis and obesity. Ask your doctor about the best exercise regimen for you.

Tone Up with Dr. Tanji

Learn about the perks of sport-specific training from Jeffrey Tanji, M.D., associate medical director, Sports Medicine, UC Davis Health System

B aseball players know it takes thousands of at-bats to learn to hit a base-ball well. Golfers know it takes thousands of swings to groove a golf swing. The importance of sport-specific training can't be overstated. It's real.

The idea behind sport-specific training is that nothing conditions you better than the actual sport itself. If you want to get into shape for cycling and you happen to be an excellent runner, you might think that running alone will help you get in condition for cycling, but it does not. Endurance sports such as running will certainly help you build your aerobic base conditioning for whichever sport you play. But the muscles, nerves and movement patterns used in cycling, for example, are so specific that only cycling trains you best for cycling.

If you want to use sport-specific training to take your skills up a notch, you should seek out a good coach in your sport. A coach can work with you to design a program that will use your training time efficiently, improve your performance and help you avoid injury. By understanding the sport at a deep level, he or she can recommend exercises that are at the core of performance. If you're a cyclist, for example, doing leg curls can give you the strength you need to go the extra mile. If you play basketball, plyometric pushups—in which you push up hard enough that your hands leave the floor—can help give your hands quick, explosive movements on the court. The very best coaches use targeted techniques to train athletes to outcompete others.

While sport-specific training has significant benefits for adults, experts discourage young athletes from specializing in one sport too soon, to avoid burnout and overuse injuries. In fact, exposing children and adolescents to a variety of sports can actually help them develop into better athletes over the long run. Then, when they're a bit older, they may choose to focus on training for the sport they love best.





From the desk of Donald B. Hufford, M.D., WHA chief medical officer

hen I was a child, I got German measles and chickenpox, as did many children. I was chatting with one of our pediatricians in Woodland recently, and at the beginning of his career, the pediatric department was full of children sick with conditions like these that we rarely see today, thanks to vaccines.

It's easy to think that these diseases are behind us, but they're popping back up. We've seen measles outbreaks in 27 states, for example, including an outbreak of nearly 400 cases among unvaccinated Amish communities in Ohio and another outbreak of 125 cases linked to two Disney theme parks in Orange County, California. A study published in JAMA Pediatrics found that the community that contracted measles at Disneyland, like the Amish community, had a low vaccination rate.

Some conditions, like whooping cough (or pertussis), a respiratory

infection, can be deadly. While it appears that the whooping cough vaccine may lose some of its effectiveness over time, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that children continue getting the DTaP (diphtheria-tetanuspertussis) shot, which has greatly reduced the incidence of the disease. Babies—who get shots at 2, 4 and 6 months of age—are especially vulnerable until their vaccine series is complete. Immunizing older children can help protect infants.

California public schools require students to be immunized in order to protect their classmates. Previously, families could forgo immunizations due to personal or religious beliefs. But in light of the recent outbreaks, Gov. Jerry Brown signed into law Senate Bill 277, which disallows that exemption (except for parents who filed a letter stating their beliefs prior to Jan. 1, 2016).

Remember: Vaccines protect our kids. Parents who don't get their children vaccinated are rolling the dice, and some of these diseases are life-threatening. While every medication has the potential for side effects, the autism risk has been completely debunked. I have had my own children immunized because the benefits far outweigh the very small risk of side effects.

While you're thinking about schoolyear vaccinations, it's recommended for everyone over 6 months old to get the flu shot. The flu virus is smart and continually mutates, so a new shot is released every year. Winter is flu season, and it takes a few weeks for the flu shot to build your immunity, so get the vaccine in the fall.

We've come a long way in 50 years, thanks to vaccines. We must each do our part to safeguard the continuing health of our children and our communities.



Keep your spirits merry and bright with this colorful, healthy seasonal guide to local fall foliage, holiday festivities and more

AUTUMN LEAF ADVENTURES

Active outings featuring our region's best fall colors

The East Coast may be renowned for fall foliage, but striking autumn leaves can also be found close to home—perhaps in your own neighborhood. "In Sacramento, we have a wonderful climate that is pretty open to growing many different types of trees," says Pamela Sanchez, a certified arborist/municipal specialist and education programs manager at the Sacramento Tree Foundation. "That means that we get a wide variety of fall color, too."

In this guide, find suggestions for active outings featuring fall colors in and around Sacramento. Typically, colors are most vivid from mid-October to early November, but timing can vary. Remember to call ahead to check conditions, carry cash for parking and dress in layers.

SACRAMENTO

Visit sactree.com/treetours to down-load the Sacramento Tree Foundation's self-guided tree tour maps of neighborhoods and parks with exemplary urban forests. "Rather than going out in the country, people can see most of our color right in our neighborhoods," says Sanchez. Enjoy the view as you trek through these colorful hot spots:

River Park Neighborhood

Highlights include the cluster of giant zelkova trees, which turn yellow or a muted orange and red, on Sandburg Drive near Moddison Avenue. This neighborhood also shows off Chinese pistache trees, which turn electric oranges and reds, and the aptly named scarlet oaks.

Southside Park

"Some of the largest willow oaks that I know of are in Southside Park," says Sanchez. "They have a beautiful yellow-to-orange color on a narrow leaf and are well worth the trip." Additional highlights include red maples; Norway maples; and ginkgo trees, which turn bright yellow.

Other park attractions include a three-quarter-mile jogging trail, a wheelchair-accessible playground, fitness areas, tennis courts and basketball courts. On Sundays, there's a yearround farmers market across the street.

Capitol Park

Our State Capitol grounds are home to trees from all over the world and some of the largest in California. Be sure to explore the area around the Civil War Memorial Grove, near L and 12th streets. "The elms, the oaks, the tulip tree, maples, the Chinese pistache—all of those are great in the fall," says Sanchez. For visitor info, call 916.324 0333.

WINE COUNTRY

For a different kind of fall color, head to wine country in November, which is typically the best time to witness the changing colors of the grapevines.

Stroll or bicycle past vineyards and yellow-hued valley oaks between Napa and Yountville on part of the multiuse Napa Valley Vine Trail. A new trail—about 4 miles long—opened this fall; it follows the Napa Valley Wine Train tracks and Highway 29 between Oak Knoll Avenue in Napa and California Drive in Yountville. To the south, a connecting 3-mile segment will link up with the Crosstown Commuter bike trail through Napa for a total of 12.25 continuous miles. For the latest info, visit vinetrail.org or call 707.252.3547.



or many of us, setting high expectations for celebrating a magical holiday season with family and friends leaves us feeling stressed out and overwhelmed. Here are some ways to keep holiday blues and stress at bay:

- Focus on what matters. Spending time with family is more meaningful than exchanging pricey gifts. Keep this in mind as you plan your holiday budget. (Planning ahead can also help relieve pressure.)
- Don't ignore your feelings. If you're missing someone, it's normal to feel sad or lonely. That said, do your best to set aside differences with family and friends, since this may not be the best time to try to resolve issues.
- Don't be afraid to say no. If you say yes to every invitation, you risk overextending yourself. Take time to recharge between festivities.

- Make time for yourself. Bonus
 points if you take a walk or do
 another form of exercise, which can
 alleviate both mental and physical
 tension.
- Go easy on the eggnog and holiday treats. Sticking to your regular, healthy routine will help you avoid overindulging—and the guilt that sometimes comes with it.
- Offer help to people who need it.
 Volunteering promotes well-being and social connection.
- Ask for help when you need it.
 Talk with family and friends. If stress and anxiety persist, seek a professional.

Sources: American Heart Association, American Psychological Association, Cleveland Clinic, Harvard Health Publications, Mayo Clinic



Local Color: Lively Seasonal Events

These festive activities promote fitness, fresh foods and quality time with family

OCTOBER

Halloween in Old Sacramento

Oct. 1–31 oldsacramento.com/ special-events

Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Sacramento (5K)

Oct. 16 – West Steps of State Capitol main.acsevents.org/ sacramento

Folsom Blues Breakout Half Marathon, Relay, 5K and 1K Kids Run

Oct. 23 – starts on Johnny Cash Bridge, Folsom folsomblueshalf.org

NOVEMBER

Downtown Sacramento Holiday Ice Rink

Nov. 4, 2016–Jan. 16, 2017 – corner of 7th and K streets godowntownsac.com

Folsom Historic District's Magical Ice Rink

Nov. 11, 2016–Jan. 16, 2017 – park at 905 Leidesdorff St. (adjacent to the ice rink) folsomicerink.com

2016 Mandarin Festival

Nov. 18–20 – Gold Country Fairgrounds, Auburn (MandaRUN 5K and Half Marathon on Nov. 20) mandarinfestival.com

Davis Turkey Trot Half Marathon, 10K and 5K

Nov. 19 – Civic Center Park changeofpace.com/ davis-turkey-trot

WHA Run to Feed the Hungry (benefits Sacramento Food Bank & Family Services)

Nov. 24 – 10K Run and 5K Run/Walk start on J Street, near Sac State entrance runtofeedthehungry.com

Solano Turkey Trot – 10K Run, 5K Run/Walk and Kids Fun Run

Nov. 24 – Solano Community College, Fairfield solanoturkeytrot.org

Marin Turkey Trot – 1 Mile/5K/10K

Nov. 24 – start/finish at Indian Valley College marinturkeytrot.com

Yountville's Festival of Lights

Nov. 25 – Yountville Community Center yountville.com

DECEMBER Calistoga Lighted Tractor Parade

Dec. 3 visitcalistoga.com/ calistoga-lighted-tractorparade

California International Marathon

Dec. 4 – Sacramento runcim.org

Santa Parade

Dec. 10 – Downtown Sacramento sacholidays.com

Jingle Bell Run (benefits the Arthritis Foundation)

Dec. 10 – Crocker Park, Sacramento ibr.org

Country Christmas in Old Town Auburn

Dec. 10 and 17 oldtownauburnca.com



Fleet Feet Free Holiday Classic Fun Run (5K run/ walk and toy drive for Salvation Army)

Dec. 18 – Sutter's Landing Park, Sacramento fleetfeetsacramento.com

New Year's Eve Sky Spectacular

Dec. 31 – Old Sacramento waterfront nyesacramento.com

JANUARY 2017 Napa Valley Resolution Run 5K/10K

Jan. 1 – Downtown Yountville napavalleyresolutionrun.com

5K Resolution

Jan. 7 – Crocker Park, Sacramento 5kresolution.org



1.

Make a Plan

Start by deciding how you want to quit and ask friends and family to support you. For some, quitting cold turkey may be the best choice, while others may prefer medication or a nicotine replacement tool, like gum or the patch, to help them through the physical cravings. Your doctor can help you decide which is right for you.

2.

Avoid Temptations

The physical craving for nicotine should dissipate after a couple of weeks, but the desire to fall back into your old habits may persist much longer. To reduce temptation, avoid going places where other people smoke, and identify situations that previously made you reach for a cigarette so you can figure out how to deal with them before they happen.

3.

Adopt New Habits

One of the hardest aspects of quitting is breaking the routines you had while smoking, and the best way to break old habits is by introducing new ones. Try chewing a stick of gum after meals, when you would otherwise want to smoke, and if you feel like taking smoke breaks at work, get up and walk around the block instead.

4.

Create a Win-Win with Exercise

Whether it's walking, biking or lifting weights, exercise is a great tool for quitting smoking. Being active takes your mind off the desire to smoke, while the endorphins released help you feel happier and more energized. And you can get the usual benefits of working out, including weight loss, improved cardiovascular health and better lung function.

5.

Reward Yourself

Set attainable, short-term goals to keep you motivated for your long-term goals, and then give yourself a (nonsmoking) reward for meeting them. For example, put aside all the money you'd normally spend on cigarettes in a week, and at the end of the week use the money for concert tickets or gear for a new hobby.

Go to mywha.org/wellness for information on WHA's online smoking cessation program.

Sources: smokefree.gov, cdc.gov, mayoclinic.org, quitterscircle.com

AVOID WINTER WHEEZING

The change in seasons can signal asthma flare-ups

When there's a chill in the air, people with asthma might find themselves wheezing and coughing more frequently. That's because breathing in air that's colder and drier than what's already flowing inside the lungs can trigger a reaction that causes airways to narrow. To help you manage asthma in cooler weather, check the following simple suggestions.

- Limit time outdoors.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a scarf or face mask. Covering your face when you go out, including during workouts, helps warm and moisten air before it reaches your lungs. If possible, breathe in through your nose.
- Try indoor activities, such as yoga, step class, walking on a treadmill and weight training. Other good options include working out in a gym and swimming in an indoor pool, as long as it's well maintained and ventilated.
- Consult with your doctor to create a safe exercise plan, which might include using a pre-exercise inhaler and other medications. Warming up and cooling down is also recommended. Winter sports such as ice hockey and skiing might be more challenging with asthma, but managing your condition can help you participate in activities you enjoy.
- Monitor air quality before stepping out. Visit airnow.gov or check your local newspaper or TV news for the latest air quality reports.
- Get a flu shot. Colds and the flu can trigger symptom flare-ups, particularly in children.
 WHA offers an asthma management program and tips for healthy living; go to mywha.org/dm.
 Sources: American Lung Association, Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, Berkeley Wellness, Cleveland Clinic, Mayo Clinic



How to Reduce Asthma Triggers at Home

- Maintain a smoke-free home and car.
- Fight dust mites. Vacuum often. Use airtight pillowcases and mattress covers; wash bedding on high heat; and, if possible, remove carpets and drapes.
- Prevent mold. Open the window or run a fan when showering or cooking. Fix leaks promptly. Use a dehumidifier or an air conditioner when conditions are hot and humid.
- Tidy up to discourage cockroaches. Keep food out of bedrooms and set traps if necessary.
- Keep furry pets out of your bedroom and off of furniture.
 Trap animal dander by covering heating vents with filtering material. Change furnace and air conditioner filters regularly.
- Avoid scented products, including cleaning supplies, perfumes, soaps, lotions, sprays and paint.
- Don't burn wood at home. Try not to use kerosene heaters, unvented fireplaces, gas stoves and gas heaters.

Sources: American Academy of Family Physicians, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Cleveland Clinic, MedlinePlus

Kids and Diabetes

Today's unhealthy lifestyles are causing more and more U.S. children to be at risk for this disease

hildhood diabetes is on the rise. Before the year 2000, almost all cases of diabetes diagnosed in children were type 1, an autoimmune disease that causes the body to attack insulin-producing cells in the pancreas. Type 2 diabetes—when obesity and lack of exercise disrupt how the body uses insulin—was extremely rare among children and young adults; it was even called adult-onset diabetes.

Since then, children and teens have not only started getting type 2 diabetes, but the numbers of both types are increasing. According to a study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* in 2014, between 2001 and 2009, there was a 21.1 percent increase in type 1 and a 30.5 percent increase in type 2 among youths under 20.

It's no coincidence this has happened alongside an epidemic of childhood obesity, experts say. "In the past 30 years, childhood obesity has more than doubled in children and quadrupled in adolescents," according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Obesity and lack of exercise are two major risk factors for diabetes, along with family history. Some ethnic groups are also at higher risk, including African-Americans, Hispanics, American Indians and Asian-Americans.

Untreated, diabetes can cause major disruptions and health risks in young people's lives. Feeling tired all the time and getting sick more frequently can affect their grades at school and relationships with friends. Fortunately, both types are manageable as long as they get diagnosed and kids work at controlling their condition.



HELP YOUR KIDS AVOID TYPE 2 DIABETES

With a few lifestyle changes, you can significantly decrease your kids' risk factors and help your family members live healthier lives.

- Send them outside. Exercise helps the body use insulin more effectively. It also helps kids maintain a healthy weight. Good options: Get them involved in after-school sports programs or join them for hikes and bike rides.
- Serve a well-rounded diet. Cook more meals at home and trade prepackaged, processed foods for fruits, vegetables and lean protein such as chicken, fish and beans.
 Avoid sugary snacks including candy and soda.
- Encourage weight loss. If your children are overweight, achieving a doctor-recommended weight can significantly reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes. Lead by example with healthy food choices and regular activity for the whole family.

UPDATE YOUR HEALTH PLAN DURING OPEN ENROLLMENT

Be sure to pay attention to deadlines for making any needed changes

Whether you have a WHA health plan through your employer, or an individual plan with WHA or through Covered California, you may have an open enrollment this fall and will need to make some decisions about it. During open enrollment, everyone is allowed to make changes to their health plan for 2017.

Most health plan changes can be made only during open enrollment, so it's important to pay attention to deadlines. If you are part of a group health plan, check with your employer for your open enrollment date. For the Individual Marketplace, open enrollment goes from Nov. 1, 2016, to Jan. 31, 2017. The deadline for changes is Dec. 15, 2016, for coverage on Jan. 1, 2017.

Updating your benefit plan might consist of just adding dependents and confirming your enrollment information, such as that your address is correct. But also consider if your current health plan covers your anticipated

medical needs. Do you need more or less coverage in 2017?

Health Plans through Employer Groups

If you get your WHA health plan through your employer and it's your open enrollment, confirm you are on the right benefit plan within the range of plans your employer offers. While some plans remain the same, others feature significant changes and/or new benefits. Be on the lookout for updated benefit plan information from your employer.

Individual Health Plans

If you are enrolled through Covered California or in an Individual Advantage plan directly with WHA, open enrollment is your opportunity to consider your options for 2017. By October, you will receive your WHA renewal notice, which also can be found at mywha.org.

For those enrolled through Covered California, visit

coveredca.com/renew to update your information. The premium assistance you may be eligible for in 2017 will vary based on changes in your household size, income and the health insurance rates in your area. If you need help, go to coveredca.com/enrollment-assistance.

For those enrolled directly with WHA and who do not wish to make any changes, we will automatically re-enroll you and your dependents into your current health plan.

All Individual Marketplace members, whether Covered California or direct, need to make benefit plan decisions this fall. Benefit plan changes and/or adding dependents must be completed by Dec. 15, 2016, for coverage beginning Jan. 1, 2017.

Learn about your coverage options online by logging in to your MyWHA account to compare plans. If you don't have a MyWHA account, sign up for one at mywhaorg/signup.





2349 Gateway Oaks Drive Suite 100 Sacramento, CA 95833

916.563.2250 888.563.2250 westernhealth.com

PRSRT STD U.S. POSTAGE PAID West Sacramento, CA Permit No. 1604







Help families in our community.

Join us at the largest Thanksgiving Day run in the country! This Sacramento tradition features 5K and 10K courses that wind through the beautiful treelined streets of East Sacramento. The run/walk is family-friendly and a fun-filled experience for all.

2016 WESTERN HEALTH ADVANTAGE **RUN TO FEED THE HUNGRY**

Thanksgiving Morning: Thursday, November 24 Start times: 10K 8:15 a.m. — 5K 9:00 a.m.

All proceeds benefit:

