San Francisco County Guidebook

Table of Contents

	Page
Health Screening	3
Prevention	4
Preventative Health Care	5
Health Insurance Programs	6
Managed Health Care Plans	7
Using a Health Care Interpreter	9
Medical Appointments	11
Your Doctor	12
Specialists	13
Medicine	14
Pharmacy	15
Immunizations	16
Blood Sample	19
Urine Sample	20
Stool Sample	21
Types of Healthcare	22
Clinic	23
Hospital	24
Health Emergencies	25
Mental Health	26
Patient Rights, Responsibilities, & Filing a Complaint	28
How to Schedule an Appointment by Telephone	30
Important Phone Numbers	31
Glossary	32
California Resources	33

Health Screening

Purpose of the Health Screening
This health screening is more complete than the one that the refugees had overseas. The purpose of the health screening is to find and begin to treat any health problem. Refugees need to be healthy to be able to work. The clinic will gather all the information needed to help refugees start medical care in the U.S.

What to Expect
Your health screening includes:

- Medical history which includes a Review of Overseas medical records
- Physical exam
- Tuberculosis screening
- Immunizations
- Screening laboratory tests
- Mental health, traumatic events and persecution screening (Refugees 16 years or older)

When a refugee goes for an appointment, a healthcare provider will review the medical and immunization records from the overseas exam. Then a healthcare provider and other health care workers will conduct an intake (initial interview) followed by the physical exam. They will ask about past health problems, and give a brief health education session. Refugees will also be asked to give blood, urine, and stool samples to test for diseases like tuberculosis, HIV, syphilis, hepatitis, anemia and parasites. In some cases refugees might also get a tuberculin skin test and any needed immunizations. Young children will be tested for lead in their blood. If a problem is found during the health screening, they will be told about it and a referral will be made to get further medical care at another clinic or specialist. Refugees will be given copies of health records when the screening is done.

What They Should Bring to the Appointment
On the day of the appointment, refugees should bring the bag from the International Organization for Migration (IOM). This bag contains a record of the overseas health exam. Refugees should also bring their passport or I-94 card and their Medi-Cal card (if they have received it). If they are taking any medicines, be sure to bring them too.

Prevention

What is **Prevention**? **To prevent is to stop something from occurring. For example:**

- To prevent getting sunburn, use sunblock.

- To prevent food from rotting, put food in the refrigerator.

- To prevent illness, visit the doctor.

Preventative Health Care

Preventative Health Care is regular medical care and healthy behaviors to avoid illness and disease.

Types of Preventative medical appointments:

- Initial Health Screening (Resettlement Health Visit)
- Immunizations
- Routine Medical Exams
  - Yearly Physical Exam
  - Well Child Exam

Important Screening Tests for Women

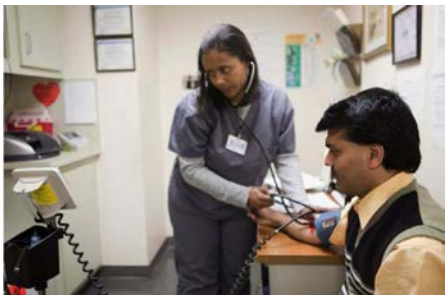
Pap Smear Test: This simple test done during a pelvic exam has saved many lives by finding cancer of the cervix early enough to treat.

Breast Self-Exam and Mammogram: A mammogram is an x-ray test that can find breast cancer when it is so small that it cannot be felt, and when it can most likely be cured. Most women have their first mammogram after they are 40 years old and should get these exams regularly.

Important Screening Tests for Men

Testicular Self-Exam: Cancer of the testes is the most common type of cancer in young men, 15 to 40 years old. It is also one of the most curable types of cancer, especially in the early stages.

Prostate: Prostate problems are common in older men. All men who are aged 50 or older should have regular prostate exams. These exams include a rectal exam, and perhaps a blood test called Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA).



Health Insurance Programs

In the U.S., the government does not provide free health care. Instead, there are health insurance programs that help people pay for medical care.

Government Health Programs

Some of the government health care programs are:

• **Medicare—**A national program for people aged 65 and older, or for persons with certain disabilities.

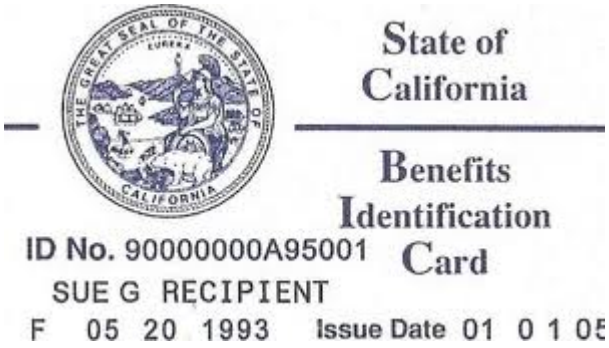
• **Medi-Cal—**This is California's health insurance program for low-income people. Medi-Cal provides health care. There are strict rules about who can get Medi-Cal. These rules are based on family income, immigration status, disability and how long a family has been in the U.S.

If refugees, asylees, and victims of trafficking are not eligible for regular Medi-Cal, then they will receive REFUGEE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE during their first eight (8) months in the U.S. For asylees, or victims of trafficking, the eight (8) months begin when the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) grants the asylee, or victim of trafficking, status.

To apply for Medi-Cal, refugees need to go to your local County Social Services ("welfare") office to fill out forms. Below is the contact information:

San Francisco	San Francisco Human Services Agency SF Benefits Net 1440 Harrison St San Francisco, CA 94120 (415) 557-5000 1 (855) 355-5757 **Toll Free** http://www.sfhsa.org

Within two (2) months, the applicant should receive forms to fill out in order to choose a physician. They will need to choose a healthcare provider from the list provided on the forms. A Medi-Cal card will come in the mail for each person in the family. They need to take the card with them every time they go for health care. Here is what the Medi-Cal card will look like:



Managed Health Care

In the U.S. today, most people with health insurance have some type of managed care plan. There are different types of managed care plans but they all involve an agreement that the patient will use certain healthcare providers or clinics within those programs' *network*. After refugees choose a managed care company, that company will give them a list of healthcare providers who are members of its plan. They choose a doctor from this list, and that doctor becomes their *primary care doctor* (PCD). If refugees do not choose a doctor, the company will choose one for them. The primary care doctor is in charge of "managing" the refugees' health care.

One of the rules of managed care is that a person must always go to their primary care doctor first, unless it is a life-threatening emergency. Refugees should go to their primary care healthcare provider when sick, when in need of immunizations, or for treatment of a continuing health problem. If a primary care doctor wants a refugee to see another doctor with advanced knowledge and training, the doctor will send them to a *specialist*. The health care plan will not pay for a refugee to see a specialist unless they have a *referral* from a primary care doctor. It is important to learn which services the health care company will pay for. It is also important to follow all the rules so the company will pay for health services.

Choosing a Managed Care Plan:
Ask for written information, talk to a Medi-Cal contact person, or ask friends and family about which plan they like. Below is a list of approved Medi-Cal plans in your county:

Plan Name	Phone
Anthem Blue Cross Partnership Plan	(800) 407-4627 TTY/TDD (888) 757-6034
San Francisco Health Plan	(800) 288-5555 TTY/TDD (888) 833-7347

You may choose your health plan or change your health plan at any time, and in a number of ways. You can make a choice by calling **California Health Care Options**:

Health Care Options
Medi-Cal Managed Care
Contact Numbers

Language	Phone Number
Arabic	1-800-576-6881
Armenian	1-800-840-5032
Cambodian	1-800-430-5005
Cantonese	1-800-430-6006

English	1-800-430-4263
Farsi	1-800-840-5034
Hmong	1-800-430-2022
Korean	1-800-576-6883
Laotian	1-800-430-4091
Mandarin	1-800-576-6885
Russian	1-800-430-7007
Spanish	1-800-430-3003
Tagalog	1-800-576-6890
Vietnamese	1-800-430-8008
TDD	1-800-430-7077

Learn about all the choices so that you can make a good decision about what is best for you and your family. Here are some good questions to ask when you are choosing a managed care plan:

• Do the healthcare providers in the plan speak my language?

• Are the plan's healthcare providers and hospital near my house?

• Does public transportation go to these places?

• Do I have to make co-payments and how much are they?

• Can I change my doctor if I want to?

Choose a primary care doctor as soon as you have received your Medi-Cal card. Call the healthcare provider's office and make an appointment for you and your family even if you feel well. It is important for you and your family to know your primary care doctor.

Using a Health Care Interpreter

The Health Care Interpreter

When you need to talk with healthcare providers about your health care, you need a *health care interpreter*. This is someone who speaks both English and your language very well and has special training in how to interpret complex medical terms and information.

Health care interpreters will correctly interpret what a healthcare provider says to you. The interpreter will also interpret everything that you say to a healthcare provider. They may also help schedule an appointment for you, but the health care interpreter cannot help you with money matters or drive you to your appointments.

Health care interpreters must keep all of your information confidential. This means that interpreters cannot speak about your health to anyone else, or even tell someone that you were seen at the office or hospital you went to for health care.

The job of the health care interpreter is to make sure that the exchange between you and the healthcare provider is correct. This means that health care interpreters must not give their own opinions or ideas. The interpreter should not give you advice or answer questions about your medical condition. It is your responsibility to ask the healthcare provider questions about your health or treatment if you don't understand something.

When you use an interpreter, try these ideas:

- Look at and speak directly to the healthcare provider, not to the interpreter.
- Ask the interpreter to write down medicine information or treatment instructions for you.
- Only tell the interpreter what you want the healthcare provider to know. An interpreter must repeat everything that is said by both you and the healthcare provider.
- If a healthcare provider is not present, do not ask the interpreter any medical questions.
- Do not ask the interpreter for his or her opinion. Interpreters cannot give personal advice.
- Do not ask interpreters to help you make decisions.
- Always ask questions if you don't understand something or if the information is unclear.

Requesting an Interpreter
The person who calls to make a medical appointment for you should always tell the office assistant or healthcare provider that you will need an interpreter. If an interpreter is not requested at the time the appointment is scheduled, the clinic may not have an interpreter ready when you come. That means you may then have to make an appointment for another day.

Using Friends or Relatives as Interpreters
Children should not be used as health care interpreters. This is wrong for both you and the child. Using family members or friends as interpreters might keep you from getting good care, because they may not have the special skills and knowledge that medical interpreters have. Also, your medical information is *confidential* (private).

Friends, relatives or children may make mistakes that could lead to wrong diagnoses or other problems. Their feelings may get in the way, causing them to change or add information. It may not be appropriate for friends, relatives or children to tell you bad news and they may not give you all the information you need about your diagnosis or treatment plans.

What to do if an Interpreter is Not Available
If a health care worker tells you to bring your own interpreter, tell them that the law may require that an interpreter be provided. If they do not have someone who speaks your language on their staff, ask them to phone the "Language Line" at 1-800-874-9426, or another phone interpreter service. If the provider refuses to give you an interpreter, you have the right to file a complaint with the Office for Civil Rights at 1-800-368-1019. You do not have to tell your name when you file a complaint.

The sample card below explains your right to an interpreter. Ask your resettlement agency to make a copy of this before you go to a medical appointment. You can show this card to the office assistant when you arrive for your appointment.

IMPORTANT!
I do not speak English
MY NAME IS_____

I SPEAK _____LANGUAGE (S)
AND I NEED YOU TO GET AN INTERPRETER NOW.
Title VI of the Civil Rights Act requires facilities that receive state or federal funds to provide qualified interpreter services at no cost to me. If you are uncertain how to proceed, please contact your supervisor. For more information, call the Department of Health & Human Services, Office of Civil Rights, at 800-368-1019. Thank you.

Medical Appointments

How do you schedule an appointment with your doctor?

- Call or visit the clinic or doctor's office
- You will need to tell them your information:
  - Name
  - Address
  - Phone Number
  - Date of Birth
  - Medi-Cal Number
  - Health Plan/Insurance
  - Name of your doctor
  - Why you need to visit the doctor
- Ask for an **Interpreter** in your language
- Ask if your health insurance is accepted
- Ask if you will need to pay any money for your appointment

Important Information about Medical Appointments

- Use a calendar to record all medical appointments for you and your family
- Arrive 30 minutes early
- Bring photo ID, Insurance Card and any **Referrals**
- **Always** ask for an interpreter if you need one. If you cannot go to your appointment, you must call to cancel your appointment 24 hours before scheduled appointment time
- A family member or friend may join you during your appointment

What Happens During a Medical Appointment?

- Your height, weight, temperature and blood pressure is checked
- A Doctor or Nurse will ask you questions about your health and the health of your family
- You may need to give a blood sample or urine sample
- **If you have questions or worries about your health or the health of your family, ask your doctor**

Your Doctor

In the US, you will have your “own” doctor or “family doctor”. This doctor is called your **Primary Care Provider (PCP).**

You will see your doctor if you are sick.

You will also see your doctor when you are healthy, for preventative medical appointments. - Examples: well woman exams, well child exams, routine exams, or immunization appointments.

You will visit your Primary Care Provider first, for most of your health issues.

Specialists

A **Specialist** is a doctor with more expert knowledge about specific health issues or areas of the body.

- When you need an operation, you will visit a *Surgeon*.
- If you are a woman or are having a baby, you will visit an *Obstetrician/Gynecologist (OB/Gyn)*.
- If you have children, they will visit a *Pediatrician*.
- When you need to examine your heart, you will visit a *Cardiologist*.

Your Primary Care Provider will give you a **referral** if you need to visit a specialist.

- A **Referral** means you have permission to visit another doctor.
- A **Referral** is usually a document or letter that you must bring to the Specialist.

You **do not** need a referral from your Primary Care Provider to visit these Specialists:

- Dentist
- Eye Doctor (Ophthalmologist or Optometrist)

Medicine

1. Prescription Medicine

If you need medicine, your doctor will give you a **Prescription.**

- A **Prescription** is a piece of paper with the name of the medicine.

You will go to a **Pharmacy**. Give your prescription to the **Pharmacist**. The pharmacist will give you the medicine. This medicine is usually paid for by health insurance. Health insurance will most often pay for the generic, less expensive version of medicine. Many medicines have more than one name.

2. Non-Prescription Medicine/Over-The-Counter Medicine

You do not need a prescription to buy some medicine:

- For headache
- For stomach ache
- For cough or cold
- For cuts

You can buy this medicine at the pharmacy or grocery store.

This medicine is not usually paid for by health insurance. You may have to pay with money.

Some health insurances have special programs to get the generic version of nonprescription medicine for free. - For example, your insurance may pay for “Ibuprofen” (generic) form of Advil (brand).

Ask your case manager or doctor about these programs.

Instructions for Medicine

Medicine can be a pill or a liquid.

The doctor or pharmacist will tell you how to take your medicine.

You should know:

- How many pills/liquid to take
- How many times each day
- What time during the day to take your medicine
- How many days or weeks to take your medicine

If you need to take medicine for a long time, the prescription may have **Refills**.

Refill -the pharmacist will give you more medicine without a new prescription from your doctor.

- Note how many Refills listed on your medicine bottle
  - This is the number of times you can get new medicine without visiting your doctor.
- If you have 0 refills and need to take more medicine, see your doctor.
- Your doctor may give you a new prescription for more medicine.

Immunizations

Immunizations (or vaccinations) prevent illness. Immunizations are injected into the body through a needle and contain medicine. All infants, children and adults need to get immunizations. You will receive many immunizations. You may have received immunizations overseas, and you will receive more immunizations in the US. It is important to keep a record of yours and your family's immunizations. Use a calendar to record the dates of all immunizations.

Never miss an immunization appointment!

The **Immunization Record** is yellow and will look like this:

Keep your records in a safe place. Immunizations are needed to enroll in school and to get a "Permanent Residence" card or "green card" (I-551). **Remember to bring your immunization record (the yellow card) every time you visit a healthcare provider.**

After you have been in the U.S. for one year, you can apply for a "change of status" from refugee to resident alien. Your resettlement agency will help you with the paperwork. You will need to show that each child and each adult has had all of their required immunizations.

Adult Immunizations Required for Adjustment of Status

Age of Applicant	**Age Appropriate Vaccinations (and required for immigration purposes)**
Birth through 5 weeks	Hepatitis B
6 weeks through 7 weeks	Hepatitis B Rotavirus
2 months through 5 months	DT, DTaP, or DTP IPV or OPV (OPV not available in U.S.) Hib Hepatitis B Pneumococcal (PCV) Rotavirus
6 months through 7 months	DT, DTaP, or DTP Hib, IPV or OPV (OPV not available in U.S.) Hepatitis B Pneumococcal (PCV) Influenza (during flu season only; October 1 through March 31) Rotavirus
8 months through 11 months	DT, DTaP, or DTP IPV or OPV (OPV not available in U.S.) Hib Hepatitis B Pneumococcal (PCV) Influenza (during flu season only; October 1 through March 31)
12 months through 23 months	DT, DTaP, or DTP, IPV or OPV (OPV not available in U.S.) MMR, Hib, Hepatitis B, Varicella, Pneumococcal (PCV), Influenza (during flu season only; October 1 through March 31), Hepatitis A
2 through 4 years	DT, DTaP, or DTP IPV or OPV (OPV not available in U.S.) MMR Hib Hepatitis B Varicella Pneumococcal (PCV) Influenza (during flu season only; October 1 through March 31)
5 through 6 years	DT, DTaP, or DTP IPV or OPV (OPV not available in U.S.) MMR Hepatitis B Varicella Influenza (during flu season only; October 1 through March 31)

7 through 9 years	Td or Tdap (if DT, DTP, DTaP shown: okay to accept) IPV or OPV (OPV not available in U.S.) MMR Hepatitis B Varicella Influenza (during flu season only; October 1 through March 31)
10 years	Td or Tdap (if DT, DTP, DTaP shown: okay to accept) IPV or OPV (OPV not available in U.S.) MMR, Hepatitis B, Varicella, Influenza (during flu season only; October 1 through March 31)
11 through 17 years	Td or Tdap (if DT, DTP, DTaP shown: okay to accept) IPV or OPV (OPV not available in U.S.) MMR Hepatitis B Varicella Meningococcal Influenza (during flu season only; October 1 through March 31)
18 years	Td or Tdap (if DT, DTP, DTaP shown: okay to accept) MMR Hepatitis B Varicella Meningococcal Influenza (during flu season only; October 1 through March 31)
19 through 26 years	Td or Tdap (if DT, DTP or DTaP shown: okay to accept) MMR Varicella
27 through 49 years	Td or Tdap (if DT, DTP or DTaP shown: okay to accept) MMR Varicella
50 through 59 years	Td or Tdap (if DT, DTP or DTaP shown: okay to accept) MMR (if born in 1957 or later) Varicella, Influenza (during flu season only; October 1 through March 31)
60 through 64 years	Td or Tdap (if DT, DTP or DTaP shown: okay to accept) Varicella Influenza (during flu season only; October 1 through March 31)
65 and older	Td, or Tdap (if DT, DTaP or DTP shown: okay to accept) Varicella Pneumococcal (PPV) Influenza (during flu season only;October 1 through March 31)

- You must complete certain immunizations to get your Green Card
- It may take 6 months to receive all of your immunizations

Children must also complete certain immunizations. Your child's doctor will tell you which immunizations are necessary and when they will be scheduled.

Blood Sample

Sometimes, your doctor will need “blood”. This is called a **Blood Sample.** The blood will be tested to look for illness.

A doctor or nurse will take blood from your arm through a needle. A special medical laboratory specialist will test it. Your doctor will tell you the results, although this may take some time.

Urine Sample

Sometimes, your doctor will need “urine”. This is called a **Urine Sample.** The urine will be tested to look for illness.

The nurse will give you a container.

You will go to the bathroom.

You will urinate into the container.

You will take it to the nurse or doctor.

A special doctor will test it.

Your doctor will tell you the results, although this may take some time.

Stool Sample

Your stool, also called bowel movement or feces, is usually something we quickly flush away in the toilet. But bowel movements can provide doctors with valuable information.

While you are at your initial health assessment, the healthcare provider will give you a kit. You will take this kit home and you will use it to collect your stool.

The kit contains:

- Instructions on how to do the collection
- Instructions on how to label the container
- It will tell you what to do with the container once you are finished
- It will tell you when to bring back the samples

It is not a painful process. It is very easy to do. You MUST keep everything clean and WASH your hands.

Your samples will be sent to a lab for testing. If problems are found, you will be sent to a healthcare provider for follow-up care.

Types of Healthcare

Preventative Care

- Routine medical care or treatment to prevent illness or injury.

Follow-Up Care

- Additional medical appointments with your doctor for more medical treatment or to review tests.
- Future appointments will usually be scheduled before you leave the office.
- Be sure to note the date and time of your next appointment.

Urgent Care

- Immediate medical care for an illness or injury (i.e. sprain, sore throat or rising temperature) - **If you become ill or injured, schedule an appointment with your Doctor.** - Appointment can usually be scheduled within 24 hours or just a few days.

Emergency Care

- Immediate medical treatment for a life-threatening medical condition or painful symptoms - **Go to the Emergency Department at the nearest hospital, or dial 9-1-1 if you are unable to go to the hospital.** This may take some time.

Clinic

A **Clinic** is a health care center where you receive routine preventative care when you are

healthy or visit your Doctor/Primary Care Provider when you are sick.

A clinic is smaller than a hospital where patients are less sick and do not stay overnight.

You will go to a clinic or Doctor's office to see your Primary Care Provider/Doctor.

- For routine medical appointments
- For appointments when you feel sick
- For immunizations

You should schedule an appointment to visit your doctor at the clinic.

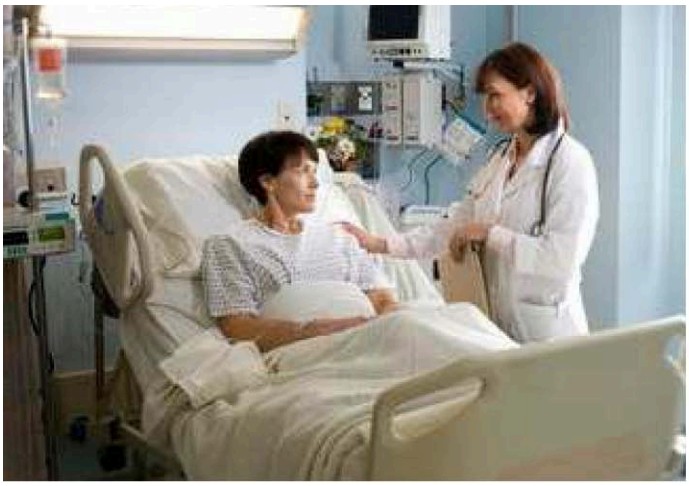
Hospital

You may need to go to a **Hospital** for some health issues:

- For Emergencies
- For an appointment with a Specialist
- For specific medical treatment: For Example: - Surgery/Operation - If you are having a baby

Your **Doctor** /Primary Care Provider will refer you to the Specialist or Hospital.

If it is an Emergency, go directly to the hospital.



Health Emergencies

What is an **Emergency?**

An **Emergency** is a serious problem that must be treated **immediately**, or it will get worse or your life/health is in danger:

- If you break a bone
- If you are having a heart attack
- If it is difficult to breath

What to do in case of an emergency

- Go immediately to the nearest Hospital
  -Visit the **Emergency Department**
  - An **Emergency Doctor** or **Nurse** will treat your emergency

- If you are unable to travel to the Hospital

- - Call **9-1-1**

  You will be asked for your:
- Name
- Address
- Phone Number
- What is the emergency/problem

  - An ambulance will come to your home.

  - Emergency Medical providers (EMT) will talk to you about your health problem.

  - The ambulance may drive you to the hospital if you need immediate medical care.

Always bring your Health Insurance card to the Hospital.

Mental Health

The mental health care system in the U.S. may be very different from what you experienced in your homeland. In the U.S., there are services not only for people with long-term or severe mental illnesses, but also for people who are having emotional reactions to difficult situations in their life. These problems are often helped with counseling or medicine. If you had a mental illness that needed hospitalization or medication in the past, tell the healthcare provider during your health-screening exam. Show the healthcare provider any reports or medicines, even if they are not in English. The health care interpreter can help your healthcare provider understand what it says. It is important that your treatment does not stop.

Problems with Feelings and How to Get Help

Some refugees, asylees and victims of trafficking come to the U.S. with dreams of a new life that will be easier and safer than the lives they had back home. But moving to a new country is hard because of all of the changes. This may cause many feelings: disappointment, sadness, anger, loneliness, fear, or confusion. These feelings are normal. Also, many refugees, asylees and victims of trafficking have had very bad things happen to them in the past, or have seen bad things done to other people. Traumatic events can upset you for many years after they happen. When feelings are strong or hard to talk about, they can affect your behavior. When your feelings stop you from doing your daily tasks or affect your life in bad ways, a mental health professional can help.

Mental health workers are trained to listen to you in confidence, and help you find answers that are best for you. Everyone has at least one of the problems listed below at some point in their lives. But if these problems trouble you for several days or weeks and make it hard to get through the day, **support is available**. Speak with your healthcare provider, nurse, or call your local county health department.

Sleep problems:

• Not being able to fall asleep at night.
• Not being able to go back to sleep after waking up at night.
• Being awakened at night by bad dreams or a nightmare.

Appetite problems:

• Not feeling hungry.
• Only eating if someone makes sure that you do.
• Losing weight, noticing that your clothes are too loose.
• Feeling hungry all of the time.
• Eating more food than you need.
• Gaining weight, noticing that your clothes are too tight.

Problems with your mood:

• Feeling sad all the time.
• Having crying spells.
• Feeling very irritable.

• Arguing and yelling more often.
• Isolating yourself, not wanting to be around other people.
• Sighing a lot.
• Feeling numb, as if you do not have any feelings.
• Feeling hopeless, as if there is nothing you can do.
• Not getting out of bed in the morning to do the things that you need to do.
• Wishing that you would die.
• Thinking about ways to end your life.

You can find help by talking to your healthcare provider, or calling your county mental health program. Most cities have a *Crisis Line* phone number to call that can help you.

If you are wishing that you would die (if you are *suicidal*), please call the National Hopeline to talk to a free telephone counselor. There is someone there, 24 hours a day, at **1-800-SUICIDE (1-800-784-2433)**. **Tell them the name of the language that you speak, so they can get an interpreter on the phone for you.**

Patient Rights, Responsibilities, & Filing a Complaint

Americans highly value each person's rights and responsibilities. In the area of health care, your rights are called *patient rights*, and they mean that you must be treated fairly. At the same time, you are *responsible* for taking care of your own health.

Patient Rights

In California you have the right to get health care no matter what your age, sex, race, or ethnicity. You have the right to talk with your healthcare providers and ask to be moved to another health care facility (such as a hospital), if you wish. You also have the right to be told about all hospital charges, rules and regulations. If you believe that you are not being treated fairly, you have the right to talk about your concerns. **Health plans are required by law to have a grievance process in place to resolve enrollee complaints within 30 days.** In most circumstances, you are required to file a grievance regarding each issue/request with your health plan and participate in the process for 30 days before submitting a complaint to the Department of Managed Health Care (DMHC). Exceptions to this requirement include when there is an immediate threat to your health or the request was denied as experimental. In either of these instances, you may seek immediate assistance from the DMHC at 1(888) 466-2219.

Interpreter Services

If you do not speak English, you have the right to have an interpreter when you go for medical care. Some places use an interpreter over the telephone; others use staff or volunteers who speak more than one language. **You do not have to pay for interpreter services.** During medical care you have the right to be treated with respect at all times. You have the right to refuse treatment. Everything you tell a healthcare provider is confidential (private). If you are going to have any medical procedure done, the law says that you must give your written consent first. This is called *informed consent*.

As part of informed consent, your healthcare provider will talk to you about the procedure or treatment:
• What will be done,
• Why it is needed,
• The risks of having it done,
• The risks of not having it done, and
• What other choices you may have if you do not want the procedure done.

Make sure that you understand everything that a healthcare provider is telling you. Don't be afraid to ask questions.

Patient Responsibilities

Along with your rights as a patient, you have important responsibilities.

Among these are to:

• Arrive early for all medical appointments.

• Call a healthcare provider's office 24 hours in advance if you cannot keep your appointment.

• Bring your Medi-Cal card or other insurance card.

• If you have no insurance, make a plan with the healthcare provider's office for how you will pay.

• Give complete information about your past medical history and your health status now.

• Tell the healthcare provider if you cannot follow the advice given to you, such as taking a medicine the healthcare provider told you to take.

How to make an Appointment by Telephone

You say: Hello, my name is _____. I am a new patient with Dr. _____. I would like to make an appointment please.

Clinic: *Certainly. What is your health insurance?*

You say: I have _____. (Amerigroup, Priority Partners, Maryland Physicians Care, United Healthcare, Medicaid)

Clinic: *Why do you need to visit the doctor?*

You say: I am sick with_____ and need to visit a doctor soon -or-I would like to schedule a wellness check-up.

Clinic: *OK. When can you come in?*

You say: Do you have any open appointments on _____ (date)?

Clinic: *Yes, I can give you an appointment on _____ (date) at _____ (time).*

You say: What do I need to bring with me?

Clinic: *Bring your health insurance card, Medical Assistance card, photo ID, and any medical records you may have. Please come 30 minutes early. See you on _____(date). Good-bye!*

You say: Okay, thank you! Good-bye!

Important Phone Numbers

Emergency Phone Number: 9-1-1

Clinic: _____

Primary Care Provider/Doctor: _____

Hospital: _____

Pharmacy: _____

Eye Doctor: _____

Dentist: _____

Case Manager: _____

Emergency Contact: _____

The Glossary

Clinic	A health care center where you receive routine preventative care when you are healthy or visit your Primary Care Provider/Doctor when you are sick.
Emergency	A serious problem that must be treated immediately, because your health or life is in danger.
Emergency Department	Area of hospital where health emergencies are treated.
Health Insurance	A program that helps to pay all or part of healthcare costs.
Hospital	A health care facility where patients receive urgent care.
Immunization	An injection which allows the body to avoid illness.
Medical Bill	Statement of money to be paid for medical care received.
Pharmacy	Health facility where you receive prescription medicine.
Primary Care Provider (PCP)	The doctor you will see first for routine preventative care when you are healthy or urgent care when you are sick.
Prescription	The form your doctor will give you if you need medicine.
Refill	When you are able to receive more medicine.
Specialist	A doctor with specific experience and/or knowledge.

CALIFORNIA RESOURCES

Telephone numbers beginning in the 1-800s (also 877 or 888) are free of charge (toll-free).
There is a 1-800 Information Number to ask if a program has a toll free number. Dial 1-800-555-1212. You may also call the local information number (411) for a phone number in your area. There is a fee for calling 411. The telephone book has special places to help you find resources. In the front is the government section (the blue pages) that is divided into City, County, State, and the U.S. If you know the name of a business you can find it in the business section (the pink pages). If you do not know the name, or you are looking for many choices, you can search by subject (for example, "dentists") in the "yellow pages".

Access for Infants & Mothers (AIM) Medi-Cal Access Line—For a low monthly fee, this program pays for prenatal care, childbirth, and infant health care. Pregnant women who are lower-income, uninsured, and do not qualify for full Medi-Cal, can call **1-800-433-2611**.

American with Disabilities Act (ADA)—Protects many rights of the disabled. For more information call **1-800-514-0301**.

Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA)—Can help with doctor, dental, therapy, and other needs for people with developmental disabilities like mental retardation or cerebral palsy. There are 21 Regional Centers in California. For more information call **916-446-7961**.

California Children's Services (CCS)—Pays for health care, therapy, and other help for children and young adults under age 21 who have eligible health problems. Families must also have a financial need to be able to get CCS. Call **1-800-288-4584**.

California Department of Rehabilitation helps disabled people to find jobs and stay independent. Call **1-800-952-5544**.

County Social Services Office ("welfare")—This State program gives aid to needy families until they are able to work. They can assist with refugee cash assistance, Medi-Cal, and Food Stamps. Your nearest office can be found in the phone book under the County Government section or call **1-800-952-5253**.

Child Health & Disability Prevention (CHDP)—A program that gives complete health exams to children even if the child has Medi-Cal. Call **1-800-993-2437**.

Childhelp USA National Child Abuse Hotline—For questions about child abuse or crisis counseling, call your local agency, or the national hotline at **1-800-422-4453**.

Child Protective Services (CPS)—For questions and concerns about child abuse, call your County CPS office. In the phone book look under "County of" in the Government section and then under "Social Services" or "Human Assistance" for children's services or http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/cdssweb/PG1985.htm. In an emergency **call 911**.

USCIS (U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services)—has a new name called the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (BCIS). This U.S. government agency is in charge of citizenship, permanent residency, employment authorization, immigration status, and foreign student authorization. They can also help to replace lost immigration documents. For information call **1-800-375-5283**.

Libraries—The library near your house is a place to find out about resources in your city. You can also use the computers (for free) to look up support groups, health teaching, and services on the Internet. You will need to bring an English-speaking person to help you.

Medicare Social Security—If you are at least 65 years old, or you are permanently disabled, you may be able to be part of this national health program. Medicare provides two types of insurance: Part A is for hospital care, Part B helps you pay for other care such as healthcare provider appointments. For more information on Medicare call **1-800-772-1213**.

Poison Control Center—When something poisonous is eaten, drunk or splashed in the eyes or on the skin, you can call for advice right away, 24 hours a day. Call **1-800-876-4766**. In an emergency, **call 911**.

School Lunch—Your child's school may give free lunches and even breakfast. Call your child's school for information. Also ask about the Summer Food program to see if your child can get lunch when school is not in session.

Suicide Line—This service will link you to a free telephone counselor. If you feel so sad that you want to die and might even kill yourself, call the National Hopeline Network at **1-800-SUICIDE (1-800-784-2433)**. If you need an interpreter, say the name of your language in English and stay on the phone for help.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI)/State Supplemental Payment (SSP)—These payments are for low-income, blind or disabled people, or low-income people age 65 or older. Apply at your local Social Security office (find under "United States" in the government section of the phone book) or call **1-800-772-1213**.

Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)—Is a nutrition program that helps pregnant or breastfeeding women, and children under 5 years, to eat well and stay healthy. They will give you free food coupons and nutrition information. Families with low or medium incomes may qualify. Call your local WIC office or **1-888-942-9675**.