

# Upcoming Changes Affect Patients on the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Supplemental Food Program

by Barbara Longo, Program Policy Branch Chief  
WIC Program Division of the California Department of Public Health

*Beginning October 2009, WIC will add new items to the list of authorized foods the program provides to participants and implement new medical documentation requirements to better coordinate care between WIC and the patient's physician. This article provides information that affects the practice of physicians who care for infants, children and pregnant, breastfeeding or postpartum women.*

## **New WIC Foods**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has revised regulations governing WIC foods to align with American Academy of Pediatrics feeding guidelines, and the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans - the first comprehensive revision of WIC foods since 1980. These changes, effective October 1, 2009, will add new food items, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains and soy products to the current list of nutritious foods, such as milk, eggs, cheese, juice, beans, peanut butter, and infant formula.

Especially positive for infants are greater incentives for breastfeeding; replacing half the infant formula with baby food fruits and vegetables for infants over six months old; elimination of juice for infants altogether; and limiting milk to low-fat varieties for women and children two years and older. Tofu and soy beverage will also be options; however, WIC will require documentation from the physician to provide soy products to children.

Another well supported change allows medically fragile patients, such as those with failure to thrive or severe allergies, to receive all appropriate food options when referred to WIC with a prescription by a physician.

For more information about the expanded healthy choices for WIC families, see the California WIC Web site, New WIC Food Packages at [www.wicworks.ca.gov](http://www.wicworks.ca.gov).

## **New WIC Referral Form**

The California WIC Program has worked with health care representatives to update the WIC Pediatric Referral Form to include all information needed to comply with the new prescription requirements and for routine referrals to WIC. You may use the referral form starting now for any of your patients that you feel would benefit from WIC services. The new WIC referral form will be required for all WIC referrals beginning October 1, 2009. To download WIC referral forms, visit the California WIC Web site at [www.wicworks.ca.gov](http://www.wicworks.ca.gov), select Health Professionals, and then Referral Forms.

If you have any questions regarding WIC or the new requirements related to special dietary requests, please contact Barbara Longo, Program Policy Branch Chief, at [barbara.longo@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:barbara.longo@cdph.ca.gov) or (916) 928-8870.

## **Medical Board member elected to Federation of State Medical Boards position**

Medical Board Member Mary Lynn Moran, M.D., of Woodside, was elected at a recent meeting of the Federation of State Medical Boards to serve a two-year term on its nominating committee. This committee recommends a slate of candidates for the Federation's elected positions each year.

Medical Board Member Hedy Chang, of Morgan Hill, was elected to a three-year term on the Federation's Board of Directors in 2008.

The Federation is a national, non-profit organization representing the 70 medical boards of the United States and its territories. Its mission is to continuously improve the quality, safety and integrity of health care through developing and promoting high standards for physician licensure and practice.