

health matters



Welcome
newsletter

things

to know

You can make a difference

Mercy Care Plan has a Member Advisory Council. Its job is to give us ideas and suggestions on how to improve services and make things work better for members.

The council meets every three months. Rides are set up for those who do not have transportation, and lunch is served.

We are looking for helpful people who are willing to get involved to make positive changes. If you are interested, call Member Services and let us know.

Are you pregnant?

Pregnant women need special care, and the sooner the better. If you are pregnant, call us right away to choose a pregnancy doctor (obstetrician, or OB). Once you choose your OB, you can go directly to him or her without seeing your PCP first.

Next, make your first appointment with your OB as soon as you can. It is important to keep all your appointments so that you and your baby stay healthy.



Welcome to Mercy Care Plan

We are glad you have joined our health plan. Now that you are a member, here are a few tips to get you started:

- For answers to any of your questions, call Member Services at (602) 263-3000 or 1-800-624-3879.
- Your *Member Handbook* has good information about how to get health care services.

You can get answers to most of your questions by reading it. If you need help understanding your handbook, call Member Services.

- Your handbook lists all of the services for Mercy Care Plan members. It also tells you how to get prescriptions and refills.
- Mercy Care Plan has verbal and sign language interpreters if you need help to talk to your doctor during your visits. Call Member Services if you need an interpreter.

Your doctor is your partner

In a health plan like Mercy Care, doctors are called primary care physicians (PCPs) because they are the ones who take care of all your health care needs. Your PCP is the doctor you see first for health care services.

Your PCP is a very important partner in your health care. Except for pregnancy, dental, behavioral

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For Member Services, call (602) 263-3000 or 1-800-624-3879

How your doctor's office works

Your primary care physician (PCP) is your health care partner. You can call your PCP for routine checkups or when you need help with things like earaches, sore throats, migraines and the flu.

Appointments

To see your PCP, call the office to make an appointment. For routine checkups, it usually takes three weeks to get an appointment. Be sure to take your ID card with you and a list of any medications you are taking. If you are going to your child's PCP, take both the ID card and shot record.

Sometimes, though, you or your children will need to see the PCP sooner. For example, your child might have an earache. Call the PCP's office right away and tell him or her the symptoms. Ask to bring your child in that day. Most offices keep some time open just for these problems.

Canceling

If you can't make it to your appointment, it is important for you to call your PCP and cancel.

After hours and weekends

Except in a real emergency, if you or your child gets sick after the office is closed or on a weekend, call the office anyway. An answering service will make sure your doctor gets your



message. Your PCP will call you back to tell you what to do. Be sure your phone accepts blocked calls. Otherwise the doctor may not be able to reach you.

You can even call your PCP in the middle of the night. You most likely will have to leave a message with the answering service. It may take a while for him or her to get back to you, but a doctor will call you back to tell you what to do.

Welcome to Mercy Care Plan

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health and yearly well-woman visits, your PCP will give you referrals if you need to see a specialist and prescriptions for any medicines you may need. He or she will do your yearly checkups and give you and your children your immunizations.

Keeping you healthy

Our No. 1 goal is to keep you and your family healthy.

Is it really an emergency?

The emergency room (ER) is for serious problems, such as heart attacks, broken bones, bad burns and car accidents. If your life or your child's life is in danger, you have a real emergency. Call **911** right away or go to the closest ER.

But if you go to the ER because you think you will be seen more quickly, you will most likely have to wait. In the ER, anything except a real emergency has to wait, even if you were there first.

Urgent care

If you live in Maricopa or Pima County, you may go to an urgent care center if you aren't able to get in to see your PCP right away.

You may not be used to going to the doctor if you aren't sick. But we want you to see your doctor to keep you from getting sick.

What you need to do is call your PCP's office every year to make an appointment for a checkup for you and your children.

If you do not remember your doctor's name, call Member Services.

Also remember to take your children to the dentist every year.