

Molina's myhealthmylife[®]

a newsletter just for Washington members

2025 Issue

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years of keeping
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Emergency or not? A simple guide to making the right call.

Knowing if you need to go to the emergency room (ER) can be tricky. Here are tips to help you make the right choice.

Call your regular doctor first

Your primary care provider (PCP) helps you stay healthy. They know your health history and can help with check-ups, shots and advice. Call your PCP if you have mild problems like a fever, sore throat, rash or back pain. They can tell you what to do or set up an appointment.

Your PCP can also help with chronic conditions. If you have ongoing health issues, like asthma or diabetes, they create a care plan for you. Regular check-ups with your PCP can prevent problems from getting worse.

Try urgent care for non-emergencies

Urgent care is a good option if your doctor's office is closed, and you need care quickly. Urgent care centers treat problems like nausea, vomiting, diarrhea or minor injuries. They are open after hours and on weekends. To find one in the Molina Healthcare provider network, visit MolinaProviderDirectory.com/WA.



Go to the ER or call 911 for serious problems

The ER is for serious or life-threatening issues. Go to the ER or call 911 if you or someone else has:


- Chest pain or pressure
- Trouble breathing
- Sudden confusion or trouble speaking
- Severe pain or heavy bleeding
- Weakness, numbness or loss of movement in arms or legs
- Suicidal thoughts



Need help deciding?

If you are unsure where to go, call Molina's **24-hour Nurse Advice Line** at **(888) 275-8750 (TTY: 711)**. Nurses are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Getting the care you need and feeling better faster comes down to knowing the right place to go. It can save time and even lives.

A close-up portrait of a man with dark, curly hair and a beard, wearing black-rimmed glasses and a blue button-down shirt over a black t-shirt. He is smiling broadly, showing his teeth. The background is softly blurred.

Why seeing your doctor after an ER visit is important

After you've been to the hospital or emergency room (ER), you might think the hardest part is over. But did you know that visiting your primary care provider (PCP) after you leave is one of the most important steps to staying healthy?

Your PCP is like the leader of your health care team. They know your medical history. And they can help make sure you're on the right path to feeling better. They'll review any new diagnoses, medications or treatments you received to make sure everything is working well together.

Sometimes, your treatment plan may need minor changes, like adjusting medication or ordering tests to check your progress. A follow-up visit is a good time to talk about how you're feeling and ask questions.

Skipping this step could lead to more problems or even another trip to the ER. Molina is here to help you schedule follow-ups and connect with your PCP.

Staying in touch with your doctor gives you the best chance to heal completely and stay healthy. Remember, your health is your greatest treasure—take the time to care for it!

Sources:
Journal of the American Medical Association

Healthy mom, healthy baby: Why prenatal care matters!

What is prenatal care and why is it important?

Prenatal care is health care for women during pregnancy that helps ensure a healthy pregnancy and baby. Starting care early and attending regular checkups improve the chances of a healthy outcome.

Pre-pregnancy care

Before pregnancy, a pre-pregnancy visit to a health care provider can help women prepare. This includes reviewing medical history, health conditions and risk factors. Steps to promote a healthy pregnancy include:

- Taking 400 micrograms of folic acid daily
- Getting up-to-date on immunizations
- Managing conditions like diabetes
- Avoiding smoking, alcohol and drugs
- Maintaining a healthy weight
- Learning about family health history

Prenatal care

Once a woman suspects she may be pregnant, she should see a health care provider to start prenatal care. These visits typically include exams and monitoring their progress. This is also a great time to get guidance on pregnancy and ask questions.

Why it matters

Regular care helps prevent complications, reduce risks to the baby and address conditions like high blood pressure or diabetes. It also ensures that medications are safe for pregnancy. For example, taking folic acid daily lowers the risk of neural tube defects by 70%.

By staying informed and following their doctor's advice, women can protect their health and give their babies the best start in life.

Sources:

National Library of Medicine, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



Let's talk about mental health

Molina Healthcare believes in providing whole-person care to our members. Mental health is just as important as physical health and can have big effects on both the length and quality of our lives. Mental health can also directly impact our physical health, especially for people who suffer from heart disease, diabetes and/or other chronic conditions. Sometimes, however, people are not comfortable sharing their feelings and are worried about being judged for admitting that they struggle with anxiety, depression or other mental health concerns. Stigmas (negative ideas or beliefs) around mental health can stop people from asking for help.

We can change this by learning more about mental health, being kind and compassionate when others share that they need help. We can also set a good example by sharing our own mental health experiences. When we understand that mental health problems are common and treatable, it's easier to talk about them.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says **mental health is a big part of staying healthy**. Many people deal with things like anxiety or depression, and there are many treatments that can help. However, stigma can prevent people from sharing their concerns and finding the help they need.

Molina offers members a broad range of therapists, counselors and doctors that provide high-quality care for your mental health. Visit **MolinaProviderDirectory.com/WA** to find a provider near you.

If you or someone you know is having a hard time, remember it's okay—and a great idea—to ask for help. Listening and being kind to others can help break the stigma. Together, we can make it easier to seek care for mental health.

Sources:
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



Well-child visits: The secret to growing up healthy

What are well-child visits?

Well-child visits are regular checkups with your child's doctor to help keep them healthy. These visits aren't just for when your child is sick. They let doctors check for problems early, track how your child is growing, and talk about things like nutrition, sleep and school.

Why are vaccines important?

Vaccines (shots) protect your child from serious illnesses like measles, whooping cough and polio. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), vaccines help your child's immune system fight off germs before they make them sick. Vaccinated kids miss less school, can safely play with friends, and help protect others—especially babies and older adults—who may get sick more easily.

How often does my child need a checkup?

Most kids need a well-child visit once a year. The CDC has a schedule to show when your child should get vaccines and health screenings. You can check the schedule online at [Child and Adolescent Immunization Schedule by Age | Vaccines & Immunizations | CDC](#). Try to plan these visits at the same time each year to make it a habit.

What can I do as a parent?

Ask questions, stay informed and keep a record of your child's health. By making regular checkups and vaccines a priority, you're helping your child stay healthy and grow strong.

For more information, visit [Healthy Habits: Child Development | CDC](#).

Sources:
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



Silent but serious: The truth about high blood pressure

High blood pressure, or hypertension, is a health problem that many people don't even realize they have. That's because it often has no symptoms at first. But if it's not treated, it can lead to serious problems like heart disease, strokes or kidney damage.

Blood pressure is the force of blood pushing against your arteries. When it's too high, it puts extra strain on your heart and blood vessels. Doctors measure blood pressure with two numbers. The first number, called systolic, is the pressure when your heart beats. The second number, called diastolic, is the pressure when your heart rests. A reading of 120/80 or lower is normal.

There are warning signs to watch for, like frequent headaches, dizziness, chest pain or trouble breathing. But remember, high blood pressure can be silent and show no signs at all. So, it's important to see your doctor regularly. They can check your blood pressure and provide treatment, if needed.

The good news?

You can lower your risk by eating healthy, staying active, and keeping a healthy weight.

Keeping your blood pressure in check is important to good health.

Sources:

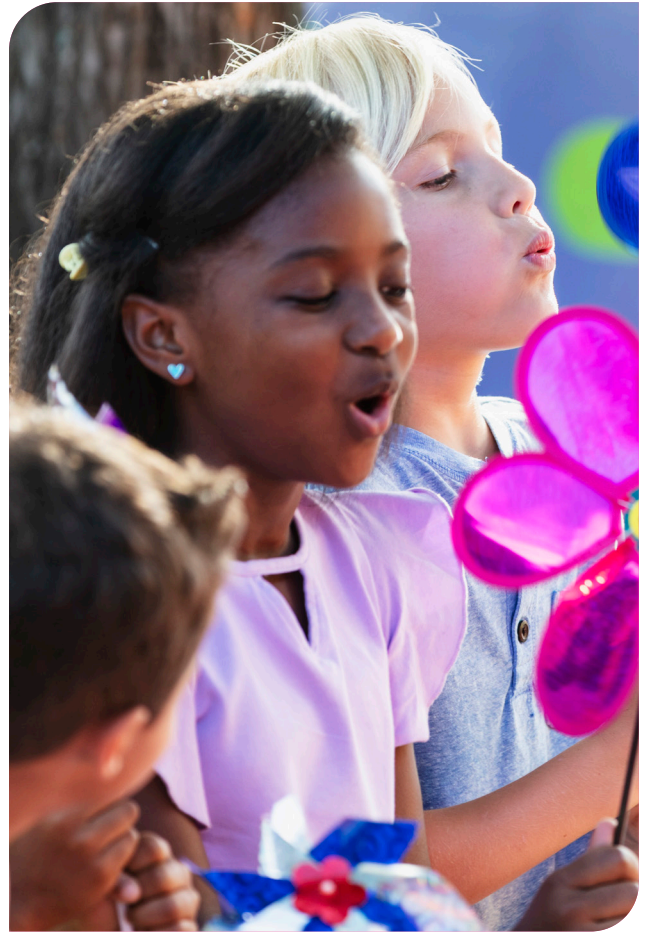
American Heart Association, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Mayo Clinic

Spot the signs: Is your child being bullied?

Bullying is when someone repeatedly hurts or scares another person on purpose. It's important to know if your child is being bullied so you can help them.

Signs your child might be bullied:

- **Physical clues:** Your child has bruises, cuts or scratches that they can't explain.
- **Emotional changes:** They seem sad, moody or more anxious than usual.
- **Behavioral shifts:** They don't want to go to school, lose interest in things they used to enjoy or their grades drop.
- **Physical complaints:** They often say they have headaches or stomachaches for no clear reason.
- **Sleep problems:** They have trouble sleeping or often have bad dreams.



How you can help:

- 1 Talk and listen:** Encourage your child to share their feelings. Listen carefully and show them you believe and support them.
- 2 Teach about bullying:** Explain bullying and reassure your child it's not their fault.
- 3 Plan together:** Work with your child on how to handle bullying, like speaking to a teacher when it happens.
- 4 Inform the school:** Talk to school staff so they can help stop the bullying.
- 5 Seek professional help:** If your child feels very sad or worried, consider getting help from a counselor or mental health expert.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says adults play a big role in stopping bullying. You can help your child feel safe and supported by noticing the signs and taking action. For more details, visit [Bullying | Youth Violence Prevention | CDC](#).

Sources:
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Your opinion matters: Take our survey and be heard!

We want to hear from you!

At Molina Healthcare of Washington, we want to offer you quality service and care. Each year, some members receive a Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS®) survey in the mail. This national survey asks about your experience with Molina and our provider network.

If you receive one, please complete it and return it. Your feedback helps us improve the care and services we provide.

Here are some changes we have made based on member feedback:

- We expanded our network of doctors and clinics to give you more choices.
- We have added more customer service staff to support your needs.
- We partnered with providers to offer telehealth, so you get care when and where you need it.
- We have increased options for filling prescriptions, including mail-order delivery.
- We expanded ways that you can access your health information like email, text, the mobile app or the member portal.

We value your voice and are committed to your satisfaction. To learn more, please visit MolinaHealthcare.com.

