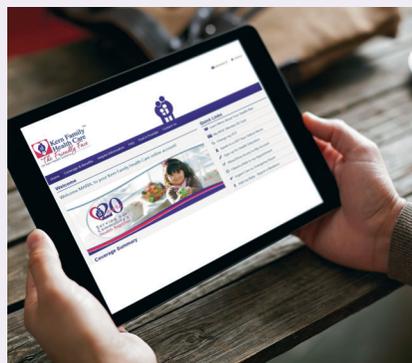


# family health



NEW MEMBER PORTAL!

## Access health plan information online

Have you seen our new member portal? Just visit [kernfamilyhealthcare.com](http://kernfamilyhealthcare.com). Click on "Member Login." Then follow the steps to sign up.

You'll have access to your health plan information—**plus**, you'll be able to:

 View and print your member ID card.

 Confirm your eligibility with Kern Family Health Care and find out who your doctor is.

 Get reminders about vaccines or tests you need.

 Change your doctor.

 Sign up for free health education.

 Learn more about your health plan.

**Create your online account  
today!**

## Take the Summer Reading Challenge

### CHALLENGE YOURSELF TO READ 10 BOOKS

**T**he Kern County Library Summer Reading Challenge encourages children, teens and adults to exercise their minds and read during the summer. This year's theme is Reading by Design.

Some benefits of reading:

- Studies show that children who read for fun during the summer often perform better than other children once back in school.
- Reading teaches problem-solving skills.
- Reading helps you learn about people who are different from you.

### For children and teens.

- Read 10 books, magazines, graphic novels, audio books or eBooks. Teens can choose to read 10 books or for 10 hours.

■ Record your titles/hours, either online at [kclsummerchallenge.org](http://kclsummerchallenge.org) or in a paper reading log. The log can be picked up from the library. Make sure a parent signs it.

■ Return your signed reading log or your printed Reading Champion badge from our online reading log to the library by **Monday, July 31**. Then you can receive a **free** paperback book from Friends of the Kern County Library, Inc.

### For adults.

■ Register with your email address at [kclsummerchallenge.org](http://kclsummerchallenge.org) to be entered into a drawing for prizes. Winners are contacted in August.

■ Record your books online as you read them.

To learn more, call **661-868-0700**.



# Kern Family Health Care wants to reward you for being healthy

**G**oing to regular doctor visits helps you and your family stay healthy. As a thank-you for taking these steps, we are offering incentives. These are rewards that we will send you for taking health actions.

## New member incentive.

- Do your Initial Health Assessment with your doctor within 120 days of enrolling.
- The assessment will help your doctor know your health needs.

- You will get a gift in the mail. It includes a first aid kit, a thermometer and a pedometer.

## Pregnancy incentive.

- Go to at least six prenatal visits and one postpartum visit with your doctor within three to eight weeks after you have your baby.
- These visits help you have a healthy pregnancy and a healthy baby.
- You will get a voucher for a Pack-n-Play crib **or** diapers and wipes.

## 1-year-old well-child exam incentive.

- Take your child (12 to 23 months) to the doctor for a yearly exam.
- This will keep your child up-to-date on shots.
- You will get a voucher for a stroller.

## Healthy Eating and Active Lifestyle (HEAL) workshop incentives.

- We will give you a gift when you attend one of our HEAL workshops.
- It may be a set of measuring cups, an exercise band, a cookbook or a pedometer.
- You'll also be entered in a raffle for a slow cooker.

## Asthma management workshop incentives.

- We will give you a gift when you attend one of our asthma management workshops.
- This gift may include a hypoallergenic pillowcase or nontoxic cleaning supplies.

## Other incentives.

- We will also provide other incentives for taking your child to the yearly well-child visit. You will receive a letter in the mail if you qualify.

If you have any questions about the incentive programs, please call us at **800-391-2000**. If you want to sign up for a health education workshop, please visit the member portal.

Kern Family Health Care complies with applicable federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex.

ATTENTION: If you speak a language other than English, language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. Call **800-391-2000**.

ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al **800-391-2000**.

注意：如果您使用繁體中文，您可以免費獲得語言援助服務。請致電 **800-391-2000**。



# Have a safe summer

**S**ummer is a laid-back season. It's not good to be laid-back when it comes to safety though. With warm weather comes the risk for certain injuries and health problems—some can even be deadly.

Here are some tips on how to keep you and your family safe:

**Never leave a child in the car.** Even if it's only 85 degrees outside, a parked car can reach 120 degrees. Always check the back seat. Put your purse or wallet in the back so you are sure to look before you lock the door.

**Make helmets a must.** Helmets help reduce the risk of head injury and of death from bicycle crashes. Helmets are also a good idea when riding a horse or skateboard, playing sports like baseball or softball, or using inline skates.

**Watch out for heatstroke.** Signs include a body temperature above 103 degrees; hot, red, dry or moist skin; a rapid and strong

pulse; and passing out. Call 911 right away if you think someone has heatstroke. Move the person to a cooler place, and use cool cloths or a cool bath to bring the temperature down. Do not give the person liquids to drink.

**Protect your skin.** Use a broad-spectrum sunscreen with at least SPF 30. The waterproof versions are the best!

## Keep pets cool in the heat

Summer's heat can be dangerous for people and pets. Help keep your furry friends safe and cool with these four tips:

**1. Supply water and shade.** If pets must be outdoors, provide plenty of cold water. In heat waves, add ice to water. No trees for shade? A tarp can do the trick. It's better than a doghouse—which can become a sauna on a hot day. Use a kiddie

## Summer safety in Kern County

If you have a child who is 5 years old or younger, there are free programs in Kern County that will teach you water safety, first aid and CPR. These include:

### Make a Splash

Water safety, first aid and CPR  
661-852-7430

### Kern Valley Aquatics Program

Water safety, injury prevention and swim lessons  
760-299-2030

**Be safe around water.** Always keep young children within arm's reach of an adult. Kids should wear a Coast Guard-approved life vest when swimming. Arm "floaties" cannot be used to prevent drowning.

Sources: American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Safe Kids Worldwide; U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission

pool for dogs that like water!

**2. Never leave a pet in a parked car—not even for a minute.** A hot car can be deadly.

**3. Limit exercise in the heat.** Take dog walks in the early morning or evening when temperatures are lower.

**4. Stay off hot asphalt.** It can burn your pet's paws. Walk or play on grass, if possible.

Source: The Humane Society of the United States



- Know your family’s health history.
- Bring all your medicines with you.
- Take notes.
- Bring someone to help you understand and remember what you heard.
- Don’t be afraid to ask your doctor to repeat something.
- It’s OK to ask your doctor to draw pictures or write down long words.

Hector Jose Arreaza, MD, a primary care doctor in Bakersfield, says: “It is very important for patients to take ownership of their health. Some patients feel like their doctor is in charge of their health. But in the end, patients are responsible for their own health.”

He shared these common questions you can ask your doctor at every visit:

- What screening tests do I need?
- Do I need any vaccines at my age?

**And when you see your doctor for a problem, ask:**

- What is my diagnosis?
- How is it treated?
- Will I need a test?
- What will the medicine you prescribed do? How do I take it? Are there any side effects?
- What can I do to improve my health?

**Take answers home.**

- Ask for written instructions or a written plan.
- Ask for brochures, videos, websites or local health programs.

Source: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality

**What questions will you ask your doctor?**

For your next appointment with your doctor, write down at least three questions you want to ask. Take these questions with you to the appointment.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Y**ou can make sure you get the best care by being an active member of your health care team. That means asking questions.

**Be prepared.** Time is limited during doctor visits. Think ahead about what you want to do during your visit. Do you want to:

- Talk about a health problem?
- Get or change a medicine?
- Get medical tests?
- Talk about surgery?

**Here are more tips:**

- Write down your current and past health conditions and surgeries. Bring that list to your appointment.

# Keep your kidneys healthy

**W**hat are kidneys and what do they do?

You have two kidneys. They are bean-shaped and about the size of a fist. They are located in the middle of your back, on the left and right sides of your spine.

The kidneys filter your blood, removing wastes and extra water to make urine. They also help control blood pressure and make hormones that your body needs to stay healthy. When the kidneys are damaged, wastes can build up in the body.

## What are the main risk factors?

- Diabetes.
- High blood pressure.
- Heart disease.
- A family history of kidney failure.

## Tips to help keep your kidneys healthy:

- Keep your blood pressure at the target set by your health care provider. For most people, the blood pressure target is less than 140/90 mm Hg.
- If you have diabetes, control your blood glucose level.
- Keep your cholesterol levels in the target range. Less than 200 mg/dL is the desirable range for most people.
- Cut back on salt. Aim for less than 2,300 milligrams of sodium each day.
- Choose foods that are healthy for your heart: fresh fruits, fresh or frozen vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy foods.
- Limit your alcohol intake, be more physically active, and if you

smoke, take steps to quit. Cigarette smoking can make kidney damage worse.

■ Avoid some over-the-counter medicines (such as aspirin, naproxen or ibuprofen) because they can harm kidneys.

If you have any of these risk factors, talk to your doctor and

get tested for kidney disease. Early kidney disease has no signs or symptoms. You may not feel any different until your kidney disease is advanced. Blood and urine tests are the only way to know if you have kidney disease. Kidney disease can be treated if detected early.

Source: National Kidney Foundation



## Learn how to manage diabetes

**M**anaging diabetes means healthy eating, checking your blood sugar and taking meds the right way. Dignity Health offers two free programs to help.

### Chronic Disease and Diabetes Self-Management seminars.

These seminars are called “empowerment” because you’ll have more control over your condition with the tips and skills you’ll learn. They include:

- Dealing with tough emotions.
- Goal setting and action plans.
- Healthy eating.
- Medication usage.
- Problem solving.
- Staying active.
- Working with your health care team.

**DEEP seminars.** Our free Diabetes Empowerment Education Program (DEEP) seminars will



help you reduce your risk of health problems that result from diabetes. These health problems can include kidney failure, amputation, vision loss, heart failure and stroke. DEEP has been shown to improve:

- A1C levels and systolic blood pressure.
- Diabetes knowledge.
- Physical activity.
- How to follow a healthy eating plan.
- Foot care.
- Checking your glucose.
- Taking your medication.

■ Feeling confident about taking care of your health.

The seminars are free, but you’ll need to sign up in advance. Call **661-323-3524** or email **lucia.ramirez@dignityhealth.org**.

Not sure if you have diabetes? Schedule a visit with your doctor to discuss your risk. You can also take the Type 2 Diabetes Risk Test at **diabetes.org** to give you an idea.

To learn more, visit **dignityhealth.org/mercy-bakersfield/classes-and-events/diabetes-education**.

### Member rights

If you have a service or quality of care complaint against Kern Family Health Care or a provider, call us first at **661-632-1590** (Bakersfield) or **800-391-2000** (outside of

Bakersfield) or visit our website: **kernfamilyhealthcare.com**.

You may call the Department of Managed Health Care (DMHC) for help if:

- Your grievance is an emergency.
- You are not happy with Kern Family Health Care’s decision.

■ It has not been resolved in 30 days. The DMHC’s toll-free number is **888-HMO-2219 (888-466-2219)**. Its TDD line (for people with hearing and speech impairments) is **877-688-9891**. You may also call the DHCS Office of the Ombudsman toll-free at **888-452-8609**.

# family health

FAMILY HEALTH is published as a community service for the friends and patrons of KERN FAMILY HEALTH CARE, 9700 Stockdale Highway, Bakersfield, CA 93311, telephone 800-391-2000.

Information in FAMILY HEALTH comes from a wide range of medical experts. If you have any concerns or questions about specific content that may affect your health, please contact your health care provider. Models may be used in photos and illustrations.

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