

California Area Indian Health Service PATIENT NEWSLETTER

Raising the physical, mental, social, and spiritual health of American Indians and Alaska Natives to the highest level.

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Director's Message

Your Personal Health Record

The Resource & Patient Management System (RPMS) Personal Health Record (PHR) is now available to patients at California Tribal and Urban clinics. The PHR contains a list of past, present, and future appointments, your medication list (active & inactive), lab results, and vital signs. You will also have the option to download your own data and to communicate electronically with your healthcare team.

The RPMS PHR allows you to securely view your health information from a computer, smart phone, tablet, or other internet connected device. The PHR works on all kinds of devices including Windows and Mac PCs as well as Android and iOS mobile devices with a web browser.

Getting Started

Simply get online, go to <https://phr.ihs.gov>, and click on the "Register to use PHR" button.

1. Create your own unique username and password
2. Enter your personal information
3. Take your personal ID to your clinic so staff can link your PHR account

Access Your Health Record

Once your account has been linked, you can access your health record online at your own convenience at <https://phr.ihs.gov>. Enter your username and password to log-in.

Electronic Messaging

Once you have logged into the PHR, you can send a secure electronic message to your healthcare team by clicking the "My Messages" link on the left hand side of the page. A member of your healthcare team will respond to you.

Engage Now

Register for PHR and play a more active role in your own healthcare.

Important Reminder

If you are experiencing a medical emergency, call 9-1-1 or go immediately to the closest emergency room.





Avoid Illnesses Transmitted by Mosquitoes and Ticks This Summer by Christine Brennan, MPH

You may have seen several news stories throughout the last few months detailing the dangers of the Zika virus, which is spread to humans via mosquitoes and has been linked to birth defects in babies born to women who were infected while pregnant. Worldwide, mosquitoes are the cause of many diseases in humans in addition to the Zika virus, including Malaria, West Nile Virus, Chikungunya, and many forms of viral encephalitis (which causes swelling of the brain). In California, the main disease spread by mosquitoes is the West Nile Virus, which causes minor flu-like symptoms in most people, but can cause serious symptoms or even death in those who have weakened immune systems or are elderly.

Another insect that can cause serious diseases in humans are ticks. Ticks are responsible for causing diseases such as Lyme Disease, Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever, Tularemia, Babesiosis, and a few other rare diseases. In California, the most common diseases spread by ticks are Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever, Tularemia, and Lyme Disease.

There are methods to protect yourself and your family from getting bit by mosquitoes and ticks. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends using insect repellent containing one of the following ingredients:

- DEET (use products with a DEET concentration of 20-50%)
- Picaridin
- Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus (OLE) or PMD
- IR3535

When applying repellents, use the following precautions:

- Apply repellents only to exposed skin or clothing (never use repellents on cuts, wounds, or irritated skin)
- Do not spray repellents directly on face. Instead, spray on hands first and then apply to face, avoiding the eyes and mouth
- Wash hands immediately after applying repellents
- Adults should apply repellent on children by spraying on their own hands first, and then applying to the child's exposed skin



In addition to applying insect repellent you can help avoid mosquito and tick bites by wearing long-sleeved shirts and pants. Check all clothing for ticks after being outdoors in wooded areas or areas with tall grass. Experts also recommend avoiding traveling to Areas where mosquito and tick disease outbreaks are occurring.

For more information, visit:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/yellowbook/2016/the-pre-travel-consultation/protection-against-mosquitoes-ticks-other-arthropods>
- Environmental Protect Agency: <https://www.epa.gov/insect-repellents/find-insect-repellent-right-you>

Bullying: Help Your Child Handle a Bully by Wendy Blocker, MSN

Bullying was once considered a childhood rite of passage, but is now recognized as a serious problem.



Types of Bullying

Bullying is a form of aggression in which one or more children repeatedly and intentionally intimidate, harass or harm a victim who is perceived as unable to defend him or herself. Bullying can take many forms, including:

- Physical—hitting, tripping, and kicking, as well as destruction of a child's property
- Verbal—teasing, name-calling, taunting, and making inappropriate sexual comments
- Psychological/Social—spreading rumors, public humiliation, or excluding a child from a group
- Electronic (aka cyberbullying)—using an electronic medium (such as e-mail, websites, a social media platform, text messages, or videos posted on websites or sent through phones) to threaten or harm others

The Consequences of Bullying

- Mental health problems, including increased risk of depression, anxiety, sleep problems, low self-esteem, and thoughts of self-

harm and suicide

- Impaired academic performance, including poor grades, detention or suspension, and dropping out of school
- Substance abuse
- Violence, including carrying weapons at school

Warning Signs of Bullying

If your child is being bullied, he or she might remain quiet out of fear, shame, or embarrassment. Be on the lookout for these warning signs:

- Lost or destroyed clothing, electronics, or other personal belongings
- Sudden loss of friends or avoidance of social situations
- Poor school performance or reluctance to go to school
- Headaches, stomachaches, or other physical complaints
- Trouble sleeping
- Changes in eating habits
- Distress after spending time online or on his or her phone
- Feelings of helplessness or low self-esteem
- Self-destructive behavior, such as running away from home

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Making Positive Nutritional Changes by Beverly Calderon, RD, CDE

If you want to make positive nutritional changes for yourself, it is critical to understand what influences you in regards to food. Evidence shows our eating habits are not shaped by knowledge alone. In order for food behaviors to change, knowledge about the risk of poor eating habits must be meaningful enough to overcome psychosocial, behavioral and environmental barriers. This is because many factors are woven together to create eating habits. The impact of behavioral factors on dietary choices must be considered. This is why altering habits acquired over a lifetime is tough for most people, and yet is a crucial piece of achieving positive change that lasts.



We are what we eat, even before birth. Our preferences for sweet, savory, and salty foods are innate to being human. Likes and dislikes of flavors start in utero, they are influenced by a mom's diet and transported in amniotic fluid to the fetus. Newborns are influenced by flavors in breastmilk, which come from the mom's diet. This impacts acceptance or rejection of foods when introduced. Taste preferences for high-fat, and fat-sugar foods are acquired in infancy, and shaped further by early childhood experiences. Early food experiences are one

of the strands woven together to create our eating habits.

Culture also influences our food choices. It impacts which foods we find pleasing or like, how much we consumed, and preferred combinations.

What can we do?

- Recognize that making positive nutritional changes are impacted by innate preference, early experiences, cultural connections, environment and economic realities, social values and peer groups, food marketing, and misleading nutrition information.
- Realize that throughout life, food likes and dislikes can be changed.
- Acknowledge that positive nutritional changes don't come from telling ourselves to think differently, and yet changing what we think is part of the change process.
- Accept that positive nutritional changes do come from uniquely individual internal experiences, which lead to changing what we think.
- Agree to make positive nutritional changes because, most often, it is easier to give advice than to accept and adopt it.

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What to Do if Your Child is Being Bullied

If you suspect that your child is being bullied, take the situation seriously:

- **Encourage your child to share his or her concerns.** Remain calm, listen in a loving manner, and support your child's feelings. Remind your child that he or she isn't to blame for being bullied.
- **Learn about the situation.** Ask your child to describe how and when the bullying occurs and who is involved. Find out what your child has done to try to stop the bullying, as well as what has or hasn't worked.
- **Teach your child how to respond.** Don't promote retaliation or fighting back against a bully. Instead, your child might try telling the bully to leave him or her alone, walking away to avoid the bully, ignoring the bully, or asking a teacher, coach or other adult for help. Suggest sticking with friends wherever the bullying seems to happen. Likewise, tell your child not to respond to cyberbullying. Use software to block the cyberbully.
- **Talk to your child about technology.** Make sure you know how your child is using the Internet, social media platforms, or his or her phone to interact with others. If your child is being cyberbullied, don't automatically take away electronic privileges. Children might be reluctant to report bullying for fear of having their cellphone or Internet privileges taken away. Your actions could prevent your child from telling you about a future incident.

- **Boost your child's self-confidence.** Encourage your child to build friendships and get involved in activities that emphasize his or her strengths and talents.

Respond to Bullying

- **Record the details.** Write down the details, including the date, who was involved and what specifically happened. Save screenshots, e-mails and texts. Record the facts as objectively as possible.
- **Contact appropriate authorities.** Seek help from your child's principal, teacher, or the school guidance counselor. Report cyberbullying to Web and cellphone service providers or websites. If your child has been physically attacked or otherwise threatened with harm, talk to school officials and call the police.
- **Explain your concerns in a matter-of-fact way.** Instead of laying blame, ask for help to solve the bullying problem. Keep notes on these meetings. Keep in contact with school officials. If the bullying continues, be persistent.
- **Ask for a copy of the school's policy on bullying.** Find out how bullying is addressed in the school's curriculum, as well as how staff members are obligated to respond to known or suspected bullying.

Taking Care of Your Dentures by Steve Riggio, DDS

Dentures are removable prosthetic devices designed and constructed to replace missing teeth. Tooth loss can occur because of dental diseases (such as periodontal disease and tooth decay), developmental effects, trauma, and drug use. Dentures can help restore functions such as chewing, speaking, and restoring your smile.



Adapting to a denture can be difficult, and problems include sore spots, gagging, and difficulty speaking and eating. Some of these challenges can be quickly overcome by practice and repetition. Sore spots can be relieved by your dentist by making minor adjustments to the denture.

There are two main categories of dentures based on the number of teeth needing replacement—removable partial dentures and complete dentures. Complete dentures are used when all of the natural teeth in an arch (upper or lower) are missing. Complete dentures are held in place when a seal forms between the denture base material and the gums. They may also be held in place with dental implants. Partial dentures can be used to replace any number of missing teeth in a dental arch. Removable dentures typically have a metal framework and a plastic base which supports artificial teeth. These appliances are usually attached to adjacent teeth with metal clasps.

Plaque and tartar can build up on dentures just like they do on natural teeth. You should clean and brush your denture daily

with a soft-bristled toothbrush and a non-abrasive cleaner. It is also very important to continue to thoroughly clean your mouth, including gums, cheeks, tongue, and roof of the mouth. Be careful, dentures can break when dropped. Don't wear your dentures at night. At night, put your dentures in water to avoid the materials from getting dry. It is important to see your dentist on a regular basis. Regular visits will help you to keep your mouth and gums healthy and ensure that your dentures are comfortable.

Why Do I Keep Hearing About Gluten? Part I of III by Amy Patterson, PhD

By now, you have probably heard of the “gluten free” diet. Gluten-free foods now make up a \$10 billion dollar (and growing) industry, and many people have opted to cut out gluten from their diets. A recent Gallup poll showed that 1 in 5 Americans say they actively try to include gluten-free foods in their diet, and 17% say they avoid gluten-containing foods entirely. Some people have dismissed the gluten-free diet as an expensive fad based on empty promises of weight loss and improved health, but for millions of people, a gluten-free diet is the only way to relieve serious and debilitating symptoms. This article is the first of a series that will explore what gluten is and why a gluten-free diet is necessary for many people.

Although people often assume gluten is another word for “wheat,” this is not accurate. Gluten is actually a protein found in wheat, rye, barley, and triticale. Some other names for these grains include durum, emmer, spelt, farina, faro, kamut, and einkorn.

A surprisingly high number of foods either contain gluten naturally or have gluten added, which makes it challenging to avoid. Common sources of gluten include pasta, breads, crackers, cereals, gravy, soy sauce, flour tortillas, brewer's yeast, and anything with wheat flour as an ingredient. Many processed foods may contain gluten, including energy bars, French fries, potato chips, lunch meats, candy, soups, tortilla chips, salad dressings, and meat substitutes. Also, beer, ales, lagers, malt beverages, and malt vinegars are often made from gluten-containing grains. Many restaurants often add flour to their foods during preparation, so restaurant meals may not be “gluten free” even if the ingredients aren't made of gluten.

Gluten-free recipes have multiple replacements for wheat, rye, and barley. Gluten-free foods are often made from a variety of grains and staples including amaranth, brown & white rice, buckwheat, almond meal flour, coconut flour, corn, millet, potatoes and potato flour, quinoa, sorghum, soy flour and teff. Even if someone is not trying to avoid gluten, many of these foods can be healthy additions to their diet.

In recent decades, the number of people who suffer from health conditions related to gluten has been increasing. There are a few theories as to why. One is that as the “western” diet has spread, people from cultures that evolved eating rice have replaced much of their diet with wheat-based foods. People also tend to eat more processed wheat products such as pastas and baked goods than in the past, and those items use types of wheat that have a higher gluten content. Wheat crops have been genetically modified over the past few decades to contain a higher amount of gluten peptides, and there is a theory that this modification alone has increased the number of people experiencing gluten-related health problems.

Currently, researchers estimate that about 7-8% of Americans suffer from some type of gluten sensitivity. This includes about 1% of the population that have Celiac disease, an autoimmune disease in which gluten causes serious damage to their intestines. For these people, a gluten-free diet is not a lifestyle choice, it's a necessity. The next newsletter will discuss how Celiac disease is diagnosed and managed.



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