

# 2023 EPSDT

SPECIAL EDITION NEWSLETTER



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## **Your Healthy Source for Living Well**

*Welcome to the 2023 Fall Early and Periodic Screening Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) Newsletter. This newsletter is for parents of EPSDT age children and for young adults up to 21 years of age.*

*At Care1st Health Plan Arizona, we understand how important your health care is to you and your family. We hope that you find the information included in this newsletter to be helpful. It can assist you in helping to know your benefits and resources available to you.*

*We want to thank you for being a member of Care1st Health Plan Arizona.*

Covered services are funded under contract with AHCCCS.

# Get the Most from your Health Plan

At Care1st Health Plan, we put you first. Take control of your health and understand what we have to offer you. Knowing your benefits helps you get the most out of them. Understanding what is available gives you control over your health.

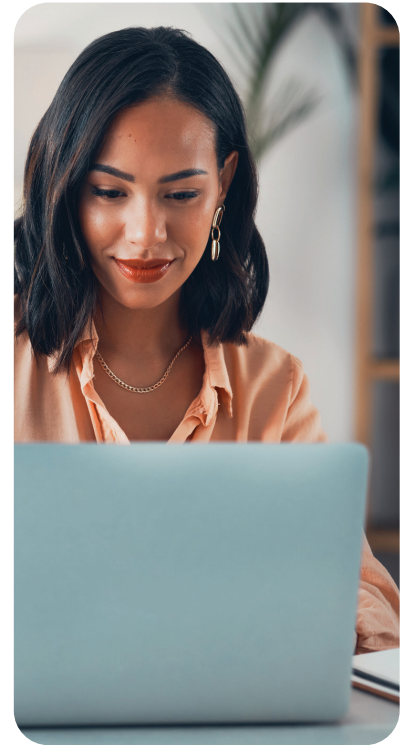
Did you know these covered services are available at no cost to you?

- ◆ Help finding a doctor
- ◆ Help with scheduling appointments
- ◆ Help with transportation to and from appointments
- ◆ Case management services
- ◆ Help with a denied service

Your Member Handbook is a guide that explains your coverage and benefits. It also lists important phone numbers. Request or download a copy today. Member services can mail you a copy at no charge. You can also download a copy from <https://www.care1staz.com/members/medicaid/resources/handbooks-forms.html>.

We are here for you and want you to be healthy. Make the most of your benefits for the best you!

*Oral interpretation and written translation services are available.*



## Asthma: Know the Triggers and Create an Action Plan to Help Your Child



Asthma is a disease that affects the lungs. It is one of the most common long-term diseases of children.

Asthma causes wheezing, breathlessness, chest tightness, and nighttime or early morning coughing. If your child has asthma, he or she has it all the time, but they will have asthma attacks only when something bothers their lungs.

They can have an asthma attack when exposed to something like house dust mites and tobacco smoke. These are called asthma triggers.

Asthma triggers can also include exposure to mold, chemicals and outdoor air pollution.

Asthma can be controlled by knowing the warning signs of an attack, staying away from things that trigger an attack, and following the advice of a doctor.

With a doctor's help, you can create an Asthma Action Plan to help you take care of your child and reduce the triggers in your home.

To learn more, go to <https://www.cdc.gov/asthma/parents.html>.

*Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

# Community Resources for Families

*There are many resources and programs that may be available to help you. These community resources can connect you to a wide range of social services that help you live a better, healthier life.*

## **Women, Infants and Children (WIC)**

**(800) 252-5942**

This program is a no cost nutrition and breastfeeding program. They serve pregnant, breastfeeding, infants and children under 5. To find out more about your eligibility for WIC or to apply, visit

<https://www.azdhs.gov/prevention/azwic/index.php/>

## **Arizona Early Intervention Program (AzEIP)**

**(888) 592-0140**

This program helps families and children birth to 3 years old with disabilities or developmental delays. If you need to refer a child to the program, you can submit a referral online or contact them at 888-592-0140. For more information, visit <https://des.az.gov/azeip>

## **Children's Rehabilitation Services (CRS)**

**(602) 417-4000 or (800) 654-8713**

This program is for AHCCCS-enrolled children and young adults up to 21 years old with qualifying health conditions. CRS helps with medical treatments and support services. An American Indian member can choose to receive CRS services through Care1st or the American Indian Health Plan. Members with Serious Mental Illness (SMI) may also get CRS services. If you need help filling out an application, call 602-417-4545 or 855-333-7828. For more information about the program and qualifying conditions, visit the AHCCCS website at <https://www.azahcccs.gov/Members/GetCovered/Categories/CRS.html>.

## **Mentally Ill Kids in Distress (MIKID)**

This program offers mental health services to youth. It also offers support services for their families. For more information about programs and services visit

<https://www.mikid.org/>

## **Head Start**

**(602) 338-0449**

This program is for children up to 5 years old and pregnant women from low-income families. It helps prepare kids for school. It covers areas such as health, education, and social needs. You can learn more at

[www.azheadstart.org](http://www.azheadstart.org)

## **Birth to Five Helpline**

**(877) 705-5437**

The helpline offers help for parents with children under 5 years old. The helpline provides help with fussiness, sleeping, feeding and more. You can learn more at

<https://www.swhd.org>

## **Raising Special Kids**

**(800) 237-3007**

The program gives support, training, and information to families of children birth to 26 who have special health care needs. You can learn more at

<http://www.raisingpecialkids.org/>

## **Vaccines for Children Program**

This is a program that helps with vaccines at no cost for children and families. To find out more about vaccines and where to locate a clinic visit

<https://whyimmunize.org/where-to-go-for-your-shots/>

## **First Things First**

This program partners with families and communities to support healthy development and learning for children from birth to age 5. To learn more visit

[www.firstthingsfirst.org](http://www.firstthingsfirst.org)

## **Find more Community Resources near you at**

<https://www.care1staz.com/members/medicaid/resources/community-resources.html>

You can call Member Services if you have any questions about community resources

### **Care1st Health Plan Arizona Contact Information**

Member Services **1-866-560-4042 (TTY/TDD: 711)**, between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.

Nurse Advice Line **1-877-236-0375** Website: <https://www.care1staz.com/>



# Fight the Flu



The Flu is a respiratory illness caused by a virus called Influenza. The flu can be passed easily from one person to another and can be serious. People over the age of 65 and children under 5 are at a higher risk of complications from the flu. Those who have chronic medical conditions are also at a higher risk of complications of the flu.

## People who have flu often feel some or all of these symptoms:

- ◆ Fever or feeling feverish/chills (it's important to note that not everyone with flu will have a fever).
- ◆ Cough.
- ◆ Sore throat.
- ◆ Runny or stuffy nose.
- ◆ Muscle or body aches.
- ◆ Headaches.
- ◆ Fatigue (tiredness).
- ◆ Some people may have vomiting and diarrhea, though this is more common in children.

## You do not have to have all these symptoms to have the flu.

Complications of the flu can include worsening medical conditions and even death.

Flu shots are best to get in September or October. Flu season peaks in the cold months and will benefit you most if gotten early. The best way to protect yourself and loved ones from the flu is to get a flu shot. The flu shot is approved for people older than 6 months.

Talk to your healthcare provider if you have questions or need more information. Wash your hands often and stay home if you are sick. You too can fight the flu!

*\*\*Source Center for Disease Control and Prevention*



## Vaccines: What Should Parents Know?

Vaccines (shots) starting at 2 months of age help protect children from potentially deadly diseases.

### Get all the facts

**Fact:** Most vaccine side effects are minor, such as a sore arm or mild fever, and don't last long. The risk of a harmful side effect is tiny compared to serious disease if your child is not vaccinated.

**Fact:** Many scientific studies have found no link between the vaccine and autism.

**Fact:** Vaccines given together have no greater risk of side effects. But, you can ask your doctor for a combination vaccine to reduce the number of shots your child will need.

Before you decide to delay or refuse shots because of something you've heard or read, talk with your doctor.

### If your child is not up to date on all vaccines

*Now is the time to see your doctor and get caught up. It's not too late!*

*Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

# Lead Poisoning

Exposure to too much lead can harm anyone. Health problems caused by lead include:



- ◆ Kidney damage
- ◆ High blood pressure
- ◆ Anemia
- ◆ Slow reflexes
- ◆ Brain and nervous system damage

## You and your family are at risk for lead poisoning if:

- ◆ You live in or often visit a home that may have been built before 1978.
- ◆ You sand or strip old paint, or refinish old furniture.
- ◆ You live with someone who works where lead is found (car repair, construction, mining, welding or plumbing).
- ◆ You use imported pottery, traditional medicine or cosmetics, or Asian, Hispanic or Indian spices.
- ◆ You buy candies from Mexico.

## Pregnant women and children should be extra careful around lead.

Exposure to lead during pregnancy can harm you and your unborn baby. Lead can affect a child's IQ and attention span forever. Young children are most at risk because they put things in their mouths.

## Your doctor will:

- ◆ Ask questions to see if you or your child is at risk for lead poisoning.
- ◆ Order a routine blood lead test on your child at 12 and 24 months of age, or at other times if there is a risk of lead poisoning.

Source: Arizona Department of Health Services

# Early Periodic Screening Diagnostic & Treatment (EPSDT)

## What is the EPSDT Program?

**Early** – Finding problems early

**Periodic** – Checking members' health at regular well visits screening – Offering physical, mental, dental, hearing, vision, and other well checks

**Diagnostic** – Run tests when a problem is found

**Treatment** – Treat, fix, or reduce health problems

**EPSDT** is a wellness program for members up to the age of 21. The EPSDT Visit is the same as a Well Child Visit. The program helps children receive services they need. It includes preventive, dental, mental health, developmental, and specialty services at no cost to you.

## EPSDT\* Wellness Program Covers:

- ◆ wellness visits
- ◆ inpatient and outpatient /hospital services
- ◆ laboratory and x-ray services
- ◆ physician services including naturopathic services, and nurse practitioner services
- ◆ medications
- ◆ dental services
- ◆ therapy services
- ◆ behavioral health services
- ◆ medical equipment
- ◆ medical appliances and medical supplies
- ◆ orthotics (for foot and ankle concerns)
- ◆ prosthetic devices
- ◆ eyeglasses
- ◆ transportation
- ◆ family planning services and supplies
- ◆ well woman preventive care services
- ◆ maternity care services

\*EPSDT also includes diagnostic, screening, preventive, and rehabilitative services



## Well Child Visits

Each child and family are unique. It is important to attend EPSDT visits as recommended in the table located in this article. Well child visits are recommended once per year with more frequent visits prior to 3 years. Make sure to talk with your primary care provider about a schedule for well child visits.

### Your child's well visit will include:

- ◆ Health and growth history
- ◆ Unclothed physical exam
- ◆ Review diet and nutrition
- ◆ Development assessment
- ◆ Behavioral health screening and services
- ◆ Oral health screening
- ◆ Vision testing
- ◆ Hearing and speech evaluation
- ◆ Assessment for vaccines as appropriate for age and health history
- ◆ Laboratory testing as needed
- ◆ Tobacco/substance use, and/or dependency services
- ◆ Referral for additional services if needed for further diagnosis and treatment

### Well Child Visit Schedule Checklist

◆ <b>Newborn</b>	◆ <b>9 months</b> - includes a General Developmental Screening
◆ <b>3 to 5 days</b>	◆ <b>12 months</b> - includes a Blood Lead Screening
◆ <b>1 month</b>	◆ <b>15 months</b>
◆ <b>2 months</b>	◆ <b>18 months</b> - includes a General Developmental Screening & Autism Spectrum Disorder Screening
◆ <b>4 months</b>	◆ <b>24 months</b> - includes a General Developmental Screening & Autism Spectrum Disorder Screening, and a Blood Lead Screening
◆ <b>6 months</b>	◆ <b>30 months</b> - includes a Developmental Screening
For children ages 3 up to 21 years, well visits are recommended once per year.	



## Dental Visits are recommended twice per year.

### Dental visits include:

- ◆ Examination of the mouth
- ◆ X-Rays
- ◆ Check for cavities
- ◆ Evaluate the need for extra fluoride (Fluoride helps prevent cavities)
- ◆ Check oral hygiene (go over brushing and flossing if needed)
- ◆ Evaluate diet and nutrition
- ◆ Counseling for non-nutritive habits
- ◆ Counseling for injury prevention
- ◆ Substance use counseling
- ◆ Counseling for piercings in and/or around the mouth
- ◆ Evaluate for dental sealants (sealants are a protective coating applied to the tooth)
- ◆ Cleaning and apply fluoride to teeth

### Dental Visit Schedule

◆ <b>First dental visit by 12 Months</b>
◆ <b>Every 6 months after first visit up to 21 years</b>



Going to the doctor, going to the dentist—all part of taking care of your child's health. But going to the eye doctor? Also important! Eye exams at every age and life stage can help keep your child's vision strong.

Did you know that the EPSDT vision coverage also includes yearly eye exams and glasses? It does! It also covers repair or replacement of broken or lost glasses. And if the child's prescription has changed, they are eligible for replacement glasses too.

When should your child's vision be checked? Your child should be checked for vision problems during their well child visit. Their doctor may recommend and refer your child to get additional testing by an ophthalmologist or optometrist. Having your child's vision checked is especially important if someone in your family has had vision problems.



### Some signs of vision loss are:

- ♦ close or cover one eye
- ♦ squint the eyes or frown
- ♦ complain that things are blurry or hard to see
- ♦ have trouble reading or doing other close-up work, or hold objects close to eyes in order to see
- ♦ blink more than usual or seem cranky when doing close-up work (like looking at books)

Get tips on protecting your child's vision at

<https://www.cdc.gov/visionhealth/resources/features/vision-health-children.html>.

For more information on the recommended vision screening periodicity schedule, visit:

[https://downloads.aap.org/AAP/PDF/periodicity\\_schedule.pdf?\\_ga=2.235007041.1507615600.1655852214-1900763535.1655852214](https://downloads.aap.org/AAP/PDF/periodicity_schedule.pdf?_ga=2.235007041.1507615600.1655852214-1900763535.1655852214)

Source: American Academy of Pediatrics, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



## Sleeping Safety and Keeping Your Baby Safe

Keeping your baby safe starts with you. You can protect your baby from Sudden Unexpected Infant Death (SUID) during naps and at night. Here are things you can do to keep your baby safe.

- ♦ Avoid cigarettes, alcohol and drug use during pregnancy and after birth.
- ♦ Place your baby on their back to sleep at all times. Do this every time your baby sleeps, including naps. When your baby is 1 year old, or once they can roll from back to front and from stomach to back again on their own, you can leave them in the position they choose.
- ♦ Share your room, not your bed. You should sleep in the same room as your baby until your baby is at least 6 months old. This will also make it easier for you to feed, comfort and monitor your baby.
- ♦ Use a firm, flat sleep surface, like a crib or bassinet. Never use a pillow or sleep positioner. Soft surfaces can increase sleep-related deaths.
- ♦ Keep blankets, pillows, soft toys and bumpers out of your baby's sleep area.
- ♦ Keep the room cool. The temperature in the room should be comfortable for an adult in a short-sleeved shirt.
- ♦ Pacifiers have been shown to reduce sleep-related deaths.
- ♦ Keep your baby up to date with vaccines.
- ♦ Never put your infant to sleep in a carrier/stroller/car seat. They should always sleep in their own bassinet or crib.

**Make sure others who care for your child know how to protect your baby, too!**

Sources: American Academy of Pediatrics, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and US Department of Health and Human Services



# Battling Obesity: Understanding Healthy Weight



Healthy eating and physical activity are important for your child's growth and to prevent health problems caused by obesity (being overweight).

Overweight kids are at a higher risk for health problems. Some of these problems include diabetes, high blood pressure and heart problems. Understanding your child's weight is one thing you can do to help your child maintain a healthy weight.

Body Mass Index (BMI) is a tool to calculate a person's body fat, based on their weight and height. As your child grows, their BMI will change often. Tracking BMI helps to make sure your child is maintaining a healthy weight. Family history, diet and physical activity are all related to weight. Here are some things you can do to ensure your child is at a healthy weight.

- Ensure your child is physically active
  - Young kids aged 3-5 should be active throughout the day
  - Older kids and teens should get 1 hour a day of activity
- Eat a healthy diet
  - Limit fast food and prepackaged meals and snacks (think fresh food))
  - Serve fruits and vegetables at every meal and for a snack
- Get regular check-ups with your child's doctor
  - You can discuss any concerns you may have



Being active is anything from running around and playing, swimming, to taking a brisk walk.

Talk to your kids about the importance of a healthy weight. Model a healthy lifestyle by staying active and eating well. Make healthy habits a family affair and everyone will benefit.

*\*\*Sources Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*



# Healthy Smiles, Healthy Bodies

According to the Arizona Department of Health Services, more than half of Arizona kindergarten children and two out of three third-graders have had tooth decay (cavities).

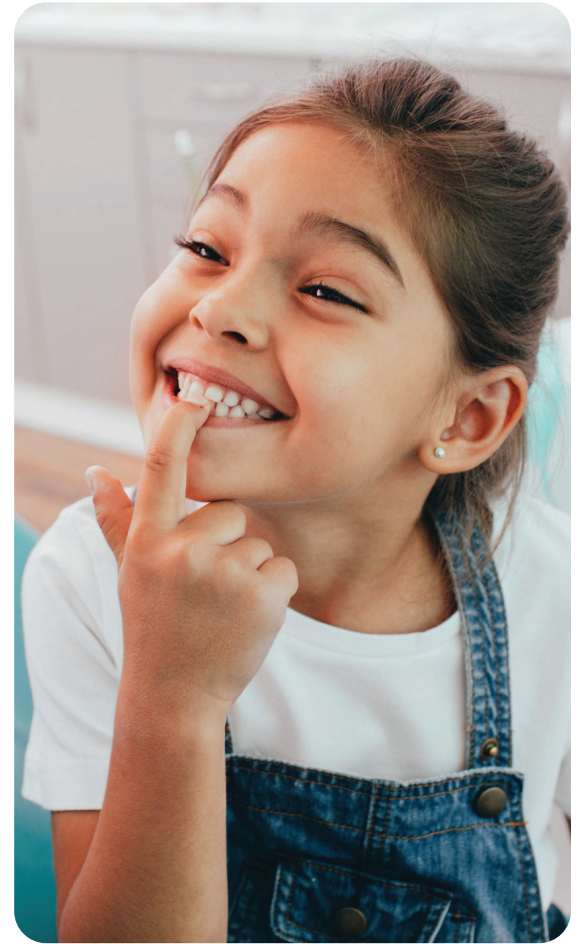
## **Tooth decay can cause:**

- ♦ Pain
- ♦ Failure to thrive and impaired speech development
- ♦ Poor school performance and poor social relationships
- ♦ Missed days at school

Healthy mouths are linked to healthy bodies. Dental services are a benefit for Care1st members up to the age of 21. Each member is assigned a dental home at the age of 6 months. New members are assigned when they enroll. A dental home is a dental office for all of your child's dental needs. This dental provider can get to know your child and give him or her the best care.

## **Here are some things you can do to keep your child's mouth healthy:**

- ♦ Wipe gums twice a day for infants with no teeth
- ♦ Brush teeth twice a day using a fluoride toothpaste
- ♦ Floss every day
- ♦ Limit sugary foods and sugary drinks, such as juice
- ♦ Take your child to the dentist when you see their first tooth
- ♦ Ask about a dental guard if your child plays sports
- ♦ Ask your dentist about fluoride and sealants
- ♦ Don't let babies sleep with a bottle in their mouth



## **Fluoride – Extra protection for teeth**

Fluoride helps make teeth stronger and helps protect teeth from cavities. You may be asked about this at your child's doctor visit. Fluoride can be applied every three months between the ages of 6 months and 2 years. A PCP (Primary Care Physician) or dentist can apply fluoride varnish.

Dentists can also apply fluoride varnish at a preventive dental visit every six months for members 12 months up to 21 years of age. Talk to you or your child's dentist about other sources of fluoride!

## **Sealants- Extra protection for molars**

Dental sealants are thin coatings that when painted on the chewing surfaces of the back teeth (molars) can prevent cavities for many years.

## **Need Help Getting to the Doctor or Dentist?**

Care1st can provide that to you at no cost.

*Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Arizona Department of Health Services, American Academy of Pediatrics*



How you feel and how you think. How you relate to your friends and family. What you think of yourself. All of these things make up your mental health. When even just one thing seems “off,” it is okay to ask for help.

Talking about mental health can be scary. Let your children know it is okay to talk about how they feel, even if it is not “normal.”

Starting the conversation is hard. Here are some ways to open up communication:

- Encourage self-care such as getting enough sleep and physical activity.
- Help them to eat good food to nourish the body.
- Encourage them to write down how they are feeling (journaling) and to connect with others when they can.
- Remind them to be kind to themselves and it is okay to ask for help.

Help is available. Telehealth services are available. Here are some resources for you and your family:

## Phone

- 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline:  
988 (call or text)  
Chat: <https://988lifeline.org/talk-to-someone-now/>
- National Substance Use and Disorder Issues Referral and Treatment Hotline:  
**1-800-662-HELP (4357)**
- Arizona Statewide Crisis Line:  
1-844-534-HOPE (4673)  
Text HOPE to 4HOPE (44673)  
Chat: <http://crisis.solaris-inc.org/start-a-chat/>
- Teen Life Line phone or text:  
**1-800-248-TEEN (8336)**

## Crisis Text Line

- Text the word "HOME" to **741741**

Crisis lines are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Crisis lines are available to anyone. Insurance coverage does not matter.

Sources: Arizona Department of Health Services, [www.ahcccs.gov](http://www.ahcccs.gov)

## Talk to Your Kids - They Listen

Talking to your child or teen about hard things can be difficult. Some topics may seem like adult issues, but it is never too early to start talking to your kids about them. Some of these topics may include:

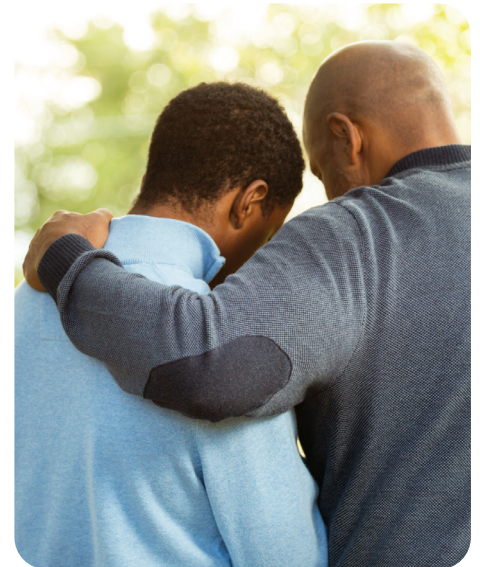
- ♦ Drugs
- ♦ Alcohol
- ♦ Tobacco
- ♦ Social media
- ♦ Teen pregnancy
- ♦ Sexually Transmitted Diseases
- ♦ Bullying

There is no easy way to have these conversations. Here are some ideas to get started:

- ♦ Teach them your values
- ♦ Listen to what they have to say
- ♦ Talk with them honestly and openly
- ♦ Educate them
- ♦ Talk, don't lecture

Talk with your child early and honestly. Listen to them and ask them questions. When you listen to them, they will listen to you. You can also speak to your child's doctor about depression, self-injury and suicide prevention. They can also provide more resources for you and your teen.

Sources: US Department of Health and Human Services and American Society for Addiction Medicine





# Know Where to Go for Care



You want to take good care of yourself and your family. Part of this is knowing where to go for care when one of you is hurt or sick. Read on to learn more about where to go for treatment for different issues. This way, you can get the right care at the right place and the right time.

## Primary Care Provider (PCP)

A PCP is a person's main doctor. This provider is for non-emergency care. See a PCP when you or your child needs a vaccine, a yearly checkup or help with colds or the flu. They can also help with health issues like asthma or diabetes. When making an appointment, you should expect to see your PCP within 21 days for routine care and 2 business days for urgent appointments. To find a PCP, use the [Find a Doctor](#) tool to search our directory of in-network PCPs, physicians, hospitals, drug stores and other health care providers who can help you or your child achieve health care goals.

## 24/7 Nurse Advice Line

Medical experts can answer health questions about you or your child and help set up doctor visits. Use this option if you need help caring for a sick child or to know if you should see your PCP. Call **1-877-236-0375 (TTY/TDD: 711)**.

## 24/7 Telehealth Services

Get expert care by phone or video. This option is for less severe health issues such as sinus problems, colds, skin problems or the flu. Check with your or your child's PCP on available telehealth services. You can also use our Teladoc program to connect with in-network providers at any time. Call Teladoc at **1-800-835-2362 (TTY/TDD: 711)** or go to [www.teladoc.com/care1staz/](http://www.teladoc.com/care1staz/).

## In-Network Urgent Care Center

If your PCP's office is closed, you or your child can visit an urgent care center to get care for a health issue that is noncritical. This includes flu symptoms with vomiting, ear infections, high fevers, and sprains.

## Emergency Room (ER)

Consider all the options when choosing where to go for medical care. Many are surprised to learn that this is often not the ER. This care option is for issues that are life threatening. This includes:

- Severe headache or vomiting, especially following a head injury
- Bleeding that does not stop
- Inability to stand up or unsteady walking
- Unconsciousness
- Abnormal or difficult breathing
- Skin or lips that look blue or purple or gray
- Feeding or eating difficulties
- Suicidal or homicidal feelings
- Increasing or severe, persistent pain
- Gun or knife wounds
- Chest pains or heart attack symptoms
- Fever accompanied by change in behavior (especially with a severe, sudden headache accompanied by mental changes, neck/back stiffness)
- Any significant change from normal behavior:
  - Confusion or delirium
  - Decreasing responsiveness or alertness
  - Excessive sleepiness
  - Irritability
  - Seizure
  - Strange or withdrawn behavior
  - Lethargy

To find a PCP that is right for you or your child, call Care1st Health Plan Arizona Monday- Friday from 8AM to 5PM at **1-866-560-4042 (TTY/TDD: 711)**.

To learn more about emergencies, visit: [When Your Child needs Emergency Medical Services](#) and [10 Things for Parents to Know Before Heading to the ER](#).