

STAYING CONNECTED

SPRING 2024

IBEW/Western Utilities Health & Welfare Trust Fund

Schedule a Preventive Care Visit With Your Primary Care Physician

Some people come up with lots of excuses in order to avoid seeing a doctor. But when you're ill, and even when you're not, it's important that you see your primary care physician (PCP) so that your illness is properly treated and you receive the care you need to avoid any future ailments, illnesses, or diseases.

By getting annual preventive services, i.e., checkups, you allow your PCP to perform medical exams, screenings, and tests that can provide a snapshot of your health status and help them detect early signs of emerging health issues, such as heart disease, high blood pressure, and even cancer, before they become harder to manage and costly to treat.

Don't wait any longer to prioritize your health. If you haven't done so already, book an appointment for a preventive care visit with your PCP today.

If you're enrolled in the Cigna OAP plan and need to find a network doctor near you, visit mycigna.com. If you're enrolled in the Kaiser HMO plan, visit kp.org.

News Briefs:

- Reminder about lab testing: Quest Diagnostics (Quest) and Laboratory Corporation of America (LabCorp) offer discounted costs for lab testing. Be sure to tell your doctor. They can find the closest facilities by referring to mycigna.com or by contacting Quest and LabCorp directly (Quest at 800-377-7220 or questdiagnostics.com, and LabCorp at 888-522-2677 or labcorp.com).
- Reach out if you need us. Call the Administrative Office at 855-617-2478 if you have any questions about your benefits.

The Value of the PCP-Patient Relationship

When you have a primary care physician (PCP), your relationship with them is integral to your health and medical needs. A PCP will be directly involved with your care and act as your main health care provider in nonemergency situations, like when you need an annual preventive care visit, or you have a minor illness or aches and pains. Even if you only see a PCP a few times each year, they will get to know **you**, which can be extremely valuable. By intensely following your health journey and keeping records, a PCP who knows you can:

- Be more attuned to your health and know when something is not quite right
- Recognize the signs of mental health struggles, such as depression, that a physician who only sees you once cannot pick up on
- Be heavily involved in all levels of your care
- Connect with any other health care providers from whom you receive care, and work with them to develop a plan for you that leads to a healthy outcome
- Keep track of your medications, recognize harmful drug interactions, and monitor you if necessary

The value of having a PCP is priceless, so if you do not have one yet, do not miss out on the opportunity to have your very own partner in health.





Achieving Sustainable Good Health

A healthy diet is essential to achieving sustainable good health. That's why it's important for you to eat healthy, balanced meals.

A healthy diet consists of a variety of foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat dairy products. It should also include a variety of proteins like seafood, lean meat and poultry, eggs, legumes (beans and peas), soy products, nuts, and seeds, and it should be low in sugar, sodium, saturated fats, trans fats, and cholesterol.

When deciding what to eat or drink, be sure to choose options that are full of the nutrients your body needs to sustain good health. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) agree that the key principles of a healthy diet are:

- **Eating a variety of foods** to ensure an adequate intake of nutrients
- **Eating plenty of fruits and vegetables** each day
- **Consuming whole grains, nuts, and healthy fats** rich in unsaturated fatty acids
- **Reducing the intake of saturated fats** to prevent unhealthy weight gain. Saturated fats should be reduced to less than 10% of total energy intake.
- **Limiting sugar intake** to less than 10% or to less than 5% of total energy for additional health benefits. This would be equivalent to 50 grams or 25 grams per day, respectively.
- **Cutting salt** to less than 5 grams (equivalent to one teaspoon) per day
- **Drinking water regularly** for good hydration, which is crucial for optimal health
- **Avoiding alcohol consumption**

Also try to avoid fad diets. They promise fast results, but they can limit your nutritional intake, be unhealthy, and tend to fail in the long run.

The benefits of healthy eating add up over time, bite by bite. Dietary guidelines can be found on the U.S. Department of Agriculture's website at [dietaryguidelines.gov](https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov).

Access at Your Fingertips

Now you can find all the information you need quickly and easily via web or app.

- Via the web:
 - You can learn about your benefits, connect to provider sites, and more, when you visit our website, ibew-west.com.
 - You can see answers to commonly asked questions the Fund receives by accessing the Learning Library at onlinelearninglibrary.com/ibew-west.
- Download these apps, so you can access information on the go, whenever you want, wherever you are:
 - **myCigna:** Find care, and view plan coverage, authorizations, and ID cards. Spanish and English languages are both supported.
 - **Kaiser Permanente:** Schedule, view, and cancel routine appointments, fill prescriptions, view lab and appointment histories, and more.
 - **Sav-Rx Mobile:** Experience a seamless and convenient way to manage and track medication refills, download your pharmacy ID card, view claims history, compare medication costs, and more. Scan the QR code to get started on the Sav-Rx Patient Portal.
 - **Delta Dental Mobile:** View and share your ID card from your phone, find a dentist, get cost estimates for common dental services that dentists charge in your area, and more.

Apps are available for download via the App Store, Google Play, or the Amazon Appstore.

app.savrx.com/login



Don't Underestimate the Value of Dental and Vision Exams!

When you think of preventive care, do you factor in dental and vision exams? You should! Taking care of your oral and vision health may help you avoid a multitude of health conditions.

- **Dental exams** offer insight into your overall health and catch cavities before they become bigger issues (filling versus root canal). Furthermore, medical evidence suggests there's a major connection between your oral health and your overall health. For instance, a high percentage of health conditions have an oral component, like swollen or bleeding gums, ulcers, dry mouth, bad breath, metallic taste, and various other changes in the oral cavity. Surprisingly, more than 120 medical conditions—many of them life-threatening—can be detected in the early stages by a dentist, including diabetes, cancer, heart disease, kidney disease, thyroid problems, high blood pressure, asthma, sleep and breathing disorders, skin rashes, bruxism (teeth grinding), HIV, tuberculosis, drug abuse, anorexia, digestive disorders, and upper respiratory problems.
- **Vision exams** are also a key component to identifying the condition of your health. During a routine eye exam, an eye doctor can detect the signs of health conditions like high blood pressure, diabetes, and high cholesterol—along with other eye and health issues. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), early eye treatment is critically important in preventing permanent vision loss or blindness due to cataracts, diabetic retinopathy, glaucoma, and age-related macular degeneration. Regular eye care can have a life-changing impact on preserving vision.

The Q&A Corner

Q. Dental sealants are known to come off during a lifetime, so why are they covered only once?

A. Sealants are plastic coverings applied to the deep crevices of teeth to seal them off from decay. Generally, children and teenagers ages 6 to 15 are the best candidates for sealants. The Plan covers sealants up to age 19, and coverage is limited to permanent molars if they are without cavities or restorations on the occlusal surface. Coverage for dental sealants does not include repair or replacement of a sealant on any tooth within two years of its application.

Remember, questions and answers are being posted in the Learning Library at onlinelearninglibrary.com/ibew-west.





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Take Your Medication As Directed

Stop! Have you taken your medication today? It's understandable if taking your medication slips your mind occasionally, but it's important to your long-term health that you take your medicine in the manner prescribed by your doctor. Medication adherence and compliance is key to controlling and managing health issues, including chronic conditions like type 2 diabetes and arthritis. If you have any concerns or trouble sticking to your daily routine, reach out to your doctor or pharmacist for assistance. For additional information about your prescription drug benefit, call Sav-Rx at **866-233-IBEW**, and speak with a live IBEW Union Sav-Rx representative.

If you have any questions about the Plan or the benefits available to you, call the Administrative Office at 855-617-2478.

Who Are You Trying to Reach?	Contact Information
Administrative Office (BeneSys)	staff@ibew-west.com
PacifiCorp Employee Benefits Department	Email: benefits.services@pacificorp.com Enrollment Site: pacificorpactive.hrntouch.com
Cigna—OAP and Behavioral Health Services	mycigna.com Employer ID: westernutilities
Sav-Rx—Prescription Services	savrx.com 866-233-IBEW
MDLIVE	mycigna.com 888-726-3171
Cigna—Employee Assistance Program	877-622-4327
Talkspace (counseling via text, voice, or video)	mycigna.com 877-622-4327 Employer ID: westernutilities
HealthEquity—Health Savings Account	healthequity.com
Kaiser—HMO Network	kp.org
Delta Dental	deltadentalins.com

The information provided in this **Staying Connected** newsletter is of a general nature only and does not replace or alter the official rules and policies contained in the official plan documents that legally govern the terms and operation of the plans.

If this newsletter differs in any way from the official plan documents, the official plan documents always govern. Receipt of this newsletter does not guarantee benefits eligibility.