

# YOUR Health

Los Angeles County Department of Health Services • Public Health

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## Physical Activity Is Important For Everyone, Including People With Disabilities

**“Exercise is for EVERY body.”**

*—The National Center on Physical Activity and Disability ([www.nepad.org](http://www.nepad.org))*

This slogan reminds us – including people with disabilities – that physical activity is important for maintaining and improving overall health. Regular exercise can increase heart and lung function, protect against chronic disease, decrease anxiety and depression, help control one’s weight, and lower cholesterol and blood pressure. Studies show that people with disabilities do not exercise as much as the rest of the population.

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## “Gateway Program” Provides Free Health Insurance for Children

Beginning July 1, 2003, the county’s Child Health and Disability Prevention (CHDP) Program will become a “gateway” for children less than 19 years of age by helping them enroll in Medi-Cal and Healthy Families.\* This new CHDP Gateway Program will automatically enroll eligible children into no cost, fee-for-service Medi-Cal for up to two months. For example, if your child goes in for a CHDP exam on July 15th, he/she will receive health insurance coverage from that day until the end of the following month (See below for description of a “CHDP exam”).

During the CHDP exam, the child’s family can also ask to receive a “joint Healthy Families/Medi-Cal application” by mail. If you complete and mail in this application

before your child’s temporary Medi-Cal runs out, Medi-Cal benefits will be extended until it is determined whether your family qualifies for Medi-Cal or Healthy Families. Even if your child is not eligible for Medi-Cal or Healthy Families, he/she can still receive CHDP services.

### Child Health and Disability Prevention Program

The CHDP Program provides free preventive health examinations (CHDP exams) to children throughout Los Angeles County. Eligible children include those from low-income families who do not have health insurance and are under 19 years of age. During a CHDP exam, children receive screenings for vision, dental and hearing; nutrition assessments; tests for diabetes and



anemia and much more. If a health problem is found during a CHDP exam, children without Medi-Cal or other health insurance are referred to a county clinic or a Public Private Partnership (PPP) provider.

### Find a CHDP provider near you

There are more than 2,000 health care providers in the county who are approved to provide CHDP examinations. The CHDP provider will provide you with information about the CHDP Gateway process and how to get help in applying for low-cost health insurance. To find a CHDP health care provider near you please call 1-800-993-2437 or visit the CHDP web site at <http://lapublichealth.org/chdp/>.

#### \*Key words:

*Medi-Cal is California’s version of Medicaid, a no-cost insurance program for children and adults with low-income, such as the elderly, disabled, and those receiving public assistance.*

*Healthy Families is a low cost insurance program that provides health, dental and vision coverage to families who do not have insurance and do not qualify for no-cost Medi-Cal.*

# Eating Raw Oysters Can Cause Serious Illness and Even Death

Each year, Californians become seriously ill, and even die, after eating raw oysters harvested from states bordering the Gulf of Mexico (Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas). Raw oysters from these states may be contaminated with bacteria called *Vibrio vulnificus* (*V. vulnificus*). During the warm summer months, *V. vulnificus* is at its highest levels in Gulf Coast waters.

Since 1983, there have been 75 illnesses resulting in 49 deaths reported in California associated with raw oysters.

Persons with certain chronic diseases, especially those associated with liver disease, are at high-risk. In the U.S., more than half of the individuals who become ill die.

## New Requirement For Sellers Of Raw Oysters

Effective May 1, 2003, the California Department of Health Services has limited the sale of raw oysters from the Gulf of Mexico to prevent *V. vulnificus* illnesses and deaths associated with their consumption.

According to the new requirement, raw oysters harvested from the Gulf of Mexico between April 1 and October 31 may not be sold in California unless the oysters are treated to reduce *V. vulnificus* to non-detectable levels.

California food businesses that sell raw oysters from the Gulf are required to provide warning signs (see below) if the Gulf oysters are harvested during the months of November through March. However, if the Gulf oysters have been treated, no warning signs are required.



**The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) offers these suggestions regarding raw oysters.**

- Do not eat oysters or other shellfish that are raw.
- Cook shellfish (oysters, clams, mussels) thoroughly. For shellfish in the shell, either:
  - Boil until the shells open and continue boiling for 5 more minutes, or
  - Steam until the shells open and then continue cooking for 9 more minutes. Do not eat those shellfish that do not open during cooking. Boil shucked oysters at least 3 minutes, or fry them in oil at least 10 minutes at 375°F.
- Avoid cross-contamination of cooked seafood and other foods with raw seafood and juices from raw seafood.
- Eat shellfish promptly after cooking and refrigerate leftovers.
- Avoid exposure of open wounds or broken skin to warm salt water, or to raw shellfish harvested from such water.
- Wear protective clothing (e.g., gloves) when handling raw shellfish.

## WARNING:

“THIS FACILITY OFFERS RAW OYSTERS FROM THE GULF OF MEXICO. EATING THESE OYSTERS MAY CAUSE SEVERE ILLNESS AND EVEN DEATH IN PERSONS WHO HAVE LIVER DISEASE (FOR EXAMPLE ALCOHOLIC CIRRHOSIS), CANCER OR OTHER CHRONIC ILLNESSES THAT WEAKEN THE IMMUNE SYSTEM. If you eat raw oysters and become ill, you should seek immediate medical attention. If you are unsure if you are at risk, you should consult your physician.”

For more information, please call the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Seafood Hotline at 1-800-332-4010 or visit the CDC Web site at [http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dbmd/diseaseinfo/vibriovulnificus\\_g.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dbmd/diseaseinfo/vibriovulnificus_g.htm)

## FAIR OFFERS FREE INFORMATION, RESOURCES FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

People caring for children with special health care needs are encouraged to attend the 8<sup>th</sup> CCS Pediatric Equipment and Resource Fair this summer. Parents, families, health educators and health care providers will benefit from the wealth of information at the fair, which is sponsored by Los Angeles County's California Children's Services, Medical Therapy Program. The bi-annual event showcases goods and services from more than 50 vendors specializing in products such as wheelchairs, walkers, arm and leg braces, and adaptive toys. The fair also provides educational seminars on a variety of topics including trust planning, adaptive driving, and animal assistance for children with special needs. Free refreshments, entertainment, and parking are available.

Date: Thursday, August 21, 2003

Time: 9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Place: Alfonso Perez Special Education Center  
4540 Michigan Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90022

Contact: Lisa Carroll Mena, Physical Therapy Education Coordinator, 626-569-6442

## Physical Activity: *Continued from page 1*

According to the Research and Training Center on Independent Living, regular physical activity can help people with disabilities reach other important goals, such as maintaining the ability to live independently, work, and parent; and increasing stamina and strength. Physical activity can also provide a chance to meet people and make friends.

Physical activity programs can be suited to an individual's needs and limitations.

### The best exercises for persons with spinal cord injuries are:

- Aerobic exercise to maintain cardiovascular health (such as wheelchair aerobics).
- Weight/Strength training to maintain the ability to perform activities of daily living and mobility, as well as to prevent injury through muscular balance.
- Flexibility training (stretching) to improve range of motion.

### Important Safety Tips Before Starting An Exercise Program

- Consult with your physician before starting any new physical activity.
- Regularly check your blood pressure, heart rate, and symptoms. Stop exercising if you feel pain or discomfort.
- Don't exercise if you are ill (i.e., cold, flu, bladder infection, pressure ulcer).
- Check medications and their effect on your tolerance to exercise.

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### Here are a few local programs that serve people with disabilities:

#### Frank D. Lanterman Regional Center

3440 Wilshire Blvd. Suite 400, Los Angeles, California 90010  
Contact: 213-383-1300  
Resource for people with disabilities in the Los Angeles area.

#### Program Northridge Hospital Wheelchair Sports Programs

NHMC-Therapeutic Recreation Dept.,  
18300 Roscoe Blvd., Los Angeles, California 91325  
Contact: 818-885-8500 ext. 3610  
Offers wheelchair hockey, quad rugby and wheelchair tennis.

#### Crown House - Ability First

3055 E. Del Mar Blvd., Pasadena, California 91107  
Contact: 626-440-9090 or dtrevino@abilityfirst.org  
Web site: <http://www.abilityfirst.org>  
Camp for disabled kids. Camp is coed, and the minimum age is 7. Also provides sports groups, and recreational groups. English and Spanish spoken.

#### Ann Samson at the Westside Family YMCA

11311 La Grange Avenue, Los Angeles, California 90025, USA  
Contact: (310) 477-1511 or [pllus@ymcala.org](mailto:pllus@ymcala.org)  
The PLLUS program is designed to maximize flexibility, posture and functional mobility for Parkinson's patients, in a social support group setting providing positive physical, mental and emotional stimulation.

#### "The Unrecables" (Los Angeles Chapter of Disabled Sports USA)

Web Site: [home.earthlink.net/%7Eunrecables/](http://home.earthlink.net/%7Eunrecables/)  
4920 Van Nuys Blvd, #131, Sherman Oaks, CA 91403  
Contact: 818-986-3830 or [unrecables@earthlink.net](mailto:unrecables@earthlink.net)  
Offers alpine skiing at Mammoth Mountain, whitewater rafting, camping, water skiing, Hollywood Bowl, concerts, and parties for people with disabilities.

### Living Independently in Los Angeles (LILA)

Web Site: <http://lila.ucla.edu/>

This web site provides resources for people with disabilities living in Los Angeles County. Using your zip code, the web site will provide the resources located nearest to you. For physical activity resources in your local area, click on "Assets" and then "Entertainment/Social Activities."

For more information, please call The National Center on Physical Activity and Disability at 1-800-900-8086 or visit the [www.ncpad.org](http://www.ncpad.org)



# Ask the Public Health Nurse

"Ask the Public Health Nurse" is a brand-new feature of "Your Health". In each issue, Public Health Nurses (PHNs) from the Los Angeles County health department will answer a common health-related question.

**QUESTION:** *I am pregnant and plan on traveling this summer. Is there any advice I should know about before I go?*

**ANSWER:** With summer here, many pregnant women are making travel plans for vacation and to visit relatives. A pregnant woman should talk with her health provider before making any travel plans.

The safest time for a pregnant woman to travel is 18 through 24 weeks of her pregnancy. During these weeks, she usually feels her best and is least likely to experience a miscarriage or premature labor. A woman in the last three months of her pregnancy should stay within 300 miles of home, so she will have medical care in case of problems.

Once a pregnant woman decides to travel, she needs to consider many things before leaving. Here is a list for the pregnant traveler to plan a healthy and safe trip.

## Guidelines for the Pregnant Traveler

- Travel with at least one companion.
- Realize you may be less comfortable traveling than you are at home and be prepared to change your routine accordingly. For example, rest more frequently; bring "comfort items" (such as a favorite pillow) with you on your travels; and change positions regularly (i.e., get out of the car about every two hours to walk around).
- Make sure your health insurance is valid during pregnancy outside of California or in another country (if traveling abroad).
- Make sure your health insurance covers the newborn in case you deliver while away from home.
- Obtain a travel insurance policy that includes medical evacuation insurance and covers pregnancy-related problems.
- Check the medical facility at your destination. Make sure it is able to handle the complications of pregnancy.
- Keep all your regular prenatal care appointments.
- Find out if blood is screened for HIV and hepatitis B at your destination.
- Know your blood type.
- Make sure your immunizations are up to date.
- Wear a safety belt at all times when traveling by car.
- Avoid potentially contaminated food or water.



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For more information, visit [www.cdc.gov/travel/pregnant](http://www.cdc.gov/travel/pregnant)