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FEATURED ARTICLE

Heart Health

Know Your Numbers, Shape Your Future



COMMUNITY
CARE HEALTH

Winter 2025

A Healthy Foundation for the Season Ahead

At Community Care Health, we believe good health is not something that happens by chance — it is the result of informed decisions, proactive habits, and access to the right care at the right time. That philosophy is reflected throughout this issue of our newsletter.

In the pages ahead, you will find practical guidance focused on heart health, cholesterol management, and the everyday choices that support long-term wellness. These articles are designed to help you better understand your numbers, recognize risk factors early, and partner more effectively with your primary care provider. Small, consistent steps — whether related to nutrition, movement, stress management, or preventive screenings — can make a meaningful difference over time.

Community Care Health plays an important role in supporting this proactive approach. As part of Community Health System, we are connected to a broad network of hospitals, physicians, specialists, and care teams working together to keep care coordinated and close to home. This integration allows us to focus not only on treating illness, but on helping our members stay healthier in the first place.

Our work is also guided by *The Cause* — Community Health System’s commitment to improving the health and well-being of the communities we serve. It is a shared responsibility that extends beyond clinical settings and into education, prevention, and long-term support.

Thank you for trusting Community Care Health as your health partner. In mid-January, you will receive a brief survey inviting you to share feedback that will guide how we deliver services and strengthen access to care. We appreciate you taking a few moments to lend your voice and help shape the future of care for our community.



Aldo De La Torre
President and CEO
Community Care Health



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HealthMatters is a quarterly newsletter brought to you by Community Care Health. Designed to deliver the latest information impacting your health, we hope you find this resource valuable.



MANAGING RISK FOR LIFELONG WELLNESS

Thomas Utecht, M.D., Chief Medical Officer, Community Care Health

This issue highlights the steps we can all take to support better heart health — from understanding key numbers to building everyday habits that protect long-term wellness. Before we look more closely at those habits, it’s important to understand one of the biggest contributors to heart disease: cholesterol.

Cholesterol plays a complex role in the body. You need it for normal function, but when levels become unbalanced, it can quietly raise the risk of heart attack and stroke. Because there are no symptoms, many people don’t know their cholesterol is high until a routine screening reveals it. Paying attention to cholesterol early makes it easier to take action before problems develop.

Why Cholesterol Matters

Your cholesterol panel includes several numbers, each offering a different clue about your cardiovascular health:

- LDL (“bad”) cholesterol — contributes to plaque buildup in your arteries
- HDL (“good”) cholesterol — helps clear excess cholesterol
- Triglycerides — fats that affect heart and metabolic health
- Total cholesterol — the combined measure

Tracking these numbers over time helps you and your provider understand your risk and decide whether lifestyle changes, medications or monitoring are appropriate.

Healthy Habits That Improve Cholesterol

Small, steady changes can meaningfully improve cholesterol levels:

- **Choose heart healthy foods:** turkey breast, whole grains, unsalted nuts & legumes, skinless poultry, fish, fruits and vegetables.
- **Limit saturated fats and sugars:** avoid or reduce your consumption of red meats, creamy sauces, fried foods, processed snacks, whole milk, sugary desserts, sweetened beverages, and candies. Enjoy with moderation — choose fruit based deserts or smaller portions.
- **Be mindful of portion sizes:** opt to use a smaller plate, listen to your hunger cues and eat slow.
- **Limit alcohol consumption:** drink in moderation — remember, alcohol can affect cholesterol levels and add extra calories, consider low-sugar options.
- **Plan ahead:** when possible, offer to bring a healthy dish. You could also eat a healthy snack earlier to avoid overindulging.
- **Stay active:** taking short walks after meals or dancing during a gathering can also help support cardiovascular health.
- **Take your medications as prescribed.**

These habits benefit not only cholesterol but overall heart health — giving you a strong foundation for the steps outlined in the article that follows.

Your Care Team Can Help You Get Started

If it’s been a while since you’ve had your cholesterol checked, consider scheduling an appointment with your primary care provider. Understanding your numbers is the first step in protecting your heart and staying on track with your long-term wellness goals.

HEART HEALTH: KNOW YOUR NUMBERS, SHAPE YOUR FUTURE

#1
heart disease is the leading
cause of death in the US

805,000
heart attacks each year in the US

40
every 40 seconds
someone in the US
has a heart attack



34
one person dies every
34 seconds from
cardiovascular disease



1/5
About 1 in 5: heart attacks are
silent – the damage is done, but
the person is not aware of it



Source: U.S. Centers for Disease Control

Your heart works around the clock — pumping blood, delivering oxygen, and supporting every system in your body. Yet heart disease remains the leading cause of death in the United States.

The good news: many risk factors are preventable with smart lifestyle choices.

In this issue, we’re exploring how nutrition, exercise, stress management and routine check-ups come together to keep your heart strong. As we turn the page and greet the new year, no matter your age or fitness level, heart-healthy habits can start today.

The Numbers That Matter Most

The most important first step in caring for your heart is understanding the numbers that reflect how well it’s working. These measurements give you and your primary care or specialty provider a snapshot of your current risk and a roadmap for improvement.

- **Blood pressure** — shows how hard your heart works to push blood through your arteries.
- **Cholesterol levels** — LDL, HDL, and triglycerides indicate how much fat is circulating in your bloodstream.

- **Blood sugar** — helps detect early insulin resistance or diabetes, both of which strain the heart.
- **Body weight and waist circumference** — can reflect how much stress your heart may be under.

Once you know your numbers, you can take confident, targeted steps toward improvement. And the good news is that the everyday choices that make you feel better — more energy, better sleep, improved mood — are often the very same choices that help move your heart-health markers in the right direction.

How Nutrition Shapes Your Numbers

Nutrition plays a powerful role in both the short- and long-term health of your heart. A pattern of eating built around whole, unprocessed foods helps improve cholesterol, regulate blood sugar, and reduce inflammation — the foundation of better heart-health numbers. And improvement doesn’t require restriction; steady, mindful choices over time matter far more than perfection.



A heart-conscious plate includes:

- **Fruits and vegetables**, which provide fiber and antioxidants that help clear excess cholesterol and protect blood vessels.
- **Whole grains**, such as oats, brown rice, and quinoa, which help lower LDL cholesterol and promote steady energy.
- **Lean proteins**, particularly fish like salmon or tuna, which offer heart-protective omega-3 fatty acids.
- **Healthy fats** from nuts, seeds, avocados, and olive oil, which can raise HDL, the “good” cholesterol.

At the same time, reducing certain foods can make numbers shift quickly in a positive direction. Highly processed items, sugary beverages, fried snacks, and foods high in saturated or trans fats can elevate cholesterol and raise blood pressure over time. Swapping even one daily processed snack for a whole-food option or choosing water over sweetened drinks can create measurable improvements.



Movement: The Most Reliable Way to Improve Every Key Indicator

Exercise is one of the most effective ways to strengthen your heart and improve your numbers at the same time.

But exercise doesn’t need to feel intimidating. Think movement, not marathons.

Regular movement lowers blood pressure, raises HDL cholesterol, improves insulin sensitivity, and helps manage body weight — all major risk factors for heart disease.

Aiming for about 150 minutes of moderate activity per week — brisk walking, swimming, cycling, or dancing — is enough to make a real difference. Many people find it easier to break this up into 20-30 minute sessions throughout the week.

Strength training also matters. Even two short sessions a week using bodyweight exercises or light dumbbells helps increase muscle mass, improve metabolism, and support healthy blood sugar and cholesterol levels.

Remember, your heart is a muscle, and movement is the most natural way to keep it strong.

Stress: The Silent Influencer of Heart Health

Stress may not appear on your lab report, but it profoundly affects the numbers that do. Chronic stress triggers hormone changes that raise blood pressure, increase inflammation, and interfere with healthy sleep — all of which place extra strain on your heart.

You can reduce stress in small, consistent ways:

- Short outdoor walks to reset your mind
- Deep breathing or mindfulness exercises
- Setting aside evening wind-down time
- Staying connected with friends or family
- Limiting stressful news or late-night screen time

These habits help regulate the stress response, support better sleep, and give your cardiovascular system a chance to recover.

Putting the Pieces Together

Heart health doesn’t hinge on one big decision. It develops gradually,

through the steady choices you make over time. Knowing your numbers helps you focus those efforts, and even modest changes — choosing more nourishing foods, moving a bit more throughout the day, carving out moments to manage stress — can have a powerful cumulative effect. Together, these habits help your heart work more efficiently and feel stronger.



If you’re not sure what to tackle first, your primary care provider can help you understand your numbers and identify the steps that matter most. With guidance and consistency, better heart health is absolutely achievable.

When to Seek Care

Some symptoms deserve immediate medical attention. **Call 911** or seek emergent care if you experience:

- Chest discomfort or pressure
- Pain that moves into the arm, back, jaw or neck
- Sudden shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Dizziness, fainting or overwhelming fatigue — most often for women
- Nausea or cold sweats

Acting quickly saves lives. Don’t wait to get help.


















YOUR CARE. ONE SYSTEM. ONE MISSION.



Community Care Health is a key part of Community Health System, helping to unite hospitals, specialty and primary care clinics, and your local health plan into one coordinated network.

Community Health System exists to better the lives of all we serve. Across the system, our shared mission is simple: bring care closer to the people who need it, deliver more value, and improve health through quality, efficient, patient-centered care. From trusted, local providers to coordinated services across the Valley, your health is supported by a comprehensive system working as one.

Community Medical Centers	Community Provider Network	Community Care Health
		
<p>Our four hospitals provide about 60% of Fresno County's inpatient hospital care and advanced expertise typically found only in larger cities.</p>	<p>A fast-growing network of primary care and specialty providers, Community Provider Network is focused on improving and extending access to healthcare for residents of the Central Valley.</p>	<p>Offering some of the Valley's largest commercial HMO and EPO plans, developed by and for Valley residents, Community Care Health provides access to an ever-growing network of providers and practices.</p>
<p> 1,273 Licensed Beds</p>	<p> 500+ Providers</p>	<p> 2,500+ Providers</p>
<p> 64,782 Inpatient Admissions</p>	<p> 50+ Clinics</p>	<p> 400+ Primary Care Providers</p>
<p> 220,873 Emergency Room Visits</p>	<p> 375,913 Annual Patient Visits</p>	<p> 75+ Specialties</p>
<p> 8,712 Annual Baby Deliveries</p>		<p> 400 Affiliated Behavioral Health Providers</p>
		<p> 20 Urgent Cares</p>

OUR EXPANDING NETWORK OF PROVIDERS



Susan Aminzai, M.D.
Internal Medicine

Community Primary Care – Shaw
2086 Shaw Avenue
Clovis, California 93611
Phone: (559) 603-7400



Mariam Buckowski, M.D., MPH
Family Medicine

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4005 North Fresno Street, Suite 104
Fresno, California 93726
Phone: (559) 603-7450



Michael Fish, D.O.
Orthopedic Hand & Upper Extremity Surgeon

Community Orthopedic Specialists
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Fresno, California 93720
Phone: (559) 603-7525



Nathan Hoekzema, M.D.
Orthopedic Hand & Upper Extremity Surgeon

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Fresno, California 93720
Phone: (559) 603-7525



Arsia Moua, C-PNP
Primary Care

Community Pediatric Care – Dearing
7145 North Chestnut Avenue, Suite 101
Fresno, California 93720
Phone: (559) 603-7270



Nazeli Shishoyan, MSN, FNP-BC
Maternal-Fetal Medicine Specialist

Community Maternal Fetal Medicine – Subhashini Ladella, M.D.
726 Medical Center Drive East, Suite 223
Clovis, California 93611
Phone: (559) 472-4255

TELEHEALTH: CARE THAT FITS YOUR LIFE



As a Community Care Health member, you have access to convenient tools that bring high-quality care directly to you – whether you’re at home, at work, or on the go. Telehealth services make it easier to get the right care when you need it, without waiting for an office visit. From everyday concerns to urgent questions, you have trusted options through both Teladoc and eVisits, available with select Community Health Partners providers.

24/7 Access Through Teladoc

Teladoc gives you around-the-clock access to U.S. board-certified physicians by phone or video. It’s a fast, affordable alternative to urgent care when you need immediate support. Teladoc doctors can help with common illnesses, minor injuries, prescription refills when appropriate, and general health questions — all for an in-network cost share and low copay.

Before each visit, Teladoc will confirm your consent to receive care through telehealth. You also have the right to access your visit records at any time, and Teladoc will share those records with your primary care provider unless you choose otherwise during your appointment.

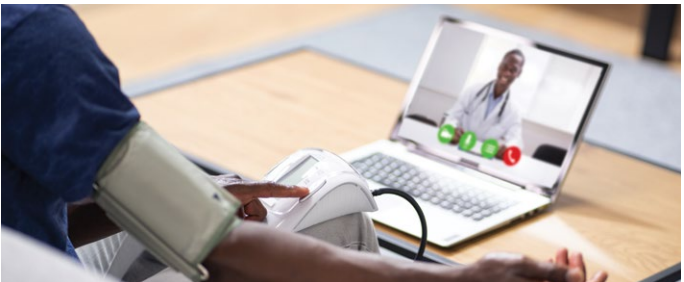
Learn more or set up your account at www.teladoc.com.

Telehealth With Your Community Health Partners Providers

While Teladoc offers convenient 24/7 care, it isn’t your only telehealth option. Many Community Health Partners providers offer their own virtual visits, called eVisits, which allow you to connect directly with your established care team. These visits can be especially

helpful for follow-up care, chronic condition management, and questions best addressed by a provider who already knows your medical history.

Community Health Partners eVisits can be initiated through the MyHealthMate app, making it easy to message your care team, upload photos if needed, and receive care without an in-person appointment.



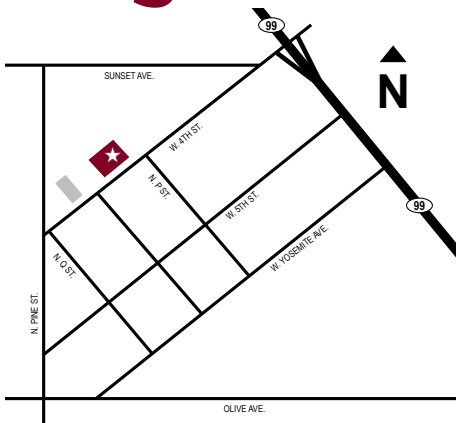
Your Care, Your Choice

Telehealth is designed to expand your access — not replace the relationship you have with your providers. You may always choose in-person care, and any telehealth services delivered by participating providers follow California’s required access and timeliness standards. If you currently receive mental or behavioral health care via telehealth, you may continue with your existing provider.

Telehealth makes care more accessible, flexible, and responsive to your needs. To learn more about your telehealth options as a Community Care Health member, visit www.communitycarehealth.org/telehealth.

Opening January 8

Community Primary Care – Madera
1111 West 4th Street, Building B
Madera, CA 93637



MEMBER RIGHTS

TIMELY ACCESS TO CARE

Health plans in California must ensure that members have timely access to their physicians and other providers when seeking care. This means that there are limits on how long you have to wait to get an appointment and telephone advice. The wait times are shown in the chart below. Some exceptions to the wait times apply. Sometimes waiting longer for care is not a problem. A provider may give you a longer wait time if they determine it would not be harmful to your health. In this event, the provider will note in your record that a longer wait time will not be harmful to your health. If you have questions, please call Community Care Health's customer service department at **(559) 724-4995** or toll free at **1 (844) 516-0181**.



Medical and Behavioral Wait Times and Timely Access to Care

ACCESS TYPE	STANDARD
Access to non-urgent appointments with a primary care physician (PCP) for regular and routine primary care services	Appointment is offered within 10 business days from time of the request
Access to urgent care services with a PCP that do not require prior authorization – includes appointment with a physician, nurse practitioner or physician's assistant in office	Appointment is offered within 48 hours from time of the request
Access to after-hours care with a PCP	Ability for member to contact an on-call physician after hours; return call within 30 minutes PCP provides appropriate after-hours emergency instructions
Access to non-urgent care appointments with a specialist	Appointment is offered within 15 business days from time of the request
Access to urgent care services that require prior authorization with a specialist or other provider	Appointment is offered within 96 hours from time of the request
Telephone triage and screening	Provided within 30 minutes Available 24 hours per day, 7 days a week
Non-urgent appointments for ancillary services for the diagnosis or treatment of an injury, illness or other health condition	Appointment is offered within 15 business days from time of request
Non-urgent appointments with a mental health or substance use disorder provider (who is not a physician)	Appointment is offered within 10 business days from time of request
Non-urgent follow-up appointments with a non-physician mental health or substance use disorder provider for members undergoing a course of treatment for an ongoing mental health or substance use disorder condition	Appointment is offered within 10 business days of the prior appointment

Other Regulatory Requirements:

AFTER HOURS CARE	EMERGENCY CARE
You should be able to reach a recorded message or live voice response providing emergency instructions and for non-emergent (urgent) matters information when to expect to receive a call back.	Providers should instruct their after-hours answering service staff that if the caller is experiencing an emergency, the caller should be instructed to dial 911 or to go directly to the nearest emergency room. Answering machine instructions must also direct the member to call 911 or go the nearest emergency room if the caller is experiencing an emergency.

LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE SERVICES

NO-COST INTERPRETER SERVICES

At Community Care Health, we're committed to ensuring you can communicate comfortably and understand the care you receive. If you need assistance talking with your doctor, understanding medical information, or coordinating care, our customer service department is here to help. Call us at **(559) 724-4995** or toll free at **1 (844) 516-0181** to access no-cost telephonic interpreter services in over 100 languages. Additionally, you may request written materials in your preferred language to ensure clear understanding.



For members who are speech or hearing impaired, the California Relay Service provides toll-free assistance. You can reach them at 1 (800) 735-2929 or 1 (888) 877-5378 (TTY) for support. Community Care Health members are entitled to full and equal access to all covered services, including those with disabilities, as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

REQUIRED INFORMATION SHARING WITH COVERED CA

California Senate Bill 260 (CA SB 260) requires Community Care Health — and all other health plans — to share member contact information with Covered California™ when a member's health coverage terminates. Covered California may use this information to help members whose health coverage has terminated to get new coverage.



If you don't want us to provide your contact information to Covered California, please call Community Care Health Customer Service at **(559) 724-4995** or toll free **1 (844) 516-0181** and we will take your name off the list.

More information about Covered California can be found at www.coveredca.gov or by calling them directly at 1 (800) 300-1506.

In Our Community

Community Care Health made a donation to Catholic Charities that helped purchase approximately 150 turkeys ahead of Thanksgiving. The donation was announced the Tuesday before at their Annual Turkey Drive that took place at KSEE 24. This was part of an effort to provide local families with a holiday meal that they would otherwise not have been able to enjoy. The turkeys and other groceries were then distributed at Catholic Charities the following day. Community Care Health is proud to support organizations that strengthen our community and provide essential resources to those in need.





Community Care Health
P.O. Box 45016
Fresno, CA 93718

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Available When You Need Us



Customer Service:

Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
(559) 724-4995;
Toll free: 1 (844) 516-0181
For more information, visit
communitycarehealth.org



1 (800) Teladoc | teladochealth.com



Pharmacy Questions:

Call MedImpact: 1 (844) 348-8510
or visit medimpactdirect.com



SimpleMSK: 1 (877) 519-8839



SimpleBehavioral: 1 (855) 424-4457