

FIND YOUR **HealthyWay** MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

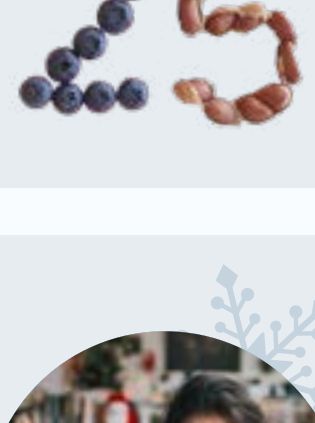
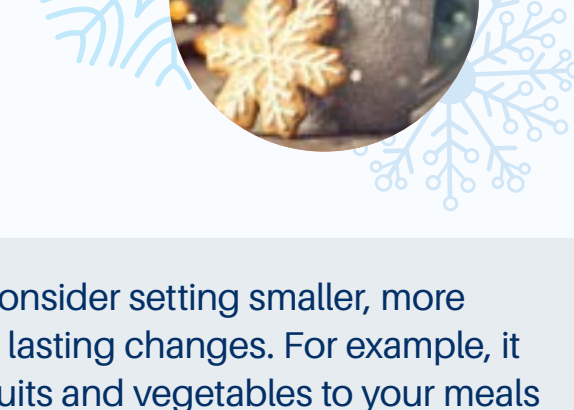
Keeping you connected to important health updates, upcoming classes and helpful resources

HAPPY, HEALTHY

holidays

Let's ring in good cheer, self-care and ways to manage stress during a busy holiday season.

Whether you're celebrating Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, or simply enjoying the warmth of the season, it's important to prioritize your mental wellness. Studies show that **64% of people experience increased stress during the holidays**, so make time for self-care. Simple practices like mindfulness, relaxation techniques, and staying connected with loved ones and your community can help you manage stress and stay focused on your plans for the coming year.



As you look ahead to the New Year, consider setting smaller, more realistic goals that can lead to bigger, lasting changes. For example, it could be as simple as adding more fruits and vegetables to your meals or taking an additional 2,000 more steps to your daily walks. These manageable changes can make a big difference over time.

Welcome the holidays with joy, but commit to making time for your overall well-being. By doing so, you will set a positive tone for a healthy, happy year ahead.



And if you need support, there are great resources like the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) who are ready and able to assist. You can also reach out to your doctor or a mental health professional for guidance.

NAMI Helpline:

1-800-950-NAMI (6264)
Available Monday through Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (Eastern Time)
Email: helpline@nami.org

SAMHSA National Helpline:

1-800-662-HELP (4357)
Text "HELLO" to 741741

To help you stay on track during the holiday season, Randy Schwartz, our Senior Vice President of Behavioral Health and Substance Use Disorder Services, has answered some of your common questions on managing holiday stress.

What ways can I manage holiday stress effectively?

Try relaxation techniques like deep breathing or mindfulness to ease stress. Make time for activities you enjoy and connect with supportive friends and family. If stress feels overwhelming, don't hesitate to seek help from your doctor or mental health professional.

One useful method is Box Breathing (or square breathing). It's simple and helps reduce stress. Here's how to do it:

- **Inhale:** Breathe in slowly through your nose for 4 seconds.
- **Hold:** Hold your breath for 4 seconds.
- **Exhale:** Breathe out slowly through your mouth for 4 seconds.
- **Hold:** Pause and hold your breath for another 4 seconds.

Repeat this several times. It helps calm your mind and improve focus, making it a great tool to manage anxiety and stress.



What are some practical steps to maintain good mental health while managing the busy holiday season?

- **Balance your commitments:** Don't overcommit. Set realistic goals and prioritize self-care.
- **Practice mindfulness:** Use mindfulness or meditation apps to manage stress.
- **Say no when needed:** Focus on what makes you happy and skip activities that are stressful.
- **Take breaks:** Step away if family gatherings become overwhelming.
- **Get fresh air:** Spend time outside to boost your mood.
- **Keep up with therapy:** Continue therapy sessions, even if they're virtual.
- **Manage grief:** Honor lost loved ones by sharing memories.
- **Avoid overspending:** Celebrate meaningfully without going over budget.
- **Talk to your doctor or health professional:** Reach out if you need more help or advice.

Remember, you are not alone. Seek support and take care of yourself this holiday season.

My pets are also part of my family. Do pets help improve mental health during the holidays?

Absolutely! Pets provide emotional support that can lift your spirits, especially during stressful times like the holidays. They help reduce anxiety, loneliness, and stress by offering companionship and encouraging physical activity - like taking three walks a day, enjoying fresh air, and connecting with nature. Studies show that spending time with pets can lower blood pressure and release feel-good brain chemicals like oxytocin, which can even benefit heart health. Pets also give us a sense of purpose, strengthen social connections, and make us feel loved and supported, all of which are key to maintaining mental well-being.



Who can I contact or turn to if I get overwhelmed and need immediate help?

You can call, **text or chat 988** if you or someone you know is experiencing a mental health or suicide crisis and requires immediate support. The hotline is available 24/7.

Randy Schwartz

Sr. Vice President of Behavioral Health and Substance Use Disorder Services

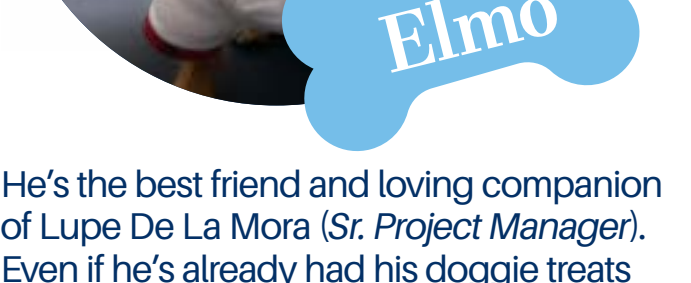
"I've had the privilege of working with Heritage Provider Network (HPN) and its affiliated medical groups for more than 11 years. Alongside a talented team of clinicians, I play a key role in developing and overseeing both traditional and innovative behavioral health programs. I also manage the contracting and administration of the behavioral health IPA and staff model networks that support all HPN medical groups. With more than 40 years of experience in healthcare financing and administration, I've held leadership roles across a variety of behavioral health settings guiding organizations and teams toward excellence in service and care." ~ Randy Schwartz



Ellie Jean - Premier Behavioral Health Mascot

Season's greetings

from our pet families to yours!
These doggies and kitties are paws-itively the cutest way to reduce stress.



Elmo

He's the best friend and loving companion of Lupe De La Mora (Sr. Project Manager). Even if he's already had his doggie treats for the day, how can anyone say no to those eyes? They just melt your heart.

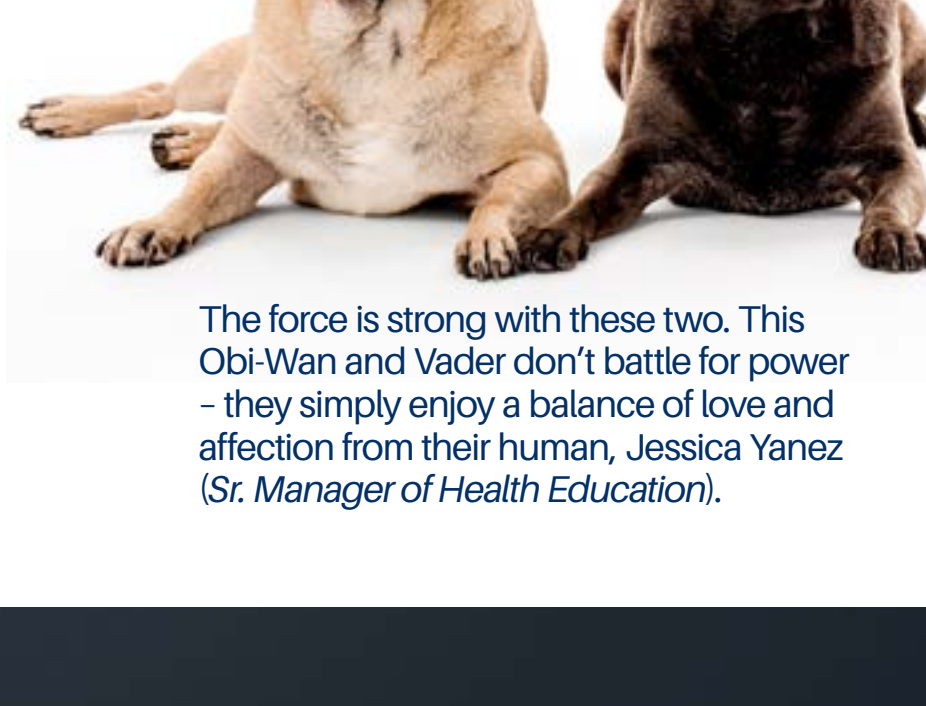


Mia

Ari Gold

Brookie

This delightful and furry trio is a mix of sweetness, sass, high energy, and occasional mischief. They keep Brian Humphreys (Sr. Marketing Traffic/ Production Project Manager) on his toes - often making surprise appearances during video conference calls.



Obi-Wan & Vader

The force is strong with these two. This Obi-Wan and Vader don't battle for power - they simply enjoy a balance of love and affection from their human, Jessica Yanez (Sr. Manager of Health Education).

HURRY!
The December 7th deadline for Medicare is fast approaching!

If you haven't heard the big news about Medicare yet this year, there are significant changes coming in 2025. This includes the new Part D benefits and annual cap of \$2,000 for out-of-pocket prescription drug costs

If you're new to Medicare, or currently on Medicare, you can still enroll or make changes until December 7, 2024.

- ✓ Medicare plans change every year so it's important to have your plans reviewed by a licensed insurance agent to ensure you still have the right coverage that meets your needs for 2025.
- ✓ Make sure to also ask about Medicare Advantage, which can help reduce out-of-pocket expenses while maximizing your healthcare needs.
- ✓ Any changes that will during the Open Enrollment Period in 2024 will go into effect on January 1, 2025.

Want to learn more? Attend our Medicare 101 event in North Hollywood, hosted by licensed insurance agent Lara Goulson (CA License #0E69969).

RSVP by calling (888) 831-9359

Wednesday, December 4, 2024
from 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Lakeside Community Healthcare
12660 Riverside Dr., Ste. 310
North Hollywood, CA 91607



Let's serve up some stew-pendous **pozole!**

Looking for a cozy and nutritious dish this season?
Try this healthier pozole - a traditional Mexican stew featuring hominy, which thickens the hearty broth and adds a satisfying texture. With over 2 million American families enjoying this flavorful stew each year, you're in good company! Choose between the spicy rojo with red chiles or the zesty verde with green chiles for a delicious and satisfying meal. Enjoy the festive flavors while keeping it healthy and light!

Red and spicy recipe

Green and zesty recipe

It's a holly, jolly time of year to stay connected!

We're making a list, and checking it twice. We're wrapping up the holidays and approaching the coming year with fun and engaging events and info for you and your family.



Follow us on social media as you don't miss it.

Wishing you and your family all the best this holiday season!

We know that a simple thank you cannot fully express our deepest appreciation and gratitude for your continued trust in us, year after year, to care for you and your family's health. As we look ahead to 2025, we remain committed to providing the quality care and service you've come to expect from us as your medical group family.

As you begin planning your winter celebrations and gatherings, we hope you'll keep your health in mind. Stay up-to-date on your vaccinations, complete your annual wellness exams and any labs, and take a moment to reflect on how far you've come in prioritizing your health this past year.

For those members who have been affected by the recent and tragic Mountain Fire across Ventura County, or who have family and friends in the fire zone, please know that you are in our thoughts and that you can reach out to us at any time. Your health and safety are always our priority.

We wish you and your loved ones a warm, safe, healthy and joyful holiday season!