



To Your Health

Human Resources
Helping U Succeed

Pinellas County Wellness Program - *Wellness for Life*

PHYSICAL | EMOTIONAL | SOCIAL | FINANCIAL

Visit www.pinellascounty.org/hr/wellness or contact Wellness staff at 464-4049 or wellness@pinellascounty.org.

APR 2021

Practice Less Stress

By Jane Grannis, Wellness Manager

Even prior to the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have been living in a modern stress epidemic. In the past year, stress levels have intensified, and since April is “Stress Awareness Month,” it’s a perfect time to focus on gaining the knowledge and tools to help manage the most common types of stress.

The American Psychological Association reports the most common sources of stress are money, work, family, economic outlook and family relationships. It’s not uncommon to experience more than one, or perhaps even all of them. This makes for a sickening reality (literally). People under stress, especially chronic stress, are more likely to suffer from headaches, insomnia, heart disease and high blood pressure, to name just a few.

In this month’s issue, we share classes and tools that educate and empower you to live an intentional, fulfilling life. Take action. Educate yourself. Living with intention reduces stress, decreases emotional turmoil and improves health outlook.

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Manage Money Stress

Suitably, April is Financial Literacy month! We’re kicking off a year full of financial wellbeing virtual webinars and sharing other ways to get on track with financial goals. Our first class is on [Finances and Food](#) on April 14th at 12:30. Pair that with a [Healthy Meals on a Budget](#) cooking demonstration on Tuesday, April 27th.

The FRS offers several virtual workshops on using the FRS for retirement and understanding your FRS benefits under the pension plan.

If your financial strain stems from the COVID-19 pandemic, the federal government provides additional help at [COVID-19 and Finances](#).

In addition to the virtual workshops we’ll be offering, your EAP offers many resources for financial help, including two free sessions with a money coach to help you achieve financial fitness no matter where you are in your financial journey. Topics include:

- Online financial stress assessment
- Budgeting
- Credit and Debt
- Estate Planning
- Saving and Investing
- Retirement Planning
- Relationships and Financing
- Paying for College
- Tax Preparation
- Much more!

Go to [EAP Financial Wellness Benefits](#) or call (866) 374-6061.



Catching Up with Your Healthcare



Your
UHC
Nurse

Amy

By Amy Hertog, RN, BSN,
Clinical Nurse Liaison

Addressing our preventive health care needs has been quite a challenge during the pandemic. In 2021, some individuals and families may find themselves with a list of “to-dos” for preventive care.

Preventive care works in two ways. Preventive care can catch diseases before they become too serious, which may drastically reduce the cost of treatment. Preventive care may also make you aware of problem areas which can prevent future diseases altogether.

Preventive care includes screening tests, vaccines, and wellness checkups that help you stay healthy. Examples of preventive care include:

- Mammograms and pap tests for women
- Colorectal cancer screening
- Vaccinations (flu, pneumonia, and/or shingles)
- Wellness visits/annual physicals
- Dental and vision exams

This year, it may be a good idea to take a few moments for a self-assessment.

- Am I due for an initial preventive screening because of my age?
- Am I due for a routine preventive follow-up screening?
- Am I in need of any routine vaccinations?
- Am I up-to-date on other routine care needs (dental cleanings, eye exams, annual physical exam)?



If you need a provider, please check the corresponding benefit plan. For Pinellas County employees, benefit plans are as follows:

Benefit Provider	Type of Benefit	Link
UnitedHealthcare®	Health plan	www.myuhc.com
EyeMed	Vision plan	www.EyeMed.com
Cigna	Dental plan	www.myCigna.com

UnitedHealthcare offers an [easy tool](#) for a preventive care self-assessment. Simply enter your age and gender. A general health screening guideline for commonly used preventive tests and services checklist will be generated for you.

Consider creating a personal “roadmap” for these tasks. (See *My Annual Health Goals* on [page 3](#).) Even if you won’t be accomplishing all tasks immediately, it may be helpful to go ahead and schedule those future appointments. As more people are faced with catching up to their healthcare needs, there may be more demand for services. Scheduling your appointments now could pay off with less stress in the future.

There are activities that will require an in-person examination or procedure. If you group them together in a single visit, you may possibly accomplish more in a shorter period. For example, if your physician offers lab draws in their office: you can have an annual physical, biometric screening (don’t forget to bring the Physician Results form from Rally), and any needed vaccinations. Remember to mention your goals when you schedule your appointment with your provider’s office.

[Visit Amy’s web page](#) or contact her at 464-5579 or by email at amy_hertog@uhc.com.



My Annual Health Goals



Start here for a healthier New Year!

Preventive care and regular screenings are essential to staying healthy. Nurse Liaison Amy Hertog is here to help you achieve your individual health goals throughout the year.



Get your annual **biometric screening**.*
Go to Rally for info.



If you are a female, schedule a **well woman visit****.



Make an appointment for your **annual physical**.



If due for a **colon cancer screening**** discuss with your doctor.



Avoid shingles. If you are 50 or over, consider a **Shingrix vaccine**.



Take care of your smile with regular **dental cleanings**.



It's never too soon to complete your **Rally Health Survey***.



Stay focused on your health with an **eye exam**.



Support your emotional health with the **Employee Assistance Program**.



Almost there. Don't forget your annual **flu vaccination**.



Complete your **biometric screening and Rally Health Survey** by 12/31.*



Congratulations. You completed your health goals!

* Eligible for a premium reduction (see www.pinellascounty.org/hr/biometric)

** May be eligible for a Wellness Program incentive (see www.pinellascounty.org/hr/incentive)



For assistance, contact your UnitedHealthcare Nurse Liaison
Amy Hertog, RN, BSN at amy_hertog@uhc.com or (727) 464-5579.

3/16/21



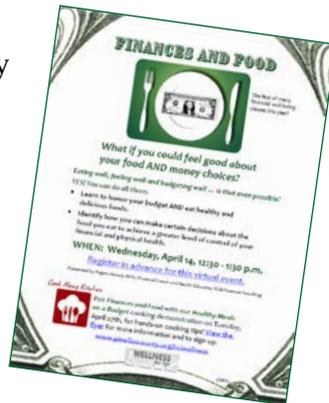
Mark Your Calendars: Wellness Activities for You

Finances and Food

What if you could feel good about your food AND money choices?

Sign up for this April 14th financial well-being class and learn how to honor your budget AND eat healthy and delicious foods.

[View the flyer](#) for details and to register.



Healthy Meals on a Budget

Join us on April 27th for a virtual interactive class and cooking demonstration to gain time-saving tips to prepare delicious, healthy and affordable meals.

[View the flyer](#) for more details and to register.



The Florida Retirement System (FRS) Offers Free Financial Planning Webinars

April 5th and 6th, the FRS will offer four 2-hour webinars:

- Using the FRS to Plan for Retirement (English and Spanish)
- Understanding Your Benefits Under the FRS Pension Plan
- Nearing Retirement in the FRS (Spanish)

[View the flyer](#) to sign up.



Behind the Belly Button Series

Epigenetics

Although DNA can't be changed, epigenetics can change how our body reads the DNA sequence. Epigenetics offers scientific proof that the choices we make can affect our health.

[View the flyer](#) with links to register for the April 20 or April 29 class.

Gut Health

[Watch the video](#) to uncover the mysteries of the gut and learn ways you can improve your own gut health.

Digestion and Nutrient Absorption

[Watch the video](#) for a closer look at how digestion works to break down food to usable forms of energy, vitamins and minerals and how they're absorbed into the body.

The Microbiome Explained

[Watch the video](#) to learn about superbugs. Our body has over 100 trillion microbial cells. When that ecosystem tips out of balance, we get sick.



Bone Health Webinars

Presented by Healthy Bones Tampa Bay

Build and keep your bones healthy and strong for life.

Get practical tools and tips on maintaining strong bones; learn simple exercises you can do at home to improve balance, strength and flexibility; and find out how to prevent broken bones.

[Watch the video](#) of the *Eating for Healthy Bones* session (works best in Chrome) and watch for classes on *Posture Power* in April!



The Power of Sleep: Catnap Version

Learn about how sleep affects every aspect of your health ([34-minute video](#)).



Relationships and Family Stress

Relationships come in all shapes and sizes: children, partners, co-workers, friends. Find resources on how to navigate and improve them. Whether you're dating, in a committed relationship, or are a caregiver, www.liveandworkwell.com has resources for everyone.

Relationships

- Committed Relationships
- Dating
- LGBTQ
- Separation and Divorce

Parenting

- Adoption
- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Avoiding Tobacco, Drugs and Alcohol
- Blended Families
- (Cyber) Bullying
- Eating Healthy and Moving
- LGBTQ Youth
- Single Parenting
- Special Needs
- Violence



Everyone living in your household (even if they're extended family or not on the County health plan) is entitled to 6 free EAP sessions per issue per year with a professional counselor. Call anytime, 24/7 for confidential help.

We all need a little support sometimes! Call (866) 374-6061. You can also find behavioral health providers, check your benefits and manage your claims on www.liveandworkwell.com. You do not need an account or password, simply type in *Pinellas* in *Browse as a Guest*.



Childcare and Eldercare

Need help caring for your children or elderly parents? The Employee Assistance Program offers directories of licensed childcare centers, family daycare homes, adult daycare, and more.

Visit www.pinellascounty.org/hr/EAP.

Wellness Center Info

Current Hours

Monday, Wednesday and Friday
5 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Tuesday and Thursday
11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

COVID-19 Safety Measures and Limitations

See the [Important Wellness Center Reopening Information](#).

Orientation

To schedule, use the [Orientation Sign-up](#).

Questions?

Contact Wellness at wellness@pinellascounty.org or 464-4049.



Biometric Screening Process in 2021

Before you get your screening, be sure to watch the [tutorial video](#).

Also, review the [webpage](#) including [FAQs](#) and the [Rally Help Guide](#) with step-by-step instructions and screenshots for every step in the process.



I Received My COVID-19 Vaccine. Now What?

By Amy Hertog, BSN, RN

As age requirements to receive the vaccine continue to decrease, you may be eager to make an appointment. Regardless of the brand of vaccine or where you obtain a vaccination, the goal is for our bodies to produce antibodies in response to the vaccination.

A vaccine isn't a "one and done." It takes time for our bodies to create the antibodies as a response to a vaccine. There is no "Poof! The needle went in my arm and now I am covered at 100%." What this means to you is that you will still need to take precautions. Vaccination day is not the day to let your guard down and discard your face mask.

You may experience certain side effects, including a sore arm, fever, chills, fatigue, headache, or other minor discomforts. Beyond dealing with these inconveniences, you may be wondering what you can do to **help your immune system accomplish what it is supposed to do.**

Sleep is very important. Infection-fighting antibodies and cells are reduced during periods when you don't get enough sleep. In fact, one study (published in 2003) concluded that adequate sleep (compared with sleep deprivation) on the night after a vaccination improves antibody production in humans. Therefore, if you are feeling fatigued after receiving a vaccination, make sure that you are addressing it and getting the sleep that you need.

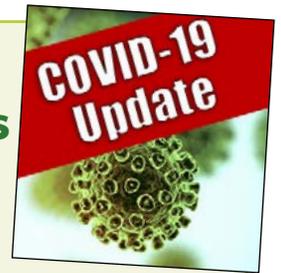
Adequate and appropriate **nutrition** is required for all cells to function optimally and this includes the cells in the immune system. After receiving a vaccination, nurture your immune system (and the rest of your body) with a healthier diet — fruits, veggies, whole grains, and lean protein sources.

Stress may possibly impact how well our body will respond to a vaccination. In another study, researchers wanted to examine if daily stressors have a similar impact on vaccine effectiveness and what the relevance may be when it comes to vaccines.

This [study](#) found that the people who were more stressed and anxious for a short period of time before the vaccine took longer to develop antibodies to a vaccine. Getting your stress under control may help

For more information about COVID-19 vaccinations, please visit [COVID-19 vaccines | UnitedHealthcare](#).

COVID-19 Vaccines Facts and Myths Webinar



Join us as UHC Nurse Liaison Amy Hertog tackles the top 20 facts and myths about COVID-19 vaccinations. Learn about do's and don'ts when it comes to protecting your health with the available vaccines.

Register in advance by selecting one of these links.

[Wednesday, April 7, 8:30 a.m.](#)

[Tuesday, April 13, 12:00 p.m.](#)

COVID-19 Vaccination Resources

Visit our [COVID-19 for County Employees](#) page for these links and more:

- [Pinellas County vaccine information](#)
- [CDC vaccine information](#)



Yogurt Blueberry Ice Pop

It's blueberry season! Celebrate by whipping up this tasty and healthy treat.

Ingredients

1½ cups plain nonfat or low-fat yogurt (regular or Greek)

1 cup fresh or frozen blueberries

1 tbsp. plus 2 tsp. honey

Nutrition Facts (per serving)

Calories	99	Total Fat	0g
Protein	6g	Saturated Fat	0g
Carbohydrate	20g	Cholesterol	2mg
Dietary Fiber	0g	Calcium	186mg
Total Sugars	18g	Sodium	72mg



real appeal

Directions

1. Combine yogurt, blueberries and honey in a blender and process until smooth, about 1 minute.
2. Pour mixture in 4 ice pop molds of paper cups. Place an ice pop stick or chopstick in the middle of each cup and freeze for 3 hours or until solid.
3. To serve, remove from molds or peel away paper cup.

Update! Stepping Into Your Health Challenge

Participants logged their final steps in this 8-week challenge on Friday, March 19th. These intrepid walkers logged **21.5 million steps!**

To check out other participants' testimonials, read the [March To Your Health](#), as well as Yvette and Sheila's experiences below. We look forward to you joining us next year!

On Super Bowl Sunday, I decided to really get serious. I joined the gym near my house and did my first treadmill workout. Ever since, I've gone every Tuesday and Thursday before work as well as weekends. I'm working up to 10,000 steps a day, especially since I just booked a November trip to Amsterdam. It's a walking and biking city, so I hope to be able to walk and bike without huffing and puffing!

Yvette M. Aehle
Airport Finance & Administration

The challenge [went great] for my walking partner, Chris Brodeur, and me. I've recruited my boyfriend to walk with me in the evenings, so he's also benefitting! To keep going beyond this challenge, I just joined a couple of small group challenges on fitbit with some other non-county friends. New places walked: Gulfport, Coffee Pot Bayou, and Daytona Beach!

Sheila Schneider
Air Quality

TrackThis!

From a Track This! participant:

I have been using the Pinellas County Wellness Incentive Tracker for 8 weeks and I have found it to be very helpful.

I have just completed the 8 weeks for two of the three challenges, with a third challenge almost finished. I would like to continue to use this program throughout the year.

Is it possible to reset the program or enroll for another challenge term?

Yes! Track This! can be used for:

- the Fruit and Veggie Challenge
- Get Fit
- the Nutrition Challenge

Use the [Track This! portal](#) to enroll and enter your activities. It's an easy-to-use online platform for data entry. It's accessible from your work or home computer as well as mobile devices. Enter your activities anytime, anywhere.

Earn incentives for one challenge or all three challenges if desired. You can use it all year long. However, keep in mind the incentive for each challenge is awarded only once per calendar year.

All incentive activities are rewarded semi-annually. See the [Wellness Incentive Payout Schedule](#).

View the [Track This! Challenges](#) flyer.

