

To Your Health

PHYSICAL



EMOTIONAL



SOCIAL



FINANCIAL



FEB 2022

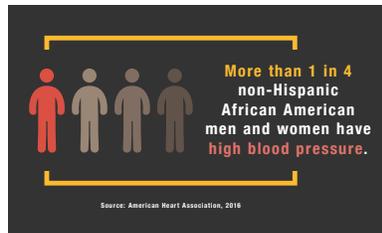
In February, which is both Black History and Heart Health Month, we bring attention not only to the seriousness and prevalence of heart disease, but also the relationship between health among different communities, especially those of different race and ethnicities.



On [page 4](#), we celebrate and honor four of many Black Americans who have made a positive impact on their communities and significant and lasting contributions to health and wellness fields both in the US and abroad.

The Heart of Community: Why Certain Groups Are at Higher Risk

Heart disease is the number one killer in the United States. Lifestyle factors, the choices we make every day, may help decrease the risk of disease if we maintain a healthy weight, exercise regularly, eat a healthy diet and avoid tobacco. These habits help control blood cholesterol, high blood pressure, and excess body weight. There are, however, risks we cannot control, one of them being race and ethnicity. Blacks and African Americans have [a higher risk of heart disease](#) than their white counterparts. Risk is also higher among Latin-Americans, American Indians, native Hawaiians and some Asian-Americans.



Certain population groups, usually based on race, ethnicity, gender and socioeconomic status experience what is known as [health disparity](#), which is the difference between health among the groups when compared to Caucasians. Root causes are complicated but there are a few inequalities known to contribute to health gaps. [Perceived discrimination](#), which is a perception of a negative attitude, judgment, or unfair treatment toward

members of a group, has been found to be a key factor in chronic stress-related health disparities among minority groups. African Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Latin Americans have been impacted greatly by hypertension due to chronic stress resulting from perceived discrimination.

Racial and ethnic minority groups are also [less likely to receive mental health care](#). For example, in 2015, among adults with mental illness, 48% of whites received mental health services compared to only 31% of Blacks and

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To Your Health is a monthly publication by the Pinellas County Wellness Program. Contact us at wellness@pinellascounty.org or (727) 464-3367, option 1.

Did You Know?

African American Women Ages 20 and Older	African American Men Ages 20 and Older
80% are overweight	70% are overweight
46% have high blood pressure	44% have high blood pressure
33% have high cholesterol	30% have high cholesterol
13% have been diagnosed with diabetes	15% have been diagnosed with diabetes

Source: National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute

Hispanics, and even less for Asians at 22%. There are a variety of reasons why this is so. Lack of awareness, stigma, or shame around mental health is common. Quality mental health care services and diverse mental health professionals are difficult to find. Language barriers and distrust in the health care system may also be reasons.

Furthermore, past generations who've experienced stress caused from discrimination can be [passed on](#) to current and future family members. This is known as generational trauma.

So, what to do next?

Know your numbers. Get an annual physical and lab work every year. Getting a biometric screening is a great first start!

- Check your blood pressure ([blood pressure tracker](#)) regularly.
- Dial your diet to a healthy channel. The [DASH Eating Plan](#) is designed specifically for those looking to reduce blood pressure and heart disease risk. It's also a great plan for those who want to stay healthy.
- Social support matters. We're more successful accomplishing goals when done with others, so get your neighbor, Facebook friend in Minnesota or a family member on board. Check in virtually, or, if in person, practice CDC safety and prevention guidelines.

Other useful resources:

- [American Heart Association](#)
- [Employee Assistance Program \(EAP\)](#)
- [Minority Health Resources](#)
- [Minority Mental Health Resources](#)

Create Lasting Change With Omada



Introducing [Omada Diabetes Prevention Program](#), a unique lifestyle and diabetes prevention program tailored to work around you. This program is similar to the Real Appeal program offered in past years, and is designed to prevent certain health conditions, such as diabetes.

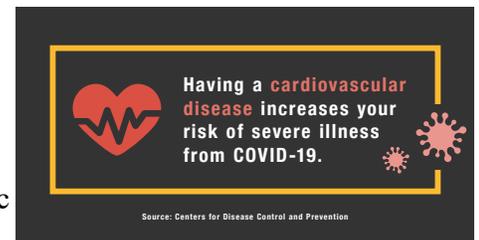
At no cost to them, eligible participants work one-on-one with a health coach to establish healthy habits that work with their lifestyle, complete interactive weekly lessons, and engage with an online community. Participants also get a wireless scale.

Because this is a prevention program, members who have already been diagnosed diabetes do not qualify, but are encouraged to work with a nurse case manager to manage their condition. If diagnosed, you may receive outreach from Cigna, or call Cigna (877) 622-4327 for assistance.

To find out if you're eligible, visit [Omada](#).

How COVID-19 Affects the Heart

When we think about COVID-19, we usually consider damage done to the lungs, but the virus can also wreak havoc on the heart. Many



COVID patients experience heart problems. Researchers are studying the effects and found the virus infects muscles in the heart itself. In addition to heart muscles, an inflammatory response, which is normal when the body is fighting infection, damages heart cells and can disrupt electrical signals causing irregular heartbeats (arrhythmia).

Pre-existing heart conditions and inflammation may be potential causes.

Additionally, conditions such as obesity, high blood pressure, stroke, coronary artery disease, heart failure and diabetes affect how your body responds to COVID-19.

To learn more, register for our [Heart Health: Don't be a Statistic webinar](#) on February 18 or 24, or visit the [National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute](#).



What the (New) EAP Can Do For You

Pinellas County's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provides support and services at no cost to employees and members of their household, regardless of whether they're on the County medical plan. Attend an [orientation webinar on February 23 or 25](#) to learn what Cigna EAP can do for you, and how to navigate the resources.

Available EAP Services

1. **Six counseling sessions per person per year per issue.** Video-based sessions are also available to fit your busy schedule.
 - Legal assistance
 - Identity theft
 - Financial guidance
 - Parenting
 - Eldercare
 - Pet care

Call (800) 862-3557, option 4 or visit myCigna.com.

Employer ID: pinellascounty (for household members without a Cigna account)

2. **Onsite Cigna EAP Representative**, Lorelei Keif, is available for in-person or virtual appointments.
 - Email: Lkeif2@gmail.com
 - Phone: (727) 639-4266 (private practice)
 - Phone: (727) 464-5545 (Pinellas County)
 - Annex, 400 S. Ft. Harrison Ave., Room 130, Clearwater

Income Tax Planning (through FRS)

Tuesday, February 15 8:30 - 10 a.m.

This 90-minute workshop helps you understand the basics of the Federal tax form 1040, teach ways to reduce your taxable income, learn about common deductions and credits, how much to withhold from your paychecks, and how to avoid IRS penalties. We will discuss an action plan that utilizes tax advantaged retirement savings accounts as a way to save for retirement.

All FRS class registration is via OLM Learner. Log in to OPUS to register. Class must meet a 25 participant minimum.



NEW in

Wellness Champion Meeting

We kicked off the New Year with a Wellness Champion meeting, appropriately titled New in 2022. It was an engaging meeting where champions learned about new updates regarding the incentive program, biometric screenings and new benefits, and asked questions so they would be better prepared to assist you.

New for 2022: Social Health and Wellness Apps & Activities

Let's make 2022 the best year yet by adopting some healthy habits! There are 20 options (something for everyone) with myCigna Apps & Activities including biking, dancing, walking with a friend, eating more fruits and veggies, packing a health lunch, and getting more sleep. Earn up to 37,500 reward points or \$150 by completing 6 activities (one at a time). Here's what you need to know.

Getting Started

- Download the myCigna Apps and Activities app to your mobile device to complete and track the challenges.
- Complete up to six 4-week challenges (one at a time).
- You can participate in more than one challenge at a time, but you will only earn an incentive for one challenge at a time.
- If desired, use the app to sync a tracking device such as a Fitbit.

Earning Incentive Rewards

- To earn a reward, activity frequency must be set to a minimum of 4 days a week for 4 weeks.
- To successfully complete a challenge, you need to earn 5 stars per week for a total of 20 points after 4 weeks. NOTE: MotivateMe tracks completion

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Black American Pioneers in Health and Wellness

[From “12 Black American Health and Wellness Pioneers”](#)

February is Black History Month, dedicated to paying tribute to Black American history. We’d like to highlight four of the many individuals who have made important contributions in health and wellness both in the US and worldwide.



Dr. Kizzmekia Corbett is a scientist at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) who was key lead in the development and production of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccines. She was a part of a small NIH team who briefed the President of the United States on the coronavirus.

Along with her work on the coronavirus vaccine, she has developed a universal influenza vaccine currently in clinical trials.

Dr. Daniel Hale Williams founded the Provident Hospital Training School for Nurses in 1891, the first hospital with a nursing and intern program with a racially integrated staff. Just 2 years later, Dr. Williams was one of the first physicians to performed open-heart surgery, which was a success.



Dr. Solomon Carter Fuller was the first Black American psychiatrist and a pioneer in the understanding and treatment of Alzheimer’s disease, having studied directly under Alois Alzheimer himself. His work helped the medical community understand the condition and early treatment. Dr. Carter

published the first-ever comprehensive review of Alzheimer’s disease.



Dr. William G. Coleman Jr was the first permanent Black scientific director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Intramural Research Program (IRP), where he directed the NIH’s National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities. He took lead on the research that focused on the various determinants of health disparities (to learn about health disparities, read the article on [page 1](#)) and their effect on the outcomes of cancer, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and other chronic diseases.



Upcoming Blood Drives



Did you know?

- Approximately 43,000 units of blood are used each day in the United States.
- 4.8 million Americans would die each year without life- saving blood transfusions.
- Every 2 seconds, someone in the United States requires a blood transfusion.

Please donate! Walk-ons are welcome or you can [schedule an appointment](#).

Downtown Clearwater Courthouse

315 Court Street, Clearwater (west parking lot)

- February 15, 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Mid County Tax Collector

13025 Starkey Rd., Largo

- February 16, 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

STAR Center

7887 Bryan Dairy Road, Largo

- February 23, 9:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Gulf to Bay Tax Collector

1663 Gulf to Bay Boulevard, Clearwater

- February 23, 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Public Works

22211 U.S. Hwy. 19 North, Clearwater
(in front of the Survey building)

- March 31, Noon to 5:00 p.m.



Mark Your Calendar: Wellness Activities for You

Tobacco Cessation Programs



Time is running out! To avoid a tobacco premium of \$500, employees on the Pinellas County health plan who use tobacco have between August 1, 2021 and March 31, 2022 to complete a qualified tobacco cessation program. The premium does not apply to spouses.

If you would like to complete a class prior to the deadline, make sure to sign up for one of the [available class options](#), including these virtual classes from Tobacco Free Florida's Group Quit, below.

Upcoming Virtual Classes

- Tuesdays, 12:30 p.m. to 1:20 p.m.
February 15, 22, March 1, 8, 2022
- Thursdays, 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.
February 24, March 3, 10, 17, 2022
- Tuesdays, 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.
March 8, 15, 22, 29, 2022
- Thursdays, 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
March 10, 17, 24, 31, 2022

To register for a Tobacco Free Florida class above, call the local Tobacco Free Florida agency, Area Health Education Center, at (813) 929-1000 or use the [online registration form](#).

See [additional resources](#) for quitting.

Clear Space, Clear Mind Webinar



Explore the connection between clutter and mental wellbeing and how to create a minimalist lifestyle that gives you energy to focus on your passions. [Register now](#) for a one-hour webinar on February 16, 12 to 1 p.m. or February 17, 12:30 to 1:30 p.m.

Heart Health: Don't Be a Statistic Webinar



Heart disease is the leading cause of death and is largely preventable. Get a weekly action plan to help you find a healthy habit groove. [Register now](#) for a one-hour webinar on February 18, 12 to 1 p.m. or February 24, 1 to 2 p.m.

Thinking About Your Thoughts Webinar



Join psychiatrist Dr. Brandon DeLiberato from BayCare to explore how children and young adults think. Find out if mindfulness and stoicism work for all ages and how young people can cultivate a healthy self concept. [Register now](#) for a 45-minute lunchtime webinar on February 22.

Taking Control Of Your Finances (Through FRS)

Wednesday, March 2, 8:30-10 am

This 90-minute workshop helps evaluate current spending habits and create a plan to accomplish your financial goals. Tips to reduce expenses, manage debt, repay student loans and make decisions on the best use of available funds are explored. We also discuss credit reports and FICO scores. Learn how to build a secure future by balancing everyday expenses while saving.

To sign up, log in to OPUS and register in OLM Learner.

EAP Overview Orientation Webinar



Learn to navigate the new Cigna Employee Assistance Program (EAP). An EAP counselor will present the types of free assistance available, from relationship issues to dealing with identify theft. [Register now](#) for a one-hour webinar on February 23, 12 to 1 p.m. or February 25, 12:30 to 1:30 p.m.



WELLNESS CHAMPION SPOTLIGHT

Leslie Caplin Solid Waste Department

Every department has a [Wellness Champion](#) who helps to communicate important wellness events, reminders and updates, as well as support you. They do amazing work and we'd like for you to get to know them!

How long have you worked for Pinellas County?



Leslie Caplin (left) and her daughter (right)

I just celebrated my one year anniversary on November 30, 2021. When I first told my family I got the job at Pinellas County Solid Waste, my daughter said to me, "So, you're going to be working with the doo-doo?" I said, "No, Samantha, not that kind of solid waste." I love it here and I am still in awe that I get to work and serve the people of Pinellas County every day.

Tell us a little about yourself.

I am a Pinellas County native, living and loving it here my entire life. I love kayaking our beautiful waterways with friends, going to all of our Tampa Bay sporting events, and working on projects around my house. I just graduated from St. Petersburg College (SPC) with a Bachelor's degree in Sustainability Management, Magna Cum Laude. Before I came to Solid Waste, I was a cake decorator for almost 25 years.

Why did you want to serve as a Wellness Champion?

The opportunity to become the Solid Waste Wellness Champion happened during a serendipitous conversation with Catherine (our previous Wellness Champ) and Nicki Lanauze (Wellness Technician) one morning last December. The timing was perfect, and I knew this could be a great way to learn the benefits of our Wellness Program and share the knowledge with my colleagues.

What do you do to take care of yourself?

Honestly, there are many things I need to do to take better care of myself. My partner Mark and I walk the Belleair Bridge every morning at 5:30am (it's almost 3 miles) but unless I improve my eating habits, not much is going to change. I'm hoping to start a department-wide healthy eating and exercise challenge that will help those of us who want to start looking and feeling better.

New for 2022: Social Health and Wellness Apps & Activities, continued from [page 3](#)

using stars, which do not have a direct equivalent to Pinellas County rewards. Upon earning 20 stars, you'll receive 6,250 Pinellas County reward points or \$25 if you elect cash.

- You can only earn 5 stars per week; therefore, you earn incentives by completing one challenge at a time. If you choose to complete more than one at the same time, you will not earn an incentive for the others.
- You may create your own challenges in the Challenge section where you have the option to invite co-workers and spouses (on the County's medical plan) to participate. To earn a reward, make sure the challenge is set up using the guidelines listed above.

More Information

For a list of the 20 challenges available and other Wellness Incentive Program options, please see the [2022 Incentive Rules & Guidelines](#).

Announcing the 2021 Maintain Campaign Winners!



First Place: Golden Girls: L to R: Shannon St. Jean, Jemera Hollis, Natasha Kinsley, Wendy Isaacs

Employees embarked on an 8-week challenge to maintain a healthy weight throughout the holidays in our annual Maintain Campaign. Through the support and motivation of teamwork and a focus on health habit challenges, participants not only maintained their weight but finished out the notorious weight gaining season lighter than when they started, with an average participant weight loss of 3.9 pounds. We've all made it through the holiday season, and two teams came out on top. Congrats on a job well done!

This Maintain Campaign had 15 teams and the first and second place teams scores differed by only 45 points.

First Place: Golden Girls (Wendy Isaacs, Natasha Kinsley, Shannon St. Jean, Jemera Hollis)



Second Place: Wii Not Fit: L to R: Jean Corvil, Amanda McNeilly, Leena Delli Paoli, Laura Albenzio

Second Place: Wii Not Fit (Laura Albenzio, Jean Corvil, Leena Delli Paoli, Amanda McNeilly)

Congratulations!



FEBRUARY 4, 2022 WAS
NATIONAL WEAR RED DAY

WearRedDay



Human Services team



Supervisor of Elections



Consumer Protection



Supervisor of Elections



Probate Court Records



Solid Waste



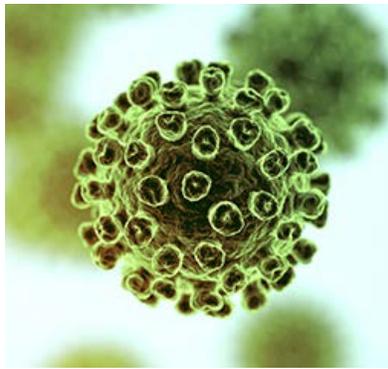
Human Resources



Supervisor of Elections



Important COVID-19 Updates



Free Tests

Ways to get free COVID-19 at-home tests:

- **Local Pharmacies:** Get up to 8 free at-home tests per month at local pharmacies. Take the test(s) to the pharmacy counter (not the regular checkout) and show your Cigna medical card.
- If you purchased the tests previously (since January 15, 2022), submit a claim for [reimbursement](#) from Express Scripts up to \$12 per test.
- **By Mail from U.S. Post Office:** Order a set of [4 free at-home tests](#) by mail from the United States Post Office. Takes 7 to 12 days to ship.
- **By Mail from Express Scripts:** Get up to **8 free at-home tests** every 30 days by mail from Express Scripts. Log in to [Express Scripts](#) and complete the short order form. Takes up to 4 weeks.

Feeling Sick?

Learn the [difference between COVID-19, allergies, and other viruses](#).

Scheduled Leave

As has been the practice during times of increased flu activity, leave taken for flu and flu-like illness is considered scheduled leave. If you do not feel well, you should not come to work. Absences due to suspected COVID-19 symptoms should be treated in this same way. Please discuss absences and how to code your time sheet with your supervisor. See the [Employee FAQs](#).

Prevention

Continue to practice CDC recommended [preventive measures](#).

Updated CDC Recommendations

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have updated the [recommended isolation and quarantine period](#) for COVID-19.

Heart Healthy Recipe: Red Beans and Rice with Corn on the Cob



Cook up this authentic, heart healthy Southern favorite on the stovetop.

Servings 4

Serving size: 1 cup red beans and rice mixture and 1 ear of corn

Ingredients

Corn on the Cob

- 4 large ears of corn, husks and silks discarded
- Butter-flavor cooking spray
- Pepper to taste (freshly ground preferred)

Rice

- 1 cup uncooked long-grain brown rice
- 2 teaspoons olive oil (extra virgin preferred)
- 1/2 small white onion, thinly sliced OR
- 4 green onions, thinly sliced and 4 garlic cloves, chopped

Beans

- 1 1/2 cups cooked red beans, cooked without salt, or 1 -15.5-ounce can no-salt-added red beans, kidney beans, black beans, pinto beans, or black-eyed peas, rinsed and drained
- 1/2 teaspoon salt-free Creole or Cajun seasoning blend
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper (freshly ground preferred)

Directions

Corn on the Cob *(Food hack: use frozen!)*

- Bring a large pot of water to a boil over high heat. Cook the corn, covered, for 5 minutes. Drain and rinse under cold water.
- Transfer the corn to a baking sheet. Gently pat dry with paper towels. Lightly spray the corn with cooking spray. Sprinkle with the pepper. Serve the corn with the red bean and rice mixture.

Red Beans and Rice

- Prepare the rice using the package directions, omitting the salt and margarine.
- Meanwhile, in a large skillet, heat the oil over medium heat, swirling to coat the bottom. Cook the onions for 2 minutes, or until soft, stirring occasionally. Stir in the garlic. Cook for 1 minute. Stir in the beans, seasoning blend, and pepper. Cook for 3 to 5 minutes, or until heated through, stirring occasionally.
- Stir the rice into the bean mixture

Nutrition Facts

• Calories	413
• Total Fat	4.5 g
• Saturated Fat	1.0 g
• Unsaturated Fat	3.5 g
• Cholesterol	0 mg
• Sodium	29 mg
• Total Carbohydrate	83 g
• Dietary Fiber	8 g
• Sugars	11 g
• Protein	15 g

Recipe from the [American Heart Association](#)

