

To Your Health

PHYSICAL



EMOTIONAL



SOCIAL



FINANCIAL



APR 2023

Meet Our New Wellness Technician!

We are so excited to announce that Cole Martin joined the Wellness Team on March 15th. Cole will play an integral role in leading and supporting all wellness initiatives, events and fitness classes. His office is located in the Benefits, Retirement and Wellness area, 400 S. Fort Harrison Avenue, first floor, Clearwater, and you'll catch him in the Wellness Center often.

Get to Know Cole



My name is Cole Martin. I grew up in Wisconsin and attended the University of Wisconsin for my undergraduate degree in kinesiology. I was on the Wisconsin wrestling team where I was a four-year starter. My

fiancé and I moved to Florida in the fall of 2021 where we both attended graduate school at the University of South Florida. I recently graduated in December with a masters degree in exercise science. In my free time, I enjoy going to the beach, playing with my dog, cooking, trying new restaurants, and exploring new places. During my time in Wisconsin, I grew to hate the cold winters so Florida has treated me very well since moving down.

My professional experience is heavy in fitness, health, and wellness. I am an ACE Certified Personal Trainer

and Group Exercise Instructor and have worked in the sports performance industry for two years where I had the opportunity to train and coach youth, high school, college, and professional athletes, as well as adults of all ages. Most recently I have worked in the corporate wellness industry where I gained valuable experience developing, promoting, and implementing various health and wellness programs designed to improve many aspects of employees' well-being. I am very excited to begin my professional journey with Pinellas County and share my knowledge and expertise with everyone.

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NEW

Fitness Classes Added

With Cole on board, we've added multiple new fitness classes. See [page 2](#) for details.

- Cardio Bootcamp
- Full Body HIIT
- Wake Up & Stretch

New Dates Added for OnSpot Dermatology Bus

View the [OnSpot Dermatology Bus](#) webpage for more details.

Achoo! "I'm not Sick, it's Just my Allergies!"

By Brittany Hartup, BSN, RN, Cigna Nurse Health Coach



Brittany Hartup

Doesn't it seem like we say that more often post-COVID? Especially in Florida, where every season feels like allergy season! These hypersensitive and over exaggerated responses by our immune system can be caused by [food, animals, pollen, insects, latex, medications, and more](#). Symptoms are based on what is causing the allergy (also known as an allergen), and how severely our bodies react. There is no cure for allergies, only symptom management and lifestyle modifications.

The prevalence of food allergies is on the rise, and currently affects approximately [32 million Americans](#), with 5.6 million of those under the age of 18 years. The United States Food and Drug Administration recognizes [9 major food allergens](#): peanuts, tree nuts, wheat, fish, crustacean shellfish, eggs, milk, soybeans, and sesame. Symptoms of an allergic reaction can be mild, such as itchy hives, flushed skin, or a tingling or itching sensation in the mouth. Severe, life-threatening reactions (anaphylaxis) can cause swelling of the throat and vocal cords, difficulty breathing, anxiety, confusion, loss of consciousness, weak pulse, and even death.

Seasonal allergies, sometimes referred to as allergic rhinitis or hay fever, are primarily caused by [wind-pollenated plants](#) such as trees, grasses, and weeds. It may come as a surprise, but the pollen from insect-pollenated plants like flowers are too heavy to remain airborne for long, making them less likely to cause a reaction. Symptoms of seasonal allergies are typically

much less severe than those caused by food. In these cases, you can often expect sneezing, runny or stuffy nose, watery and itchy eyes, ear congestion, and postnasal drainage.

Treatment for allergies depends on the type of allergen. For mild seasonal allergies, many people take over-the-counter medication either regularly or on an as-needed basis. Beyond using medications, you may be able to [manage your seasonal allergies](#) by regularly changing your air purifier, wearing a mask outdoors, using nasal irrigation, and even wearing sunglasses. For people with severe, life-threatening reactions to things like insects or food, the primary method of management is to strictly avoid the allergen. Additionally, carrying an [EpiPen](#) can save their life if they come into contact with a life-threatening allergen. These emergency injections of epinephrine can help improve breathing, stimulate the heart, increase blood pressure, and reduce swelling of the face, lips, and throat.

If you think allergies may be negatively impacting your quality of life, talk with your [in-network healthcare provider](#) about your treatment options. Take your friends and family seriously when they share information about their allergies with you. By helping reduce or prevent exposure to an allergen, you could not only spare them some nasal congestion and coughing, you could also be saving their lives.



Cigna Nurse Health Coach [Brittany Hartup](#) provides coaching on preventing and managing chronic conditions.

New Fitness Classes

With a new Wellness Technician comes new Fitness Classes! Cole is utilizing his exercise science background to bring you brand new classes to spice up your fitness routine. Check out the new classes below:

Cardio Bootcamp, Tuesdays, 12:00 - 12:30 p.m.

Challenge your cardiovascular system in a high intensity workout using a variety of equipment. Stay on your toes in a fun, high energy environment. Intensity modifiable to all fitness levels.

Full Body HIIT, Thursdays, 12:00 - 12:30 p.m.

Maximize your caloric burn with high intensity intervals followed by rest periods. Combining strength and cardio, get the most out of your workout using

a variety of equipment to get your heart rate up and muscles pumping.

Wake Up & Stretch, Mondays, 6:30 - 7:00 a.m.

Start your week with an energizing yet relaxing stretch to mobilize and prep your body for a great week. This class will help to improve flexibility, mobility, and range of motion in all fitness levels.

View the [Group Fitness Classes](#) webpage to see the full fitness class schedule, class descriptions, and how to sign up.

If you are not a member yet, [sign up](#) for our Wellness Center orientation to get started.



April Wellness Screenings, Events & Webinars



Jet Dental

Skip the traffic and get your dental exam at a worksite near you. [Register now](#) for an appointment at a pop-up dental clinic (now through May 30). The appointment includes X-rays, cleaning, and a comprehensive exam by a dentist.



OnSpot Dermatology Bus

NEW! Get a full skin cancer screening and other dermatology services on the bus. [Register now](#) for a mobile dermatology appointment at multiple convenient locations from **April to August**.



Living Paycheck to Purpose Series

[Register now](#) for a 4-week (1-hour each) financial empowerment webinar series **May 2 to 23, 1:15 p.m.** Learn to plan for financial success, take control of your paycheck, and build wealth.

Spring Harvest Talk & Tour



[Register now](#) for a 1-hour in-person garden tour in Largo on **April 14, 12:30 p.m.** with an IFAS Master Gardener. You'll gain vegetable and herb tips while harvesting the bounty of a real urban garden.

Attracting Wildlife to Your Yard



[Register now](#) for a 45-minute webinar on **April 18 at 12:15 p.m.** Join UF/IFAS Extension educators to learn the top ten landscaping tips to support wildlife in your yard.

Forest Bathing Nature Walk



[Register now](#) for a 45-minute in-person immersive nature experience at Walsingham Park on **April 21 at 12:30 p.m.** Enjoy a walk in the woods to promote good health and reduce stress.

FRS Social Security & Retirement



[Register now](#) for a 1-hour webinar on **April 12 at 8:30 a.m. or 3:30 p.m.** to understand the role Social Security will play in your retirement, how to qualify, how to obtain estimates, and when to start collecting.

Cook Along: Eating with the Season



[Register now](#) for a 45-minute webinar on **April 20 at 12:15 p.m.** Learn what is growing in the Sunshine State now and the perks of eating with the seasons, while watching a cooking demo of stuffed yellow squash.

Stress Less: Simple Changes



[Register now](#) for a 30-minute webinar on **April 27 at 12:15 p.m.** What does "stress" really mean and how does it hurt us in the long run? Explore the ins and outs of stress and what we can do to manage it.

[View all current wellness classes, events, activities, screenings, and blood drives.](#)



Healthy Nutrition, Healthy Skin

By Shannon Parks, MPH, RD, CPH, Cigna Nutrition Health Coach



Shannon Parks

It's undeniable that just about everybody wants healthier, younger-looking skin. With warmer temperatures on the horizon, our skin is likely getting more attention than it has through the winter season. When it comes to healthy skin, what you put on your plate may be more important than what you put on your skin.

Everything we eat not only nourishes our body on the inside, but we see its impact on our skin, too. You may find yourself battling skin breakouts, rashes, and/or flares in eczema or psoriasis that [can be directly linked to diet](#) or food intolerances. Paying attention to nourishing your skin through a nutritious diet and adequate hydration can really help. Check out the [nutrients your skin needs](#) to look and feel its best all season and beyond:

- **Healthy fats:** These help your skin glow, instead of looking wrinkly or dry. *Where to find them:* fatty fish like salmon, nuts and seeds, and healthy oils like coconut, avocado, or olive oils.
- **Protein:** Considered the building blocks of skin, they help form collagen and keratin, as well as provide amino acids for sloughing off dead cells. *Where to find it:* animal and plant sources such as meat, eggs, dairy, legumes, tofu, tempeh, nuts and seeds.
- **Vitamin A:** This nutrient helps the oil glands surrounding your hair follicles work to lubricate your skin naturally, as well as aiding in healing cuts and

scrapes. *Where to find it:* dark leafy greens, eggs, dairy.

- **Vitamin C:** A powerhouse for collagen formation; your skin absolutely loves this nutrient. *Where to find it:* dark leafy greens, avocados, citrus, orange, and yellow vegetables.
- **Vitamin E:** Acts as an antioxidant in protecting your skin from energy emitted by UV rays that can cause light damage to your skin. *Where to find it:* dark leafy greens, eggs, avocados, olive oil.
- **Zinc:** Critical to skin healing and skin integrity. *Where to find it:* legumes, eggs.
- **Selenium:** Acts as an antioxidant in protecting your skin from energy emitted by UV rays that can cause light damage. *Where to find it:* Brazil nuts, flaxseeds, eggs, spinach.

If you're unsure whether your skin is getting the nourishment it needs, it may be time to take a deeper look at your nutrition, including vitamins, minerals, protein, and dietary fat. Schedule an appointment with your [Cigna Onsite Health Coaches](#) today. Please note, some skin conditions may be best discussed with an [in-network dermatologist](#). Your Onsite Cigna Health Coaches can help you find a local, in-network provider, as well.



Cigna Nutrition Health Coach [Shannon Parks](#) provides coaching on nutrition and wellness.

Pinellas County Steps Into Health

The Wellness Team congratulates over 100 employees who, in January, committed to making healthy changes in 2023 by signing up for Stepping Into Your Health. Participants embarked on an 8-week personal journey that allowed them to “choose their own path” when it came to setting personal weekly step goals. After reflecting at the end of each week, they could increase their step goal if they wished. Here are just a few comments we received.



Becky Gonzalez,
Business
Technology
Services

From left to right: Stephanie Hendrix, Cathie Perkins, and Mary Burrell from the Emergency Operations Center



“The challenge motivated me to get up and move more. Most days I got 2,000 to 4,000 more steps than I did before.”

-Stephanie Hendrix

“I built up endurance very quickly and was thrilled to see that I could safely push myself further. I continue to work out and have newfound motivation. Thanks for getting me back on track!” -Brandi Kasprzyk

“Because I set achievable goals, I found that meeting them each week motivated me to keep going. I gradually increased my step goal, am still walking every day after work, and have gone down a dress size.” -Catherine Eichner

Keep an eye out for more challenges in the future!



Back on Your Feet: Foot and Ankle Solutions

BayCare Presents Health and Wellness From the Experts Webinars

Monday, May 15, 12:30 p.m. to 1:15 p.m.

Presented by: Eric R. James, MD

Learn from a board-certified orthopedic surgeon as he discusses common foot and ankle conditions, medical imaging and when to order one, and various treatment protocols.

Join Dr. James to learn the ins and outs of foot and ankle conditions and why surgery may or may not be your best option for optimal recovery and overall health and well-being.

Please [register](#) in advance.



EAP Wellness Webcast

We are pleased to offer national webcasts through Cigna EAP on **Wednesdays at 2 p.m.**



[Sign up now](#) and stay tuned for more throughout the year.

- **April 19 – Workplace Conflict: Strategies & Solutions** – Conflict is a fact of life, and the workplace is no exception. Find out how you can respond to it in proactive and constructive ways. (Available in English and Spanish)
- **May 3 – The Power of Connection at Work** – Feeling disconnected can have a powerful impact on our work and well-being. We'll discuss the challenges and how to build meaningful connections.

Financial Football Series Now Available on Video

Did you miss this class? The entire series is available on the [Wellness Videos](#) webpage.

Like any winning football team, a solid strategy, consistency, and effort result in a winning season.

What is your financial game plan for 2023 and beyond? Not sure where to start? Watch the workshop to devise a solid strategy, set goals, and outline an action plan.



Wellness Incentives Payout in March 31 Paycheck

If you completed activities between July 1 and December 30 that qualify for [Wellness Incentives](#), your points were deposited into your reward bank on March 31. If you elected cash, the reward appeared on your paycheck the same day. If you're expecting rewards, please check your paystub or the [rewards website](#) (internal link for employees). Reach out to wellness@pinellas.gov with any questions.



Food Trucks on Wednesdays

Connect with your co-workers during Food Truck Wednesdays at two County locations.

You can order at the truck, or pre-order up to 3 days ahead, pay and select a pick-up time using each location's unique link. The cuisine rotates each week for variety. You can also sign up for email reminders of which truck is coming each week using the links below.



Clearwater Campus

Wednesdays 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
400 South Fort Harrison Avenue

Enjoy your lunch in a shady picnic area in front of the Annex building. View the [Clearwater Campus Food Truck Schedule](#) and pre-order if desired.

STAR Center / Raytheon

Wednesdays 10:30 - 1:30 p.m.
7887 Bryan Dairy Road, Largo

West parking lot near Raytheon main entrance. View the [STAR Center/Raytheon Food Truck Schedule](#) and pre-order if desired.



WELLNESS CHAMPION SPOTLIGHT

Alex Meloy

Purchasing & Risk Management

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?

Since June 2017. One and a half years with the Clerk of the Circuit Court and almost 4 and a half years in Purchasing and Risk Management as a Procurement Analyst.

Tell us a little about yourself.

I have lived in Pinellas County since 1994. I am a transplant from Napa, California and Chicago, Illinois. My first career was in the restaurant industry for 19 years. I have been playing guitar for almost 25 years and play with the worship band at my local church, Adoration. I enjoy all sports but golf, baseball and football top my list and I root for the local teams. I love camping and

spending time outside with my wife of 16 years, Amy, and our 3 kids, Lily (8) and our twins Emma and James (2 ½).

Why did you want to serve as a Wellness Champion?

I did not know I wanted to be a Wellness Champion! It was my first month in Purchasing and the opportunity was bestowed on me. But I have enjoyed serving the entire time and it has been a privilege to hold the seat.

What do you do to take care of yourself?

I try to exercise 3 times a week between cardio, calisthenics and yoga. I try to eat healthy with a balanced diet of various proteins, fruits and vegetables. I limit the pizza, beer and cookies to once a week (sometimes twice a week!). Also, chasing twin toddlers will help keep you young and moving all the time!

Upcoming Blood Drives



Did you know that one blood donation can save up to three lives?

Please consider donating! Walk-ins are welcome or [schedule an appointment](#).

- **Clearwater Courthouse**
315 Court Street (west parking lot)
April 25, 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- **Public Works**
22211 U.S. Highway 19 N., Clearwater (in front of the Survey building)
April 13, 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- **STAR Center**
7887 Bryan Dairy Road, Largo
April 20, 9:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
- **Utilities**
14 S. Ft. Harrison Avenue, Clearwater
April 13, 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Notice to Tobacco Users: Paycheck Deductions Begin April 14



For those employees on the County's medical plan who attested to using tobacco and did not complete a qualifying tobacco cessation program before the March 31 deadline, paycheck deductions will begin on the **April 14** paycheck.

If you complete a program after the deadline, the deductions will stop. There are no retroactive refunds.

Be sure to check out and sign up for one of the [available program options](#), including coaching with one of our [Cigna Onsite Health Coaches](#) or Cigna's telephone coaching.

Visit our website for a full list of [tobacco cessation resources](#).



Celebrating Eid al-Fitr: Cookie Recipe



Eid al-Fitr, also known as “Holiday of Breaking the Fast” or “Festival of Sweets,” is a religious holiday celebrated by Muslims marking the end of the month-long fasting of Ramadan.

The date of celebration varies

year to year as it is based around when the new moon is sighted by local religious authorities. This year, Eid al-Fitr takes place at sunset on April 21. Depending on the country, Eid al-Fitr is celebrated for 1 to 3 days, with celebrations including obligatory acts of charity, ritualistic congregational prayer, and feasts, often with an abundance of sweets.

The traditional Eid cookie is common in many celebrating countries. Stuffed with pistachios, sesame seeds, and honey, this sweet treat is a tasty way to honor the holiday. The pistachios and sesame seeds in this recipe provide an unsuspecting nutritional punch as great sources of plant-based protein, healthy dietary fat, gut-friendly fiber, and nutrients such as potassium, zinc, selenium, copper, iron, and vitamin B6!

One ingredient in this recipe may be new to you, but it has been used for thousands of years in India and other parts of South Asia and the Middle East. Ghee is clarified butter, which is butter that has been simmered at low temperatures until the water bubbles to the top and forms a light foam. The water is then strained and a rich, nutty flavor remains. Clarifying butter removes casein and lactose, making it suitable for the dairy-sensitive. Without water, ghee is shelf-stable and can be stored without refrigeration. It also has a high smoke point. Many grocery stores tend to carry at least 1 brand of ghee in the international aisle, and with the many Indian and other Asian markets in the area, it’s not hard to find.

Although packed with nutrients, at 209 calories and 14 grams of fat per cookie, take time to savor it and limit your portion size.

Ingredients

- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon granulated sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 3 tablespoons toasted sesame seeds
- 1/2 teaspoon dry yeast

- 1 cup ghee (clarified butter), room temperature and not melted
- 1/3 cup warm water

For the filling:

- 1 tablespoon ghee
- 1 tablespoon flour
- 1 teaspoon sesame seeds
- 1/4 cup honey
- 1/2 cup pistachios, coarsely ground

Optional powdered sugar for garnish

Directions

1. In a medium sized mixing bowl, combine flour, salt, sugar, yeast, cinnamon, sesame seeds, and ghee until completely incorporated. Add water and continue mixing until you’ve got a nice, consistently textured dough. Cover and let rest 1 hour.
2. Meanwhile, prepare the filling. In a small pot over medium heat, add ghee and flour, mixing constantly until the flour turns golden brown. Remove from heat. Add sesame seeds and honey, mixing well; return to a low heat until it thickens.
3. When thickened, remove from heat and fold in pistachios, mixing to combine. Let cool for about 10 minutes and form this mixture into 20 small balls.
4. After the cookie dough has risen for an hour, divide the dough equally into 20 balls of roughly 40 grams (approximately 1.41 ounces) cookie dough each. Place the dough balls on a plate and cover with plastic wrap.
5. Take 1 of the balls of dough, put 1 portion of pistachio filling in the center, and close the dough to form a ball around it. Make a small engraving with a fork.
6. Place cookies on a parchment-lined baking tray, bake at 350F for 20-25 minutes or until the bottom is golden brown.
7. Let the cookies cool completely on a wire rack. Store in an air-tight container. When ready to enjoy, sprinkle with powdered sugar (optional).

Yield: 20 cookies

Serving: 1 cookie

Recipe adapted from [Halifax Public Library](#).

Nutritional information per serving:

Calories 209, Carbohydrate 20 gm, Dietary fat 14 gm, Protein 3 gm, Sodium 16 mg, Sugar 4 gm



April 2023 Group Fitness Classes

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
6:30 to 7:00 a.m. Wake Up & Stretch Cole 			6:30 to 7:10 a.m. Walk & Talk (Outdoor) Shannon
12:15 to 12:45 p.m. Core & Balance Shannon	12:00 to 12:30 p.m. Cardio Bootcamp Cole 	12:15 to 12:45 p.m. Spin YouTube Video (no class 4/26)	12:00 to 12:30 p.m. Full Body HIIT Cole 
	5:15 to 6:15 p.m. Solely Strength Cole	5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Urban Line Dancing Jolanda (no class 4/26)	

Classes are held at the [Wellness Center](#), 324 South Fort Harrison Ave., Clearwater.

Pre-Registration Required

- To sign up, visit [Fitness Class Registration](#).
- Sign up opens one week before class.
- Registrants who do not show up for class within 5 minutes of start time will lose their spot.
- If a class is full (8-person limit), you can wait on standby and join the class if a spot opens up.
- If unable to attend, cancel your registration or email wellness@pinellas.gov.

Class Descriptions

Cardio Bootcamp (30 minutes): **NEW**

A challenging, fun, high energy class. Intensity modifiable for all fitness levels.

Core & Balance (30 minutes): An all-level core-dedicated workout that strengthens mid-body muscles which help maintain good posture, range of motion and a healthy back.

Full Body HIIT (30 minutes): **NEW**

Combine strength and cardio intervals, and a

variety of equipment to work your entire body.

Solely Strength (1 hour): Focus exclusively on building strength, lean body mass, bone strength and decreasing body fat in this total body strength training class.

Spin (30 minutes): A low impact cardio workout ideal for all fitness levels. Control your own resistance and speed to improve your current fitness level at your pace. The April Spin class will feature an online video on the TV.

Urban Line Dancing (1 hour): Dance is an excellent stress reducer, muscle toner and leg strengthener. Get moving and have some fun!

Wake Up & Stretch (30 minutes): **NEW**

Start your Monday with an energizing yet relaxing stretch to prep your body for a great week.

Walk & Talk (40 minutes): Get your steps in with Shannon, your [Cigna Onsite Nutrition Health Coach](#), while discussing nutrition and a healthy lifestyle.

Bookmark the [Group Fitness Class Schedule](#).

