

# To Your Health

PHYSICAL



EMOTIONAL



SOCIAL



FINANCIAL



OCTOBER 2023

## October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month

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

It's probably reasonable to say you or someone you care about has been impacted by breast cancer. During the month of October, we recognize Breast Cancer Awareness Month to bring attention to the fact that 264,000 women and 2,400 men are [diagnosed](#) with breast cancer annually.

Some people have no [symptoms](#) and are diagnosed at a routine screening. Others may feel a new lump in their breast or near the armpit during a [self-exam](#). They may notice a change in the skin of the breast, like new irritation, dimpling, redness, or flakiness. The nipple could become painful and start pulling inwards or produce a discharge that is not breastmilk.

The best type of screening you can get is a [mammogram](#), which is covered 100% by insurance when part of your preventative care. This special x-ray of the breast can identify early signs of cancer, sometimes up to three years before a lump can be felt.

A breast cancer diagnosis can feel overwhelming, but the quicker it's found, the quicker it can be treated. We are fortunate to partner with [BayCare's VIP Mammogram Days](#) program which secures first access to appointments for County employees and their covered spouses on October 24, November 2, November 6, and November 14. If you are not on the County plan, please check with your insurance provider. You can also watch for the return of the mobile mammogram bus in April 2024.

## Depression Education and Awareness Month

By Jane Grannis, Wellness Program Manager

It can be difficult to talk about what's going on in our head sometimes. With October being National Depression Education and Awareness Month, let's explore that conversation. Depression affected [21 million people](#) in the U.S. in 2021, and only a bit more than half of those individuals received treatment. Although depression is one of the most common mental health diagnoses in the U.S.,

Continued on [page 5](#)

## Inside

- 2 Move for Your Mental Health, Diet and Depression: There's More to It Than We Realize
- 3 Upcoming Wellness Activities:
  - Nearing Retirement in the FRS Webinar
  - Cook Along Kitchen: Seasonal Salads Webinar
  - Preventive Care, Healthier You Webinar
  - Plant Your Own Herb Garden Workshop
  - Wellness Weekly Breaks
- 4 What a Pain!, Hinge Health Testimonial, Biometric Screening FAQs
- 5 Free Onsite Flu Shots & More Vaccine Clinics
- 6 Clerk's Technology's Squat & Lunge Challenges, Important CDC COVID Vaccine Updates
- 7 Tell It Well: Julia Stevenson, Wellness Incentives Paid Out in Sept. 29 Paycheck, Maintain Campaign
- 8 BayCare VIP Mammogram Days
- 9 Tobacco Cessation Programs, Pediatric Cardiology to Adult Congenital Heart Disease: A Lifelong Journey of Care BayCare Webinar, EAP Wellness Webcast, Upcoming Blood Drives
- 10 Mobile Wallet Card
- 11 Canadian Split Pea Pudding Recipe, Open Up! It's National Oral Hygiene Month
- 12 Group Fitness Classes

## Wear Pink on October 20

Wear pink on Friday, October 20 to help raise awareness of breast cancer.

Send a selfie or a group photo of your coworkers by October 26 to [wellness@pinellas.gov](mailto:wellness@pinellas.gov) and we'll put it in the next *To Your Health!*

# Move for Your Mental Health

By Sydney Szczesniakowski, MS, NSCA-CPT, Wellness Technician



Sydney Szczesniakowski

Depression can look different for everyone. It can range from temporary feelings due to a life event, unexplainable low periods, or more persistent bouts of depression. While therapy and medication can be effective tools for handling depression, physical activity can also help alleviate feelings of depression.

How exactly does exercise impact depression and its symptoms? You've probably heard of our "feel-good" hormones, [endorphins](#). Exercise increases the production of these hormones, which can reduce stress and improve mood. Just 30 minutes of low-intensity exercise, such as walking, has been shown to increase levels of [serotonin](#), a chemical in our brain that regulates mood, keeping us happy and emotionally stable.

When experiencing feelings of depression, some may avoid activities and social situations they once enjoyed or isolate from others. Taking a [group fitness class](#) or playing a sport can increase exposure to [social interactions](#). Exercise also tends to have a positive effect on perceived body image and can help improve feelings of low self-esteem. By participating in physical activity and allowing the body to move, [self-efficacy](#), the belief in the ability to accomplish something, improves, which then positively contributes to a sense of self-worth.

## How to Make a Sustainable Routine:

- Start small
- Find an activity you enjoy
- Be consistent
- Record your progress

Exercise resonates differently with people based on their experiences with it. If you already have a negative association with exercise, you may think there's no way it could possibly make you feel better. The good news is you have the ability to redefine exercise. You don't have to run laps around a track or lift weights for hours. While there are benefits to [aerobic exercise](#) and [weightlifting](#), the most important aspect of physical activity is creating a sustainable routine. Once you're comfortable with moving your body, you can branch out and try new things because you will have developed that sense of self-accomplishment and improved your confidence.

The goal is [30 minutes a day, five times a week](#). You can divide the time into shorter periods and still get the same benefits. Let's get moving for mental health!

# Diet and Depression: There's More to It Than We Realize

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



Shannon Parks

Few people are aware of the connection between nutrition and depression, and even fewer know that certain nutritional deficiencies can have a direct link to depressive symptoms. Deficiency of omega-3 fatty acids, folate (a B vitamin), vitamin B12, and magnesium are all linked to developing depression. Nutrition can play a key role in

the onset, severity, and extent of depression someone experiences. Looking at the diet of depressed individuals, there is a greater likelihood that they're making poor food choices and choosing foods that might actually contribute to depression.

[Several studies](#) have looked at the positive effects of amino acids (specifically tryptophan, tyrosine, phenylalanine and methionine) in treating mood disorders, including depression. The amino acid tryptophan – the stuff that makes you sleepy after Thanksgiving turkey – is converted to serotonin, a feel-good chemical in our brain. Other amino acids, tyrosine and phenylalanine, are building blocks for dopamine, another dominant feel-good chemical in our brains. Our bodies naturally produce these amino acids as building blocks for feel-good chemicals in our brain when we eat carbohydrate-rich foods such as fruits, starchy vegetables, and whole grains. It's suggested that complex carbohydrates offer a longer lasting mood-boosting effect than simple carbohydrates like sweets that tend to provide immediate, but temporary, relief.

There are also links between low intake of omega-3 from fish and other sources and increased diagnosis of major depression. [Clinical studies](#) have shown that omega-3 fatty acids can effectively treat depression in doses of 1.5-2 grams of EPA daily.

Depression can feel really difficult to manage, but a well-rounded diet rich in nutrient dense foods can help. If you're curious about your dietary intake and mental health, reach out to your onsite [Cigna Nutrition Health Coach](#) to chat today.



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



# October Wellness Activities

## Webinars

### Nearing Retirement in the FRS



[Register now](#) for a 90-minute webinar on **October 19 at 8:30 a.m.** Topics discussed include setting retirement goals, including income needs, and understanding your sources of retirement income. **Registration closes October 13.**

### Cook Along Kitchen: Seasonal Salads



[Register now](#) for a 45-minute cooking demonstration webinar on **October 26 at 12:15 p.m.** Shannon spices up salads with seasonal ingredients to offer a flavorful, fun addition to your meal rotation. You and your loved ones are sure to enjoy this recipe.

### Preventive Care, Healthier You



[Register now](#) for a 30-minute webinar on **October 31 at 12:15 p.m.** Gain insight on ways to stay proactive with your health through preventive care. Brittany will discuss major risk indicators and common health screenings so you can take control of your health.

## Screenings & Clinics

### BayCare VIP Mammogram Days



[Register now](#) for a mammogram screening in Clearwater or St. Petersburg **between October 24 and November 14.** Designed especially for Pinellas County employees to get first access to mammogram appointments at two BayCare locations.

### Flu Shots & More Vaccine Clinics



[Register now](#) for free flu, shingles, pneumonia, Hepatitis A and B, and Tdap (Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis) vaccines at 7 different County worksites **between October 10-26. Please note, appointments open 7 days prior to each event.**

### Plant Your Own Herb Garden Workshop



[Register now](#) for a 45-minute onsite workshop at Public Works in Clearwater on **October 19 at 12:15 p.m.** Whether you have never grown anything or you're an experienced gardener, attend this workshop and create your own miniature herb garden!

## Wellness Weekly Breaks: Just 15 Minutes a Day

### Meditation Mondays



Build a healthy habit and start the week off with the right mindset. Pop in [every Monday](#) morning at **9:00 a.m.** and/or afternoon at **3:00 p.m.** for a 15-minute guided live meditation.

### Decompress to Stress Less on Wednesdays



Join Onsite Nurse Health Coach Brittany [every Wednesday](#) at **2:30 p.m.** for 15 minutes to enjoy word games, trivia, stretching, and more to give your brain a break.

### Friday Stretch



Sitting for long periods of time can play havoc with your posture and health. Pledge to move more by dropping in [every Friday](#) at **10:00 a.m.** to take a quick 15-minute stretch wherever you are.



# What a Pain!

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



Brittany Hartup

Everyone experiences physical pain at some point. It's our body's way of letting us know that something isn't quite right. But when does pain go from a minor inconvenience to a major problem? Living with pain, whether acute or chronic, can disrupt life by interfering with sleep, work, and hobbies. Additionally, chronic pain can lead to mental health conditions such

as depression and anxiety; people miss out on enjoyable activities, workplace duties, and often encounter providers that do not believe or know how to treat them. Knowing how and when to seek treatment can help you get back to living a normal life quickly.

Acute pain has a sudden onset and is typically the result of an injury. As the original problem resolves or heals, acute pain improves and disappears. Acute pain could occur from injuries such as a broken bone, burn to the skin, or surgery. In most cases, acute pain can be treated with over-the-counter medications such as ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin), acetaminophen (Tylenol), or naproxen (Aleve).

When pain becomes an ongoing problem lasting a few months or longer, it is considered chronic. The intensity of the pain may vary from day to day; however, it lasts over a significant amount of time and often greatly interferes

with everyday life. Back injuries, diabetic neuropathy, and non-healing injuries are just a few causes of chronic pain. In these cases, chronic pain can feel like its own separate disease. Preventing or managing health problems can help reduce the likelihood of developing chronic pain.

No matter which type of pain you are experiencing, you have options for how to manage it. Ways to relieve pain without taking medications include stretching, massage, acupuncture, heat or ice therapies, rest, physical therapy, and even hypnosis. If you have new onset pain lasting more than a few days that is not responding to conservative treatments, it may be time to see a healthcare provider.

Additionally, you may consider [Hinge Health](#), a new, free benefit to employees and adult dependents over 18. Hinge Health is a digital exercise therapy platform designed to help prevent and manage joint and muscle pain.

If you have questions about pain or help managing conditions like diabetes that can cause chronic pain, don't hesitate to reach out to your onsite [Cigna Nurse Health Coach](#) for guidance.



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

## Hinge Health Testimonial

*"The new Hinge Health benefit information couldn't have come at a better time for me. I injured my neck a few months ago and was looking for a medication and surgery-free way to help manage pain. The therapy sessions are short and can be done anytime, day or night. The free equipment helps to ensure I correctly perform the exercises. Best of all, I've significantly improved mobility and decreased pain."*

- Teresa Del Rio, Clerk of the Circuit Court



## Cigna Network

Not sure if your provider is part of the Cigna network? Log in at [myCigna.com](#), click *Find Care & Costs*, then search for a doctor, practice, or facility to see if they are listed.

## Biometric Screening FAQs

*How do I know if I completed both the biometric screening and the health assessment?*

Check your completions on [myCigna.com](#) using the [Completion Help Guide](#). If you need assistance, call Benefits at (727) 464-3367, option 1 or email [wellness@pinellas.gov](mailto:wellness@pinellas.gov).



*Should I use the Physician Results Form or make an appointment using Direct-to-Quest?*

We recommend you use the [Direct-to-Quest](#) option for quick, paperless results. The Physician Results Form takes up to 5 weeks to process. If you are using that option, NOW is the time to complete that step.

*Do I need to wait for my biometric screening results before I complete the health assessment?*

No, complete your health assessment now.



# Free Onsite Flu Shots & More

## Vaccination Clinics at 7 Locations

### Vaccines Available

- Flu
- Shingles
- Pneumonia
- Hepatitis A and B
- Tdap (Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis)

### Wellness Incentive

- Flu shots earn a Wellness Incentive Program reward of \$25 or 6,500 points.
- Earn the flu shot incentive at an onsite clinic or any other location such as Walgreens, CVS, etc.

Make an online appointment by entering the location zip code in the Publix scheduler using the Sign Up link or the QR code. **Scheduling opens 7 days prior to the clinic.**

Location	Date/Time	Sign Up Link
Annex Building, Room 130 400 S. Fort Harrison Avenue, Clearwater 33756	Tuesday, October 17 7:00 - 9:00 a.m.	<a href="#">Sign Up</a> (opens 10/10)
Annex Building, Room 130 400 S. Fort Harrison Avenue, Clearwater 33756	Wednesday, October 25 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.	<a href="#">Sign Up</a> (opens 10/18)
Justice Center, 2nd Floor Clerk's Office 14250 49th Street North, Clearwater 33762	Tuesday, October 24 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.	<a href="#">Sign Up</a> (opens 10/17)
Justice Center, 2nd Floor Clerk's Office 14250 49th Street North, Clearwater 33762	Thursday, October 26 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.	<a href="#">Sign Up</a> (opens 10/19)
Parks and Conservation Resources, Gardenia Room 12520 Ulmerton Road, Largo 33774	Thursday, October 12 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.	<a href="#">Sign Up</a> (opens 10/5)
Public Works, 1st Floor Breakroom 22211 Highway 19 N., Bldg. 1, Clearwater 33765	Wednesday, October 18 7:00 - 9:00 a.m.	<a href="#">Sign Up</a> (opens 10/11)
Public Works, 1st Floor Breakroom 22211 Highway 19 N., Bldg. 1, Clearwater 33765	Thursday, October 19 8:00 - 10:00 a.m.	<a href="#">Sign Up</a> (opens 10/12)
Solid Waste 3095 114th Avenue N., St. Petersburg 33716	Wednesday, October 11 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.	<a href="#">Sign Up</a> (opens 10/4)
STAR Center, Planning Conference Room 7887 Bryan Dairy Rd., Largo 33777	Tuesday, October 10 9:00 - 11:00 a.m.	<a href="#">Sign Up</a> (opens 10/3)
St. Pete-Clearwater International Airport, Room #234 14700 Terminal Boulevard, Clearwater 33762	Wednesday, October 25 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	<a href="#">Sign Up</a> (opens 10/18)



See FAQs at [www.pinellas.gov/flu](http://www.pinellas.gov/flu).

Contact Wellness at (727) 464-3367, option 1, or [wellness@pinellas.gov](mailto:wellness@pinellas.gov).

8/31/23



[an estimated two-thirds](#) of cases are undiagnosed.

While it is improving, stigma still exists around depression and other mental health conditions.

Unfortunately, the belief that having a mental illness is shameful and a sign of weakness prevents people from getting the right care. It is a medical condition and should be treated as such.

A formal depression diagnosis is characterized by having multiple symptoms lasting at least two weeks. These feelings may arise from difficult life events such as financial struggles, work stress, relationship troubles, chronic pain, medications, or trauma.

[Symptoms](#) associated with depression can include:

- Lack of interest in daily activities or hobbies
- Persistent feelings of sadness, anxiety, or pessimism
- Disrupted sleep
- Difficulties with concentration or energy
- Feelings of low self-worth

- Changes in appetite
- Suicide attempt or suicidal thoughts

### **Employee Assistance Program Onsite Counselor Available to All Employees**

Call or email [Lorelei Keif](#), or if preferred, set up a virtual, phone or in-person appointment. For your privacy, please email only from your personal email address.

- Email: [Lkeif2@gmail.com](mailto:Lkeif2@gmail.com)
- Phone (Pinellas County office): (727) 464-4555, option 4
- Phone (private practice): (727) 639-4266

Treatment commonly includes therapy, medication, lifestyle changes, or a combination of all three. Speaking with a mental health professional can provide some clarity and next steps for treatment. Employees and everyone in their household have access to our [onsite EAP counselor](#), Lorelei Keif, LCSW, or the national EAP [network of providers](#) through [myCigna.com](#).

If you're having trouble finding a traditional provider, consider virtual EAP and behavioral health. To find a provider that is available via phone, messaging or video, select the virtual option in the provider directory.

[Lifestyle changes](#) also play a key part in managing emotional health. Stress management, regular physical activity, a

healthy diet, a good support system, and quality sleep go a long way. Turn to [page 2](#) to learn about the impact diet and exercise have on depression.

## **Clerk's Technology's Squat & Lunge Challenges**

Jennifer Gundel, Clerk's Technology's [Wellness Champion](#), started a 4-week squat challenge within her workgroup that eventually attracted participation from other Clerk's sections. The challenge provided repetition targets based on ability level and included a tracking calendar. It was so well-received that they're in the midst of a lunge challenge this month!

Way to go, Jennifer and team!

If you'd like to implement a challenge in your department, reach out to your [Wellness Champion](#) or email [wellness@pinellas.gov](mailto:wellness@pinellas.gov).



## **Important CDC COVID Vaccine Updates**

### **What You Need to Know**

- The CDC recommends the 2023-2024 updated COVID-19 vaccines.
- [Everyone aged 5 years and older](#) should get **1 dose of the updated Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine** to protect against serious illness from COVID-19.
- [People who are moderately or severely immunocompromised](#) may get additional doses of the updated COVID-19 vaccine.
- [Children aged 6 months - 4 years](#) need multiple doses of COVID-19 vaccines to be [up to date](#), including at least 1 dose of the updated COVID-19 vaccine.
- COVID-19 vaccine recommendations will be updated as needed.





## Tell It Well

Julia Stevenson, Human Services



I have struggled with my weight for my whole life. I can't pinpoint the exact moment I decided to change my lifestyle, but I just woke up one day and decided to change my eating habits. I signed up for the [Omada Diabetes Prevention Program](#) and later also joined Weight Watchers.

I started small with incorporating more water, vegetables, and fruit. I looked for ways to still enjoy foods, but with lower calorie and point values. I didn't grow up learning how to eat healthy, but now I am taking an active role in what I choose to eat, make, and drink.

I started small with my goals — 5 pounds, 20 pounds, 50 pounds and I am still going.

Over time, I have incorporated exercise in my daily life, which has helped me to lose more weight and feel better. I'll never forget when I was able to go up several flights of stairs without feeling tired or having

to stop midway up. I am fortunate that my husband is a big supporter and encourages me every day in this journey. He doesn't mind that we eat more salads and healthier foods. In fact, he has incorporated better eating in his life, as well.

A big obstacle is I do love to eat! However, over the last few months, I have learned to either find a healthier option or exercise more to account for the extra calories. My goal for 2024 is to train for a mini triathlon! Currently, I am down about 70 pounds and looking to reach my final weight goal by the end of 2024.



I encourage all Pinellas County employees to take advantage of the [Wellness Program](#) resources and reach out to your department's [Wellness Champion](#) because they are a great resource for creating a healthier you!

## Wellness Incentives Paid Out in September 29 Paycheck

If you completed activities between January 1 and June 30 that qualify for [Wellness Incentives](#), your points were deposited into your reward bank on September 29. 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](mailto:wellness@pinellas.gov) with any questions.



### Is Your Child Depressed?

Is your child experiencing sadness or clinical depression? Learn the signs and get helpful tips on what to do from EAP.

Visit [www.pinellas.gov/EAP](http://www.pinellas.gov/EAP).

*Employee Assistance Program (EAP): Providing counseling and so much more to all Pinellas County employees.*

## 'Tis the Season to MAINTAIN Healthy Holiday Habits

Registration opens  
Tuesday, October 31st

You are unlikely to experience snow this winter, but you are very likely to experience piles of food, to-do lists, and stress! The **Maintain Campaign** is a fun 8-week challenge that provides tools and support to help you maintain your weight and keep healthy habits during the holiday season.

### Get Ready

Watch your email for the registration information on October 31st. The Challenge dates are **November 13 through January 7, 2024**.



Start each day with [MyPinellas](#), the County's new intranet site. Enjoy fresh news and features, updated every day, including wellness activities.



# BayCare VIP Mammogram Days



**Designed especially for Pinellas County Government employees, this VIP program gives first access to appointments.**

**WHO:**

Pinellas County Government employees with insurance as well as covered spouses.\*

**WHAT:**

A 3D mammogram screening is covered at 100% as an annual preventive screening for women age 40 and older.

**WHERE and WHEN:**

**Susan Cheek Needler Breast Center**

Morton Plant Hospital-Axelrod Pavilion  
400 Pinellas St., Suite 100, Clearwater

October 24, 1:00 - 5:00 p.m.

November 2, 1:00 - 5:00 p.m.

November 6, 1:00 - 5:00 p.m.

November 14, 1:00 - 5:00 p.m.

**BayCare Imaging –  
Carillon**

900 Carillon Parkway  
St Petersburg

October 24, 12:00 - 4:30 p.m.

Scan QR code or  
click below to  
register:



[Register now](#)

To learn more, see the [FAQs](#).

\* If you are outside the Pinellas County Government insurance plan, please check with your insurance provider.

#inourhands





## Tobacco Cessation Programs



If you use tobacco, complete an eligible tobacco cessation program between now and March 31, 2024 to save \$500 on your 2024 medical plan premium due to the [tobacco premium](#). There are a variety of ways to complete a program.

- Sign up for tobacco cessation coaching with Brittany or Shannon, our [onsite Cigna health coaches](#).
- Work with a Cigna health coach over the phone. To register, call (800) 862-3557, option 6.
- Complete an online 28-Day Quit Program on [myCigna.com](#).
- Register for a Tobacco Free Florida class series.
  - [Wednesdays, 12:45 - 1:45 p.m., Oct. 11, 18, 25, Nov. 1](#)

View more [tobacco cessation resources](#).

## 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.

- **October 18 – Managers: Compassionate Leadership** – Does compassion really belong in a leader’s skill set? Research says yes! Learn what it looks like and how you can use it to manage effectively.
- **November 1 – Giving to Yourself: For Caregivers** – As caregivers, it’s easy to slip into a pattern of giving all of our resources to others. It’s time to change that. Join us to gain doable self-care strategies.

## Confidential Results

Your biometric screening lab work results and health assessment responses are completely confidential.

Pinellas County does not receive individual labwork results or health assessment responses from Quest and Cigna. County reports include only aggregate results (e.g., 35% of employees have high blood pressure) which helps us design wellness programs. See [Biometric Screening and Health Assessment](#).



## Pediatric Cardiology to Adult Congenital Heart Disease: A Lifelong Journey of Care

### BayCare Presents Health and Wellness From the Experts Webinars

Monday, October 16, 11:00 to 11:45 a.m.

Presented by: Suying Lam, MD

Congenital heart disease is a lifelong condition requiring dedicated care, specialized knowledge, and continuous medical innovation. Progress in pediatric cardiology has led to improved patient outcomes and enhanced quality of life for adults with congenital heart disease when there is seamless care transition from pediatric to adult medical care.



Please [register](#) in advance.

## 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)  
**October 17, 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**
- **Public Works**  
22211 U.S. Highway 19 N., Clearwater  
**October 26, 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.**
- **STAR Center**  
7887 Bryan Dairy Road, Largo  
**October 24, 9:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.**

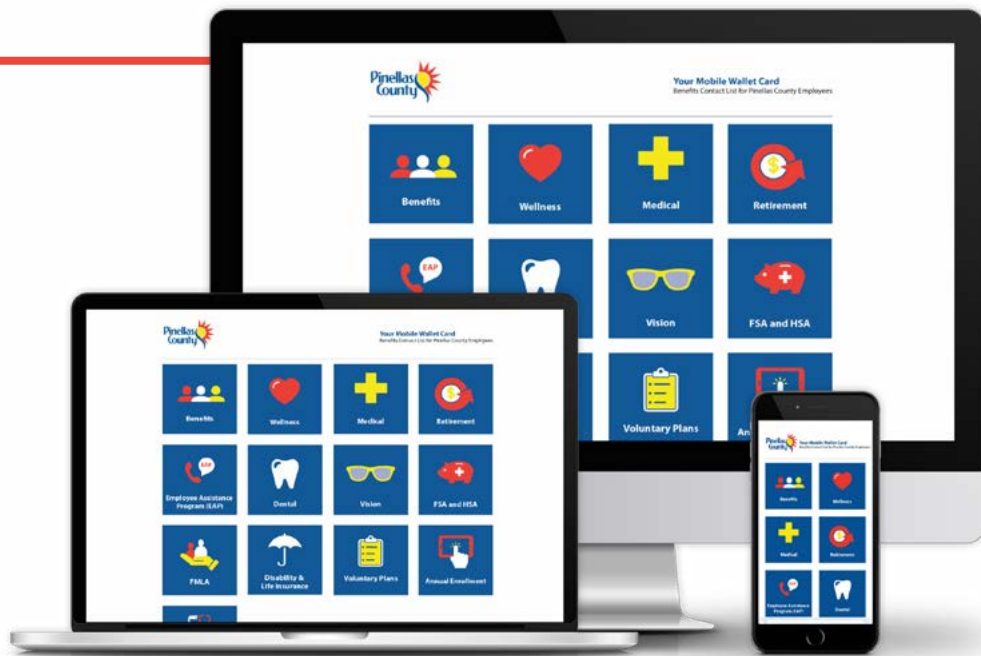


## Annual Enrollment for 2024 Benefits

Enroll in OPUS from November 1 to 15, 2023

All employees, including new hires and those declining coverage, must enroll for benefits in OPUS between November 1 and 15, 2023. We will be offering virtual information sessions at a variety of convenient times. Stay tuned for more information coming soon by email.





# Your Pinellas County benefits contacts on the go!

My Mobile Wallet Card is the easy way to find your benefits contact information, from any device, wherever you are.

To access your benefits contact information, visit:

[www.pinellas.gov/wallet-card](http://www.pinellas.gov/wallet-card)

Click on any benefit to see more information, including group numbers, phone numbers, websites, and more.

**Scan the QR code on the right to bookmark your mobile wallet card to your devices and access anytime on the go.**



# Celebrating Canadian Thanksgiving: Canadian Split Pea Pudding Recipe



Thanksgiving Day has officially been celebrated as an annual Canadian holiday on the second Monday in October since 1879. The holiday celebrates the harvest and other blessings of the past year. While Americans

celebrate Thanksgiving on the fourth Thursday of November, Canadians are known to celebrate the holiday any day of the long weekend leading up to their observed Thanksgiving Day, with the Sunday prior to the holiday being most popular for celebrations.

Foods traditionally served include roasted turkey, roast beef, ham, stuffing, mashed potatoes with gravy, sweet potatoes, cranberry sauce, sweet corn, autumnal vegetables, and sweet treats like pumpkin pie. Various regional dishes and desserts are also served, such as

## Open Up! It's National Oral Hygiene Month

Did you know oral hygiene is linked to overall health and wellness? You may be surprised to learn that gum disease is the most common type of chronic inflammation in the world. When not taken care of properly, our mouths become an entry point for bacteria. People with gum disease are [twice as likely](#) to die from a heart attack and three times as likely to have a stroke when compared to their counterparts with good oral hygiene.

It's rare to find someone who truly enjoys going to the dentist, but getting your teeth cleaned every six months is an important part of your health. You deserve a clean, healthy smile you can be proud of. Don't delay! Make an appointment today. If you need to find an in-network provider, visit [myCigna.com](http://myCigna.com), *Find a Provider* and select the specialty.

Tips to promote good dental health:

- Floss daily *before* brushing to remove any food, bacteria, and plaque, which can then be cleared away with brushing.
- Replace your toothbrush every 3-4 months, as it is not as effective once the bristles begin fraying.
- Brush your teeth for at least 2 minutes, twice a day.
- Reduce sugary foods, which cause your mouth to create acids that can lead to tooth decay.
- Get a cleaning and dental exam twice a year.

salmon, wild game meats, Jiggs dinner with split pea pudding, and butter tarts.

Rich in protein and fiber, split yellow peas belong to the same family as lentils. These small, hearty vegetables are an excellent source of calcium, iron, magnesium, copper, selenium, folate, and choline, too.

### Ingredients

- 1 lb. dried yellow split peas, about 2 rounded cups
- Water, as needed
- 1 beef bouillon cube
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Butter to taste

### Directions

1. In a strainer, wash and rinse peas with cold water. Once washed, place peas in a large saucepan and cover with water. Bring the split peas to a boil over high heat. Once they begin to boil, reduce the heat to low and simmer for about 1 hour.
2. Once the peas start to soften, season with the bouillon cube. Continue to simmer until peas become soft and mushy, adding more water if needed. Cook until the peas are quite thick, stirring occasionally so they don't stick. The whole cooking process should take 2 - 2.5 hours.
3. Once the peas have cooked to desired consistency, season with salt, pepper, and butter to taste.

Recipe adapted from [www.stuffedatthegills.ca](http://www.stuffedatthegills.ca).

Yield: 8 servings

Serving size: 1/2 cup cooked peas

Nutritional information per serving:

Calories 155, Carbohydrate 33 gm, Fat 8 gm, Fiber 8 gm, Protein 12 gm, Sodium 268 mg, Sugar 0 gm



## Ginger

Ginger has two active components (gingerol and shogaols) which have anti-inflammatory properties that can reduce muscle pain after a workout.

To learn more about nutrition, contact [Health Coach Shannon Parks](#).



# October 2023 Group Fitness Classes

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
			6:30 to 7:10 a.m. <b>Walk &amp; Talk (Outdoor)</b> Shannon	
12:15 to 12:45 p.m. <b>Core &amp; Balance</b> Shannon	12:10 to 12:40 p.m. <b>Cardio Bootcamp</b> Sydney	12:15 to 12:45 p.m. <b>Spin</b> Shirley (no class 10/25)	12:10 to 12:40 p.m. <b>Full Body HIIT</b> Sydney	12:30 to 1:15 p.m. <b>Restorative Yoga</b> Shannon (no class 10/6 and 10/20)
	5:15 to 6:15 p.m. <b>Solely Strength</b> Sydney	<b>Parks' Magnolia Room in Largo</b> 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. <b>Urban Line Dancing</b> Jolanda (no class 10/11)		
		5:30 to 6:30 p.m. <b>Step 'n' Sculpt</b> Lisa (All dates available, subject to cancellation.)		

All classes are held at the [Wellness Center](#), 324 South Fort Harrison Ave., Clearwater, except Urban Line Dancing is at Parks & Conservation Resources, 12520 Ulmerton Road, Magnolia Room, Largo.

## NO REGISTRATION REQUIRED - JUST SHOW UP

**Cardio Bootcamp** (30 minutes): A challenging, fun, high energy class that is modifiable for all fitness levels.

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

**Full Body HIIT** (30 minutes): Combine strength and cardio intervals, and a variety of equipment to work your entire body.

**Restorative Yoga** (45 minutes): A restful yoga practice that prioritizes long holds to gain a deeper stretch and emphasizes the meditative aspect of the mind-body connection.

**Solely Strength** (1 hour): Build strength, lean body mass, and bone strength, while decreasing body fat.

**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.

**Step 'n' Sculpt** (1 hour): Step your way to a healthy heart, tone your core and abs, and show your muscles some love with a feel-great stretch.

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

**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](#).

