



To Your Health

PHYSICAL



EMOTIONAL



SOCIAL



FINANCIAL



SEPTEMBER 2024

Creative Outlets for Stress Management

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



Sydney Szczesniakowski

Everyone experiences stress – it’s the body’s natural response to a challenging or threatening situation, often activating the fight-or-flight reaction. Stress allows you to make a decision to either deal with the given circumstance head on or to avoid it entirely. While this stress response can be necessary, [prolonged exposure to stress](#) without proper management

can lead to negative physical and mental health issues, including anxiety, agitation, fatigue, burnout, and even a weakened immune system.

Your stressors may be entirely different than someone else’s, so the methods you use to manage stress should be personal. Meditation, for example, is an excellent tool for some but may not resonate with you, and that’s okay! While it can be discouraging when something doesn’t work as expected, the key is to keep trying until you find what truly helps you.

Creative outlets offer a powerful way to manage stress, allowing you to see the world from new perspectives, enhance problem-solving skills, and refresh your mind and body. Research has shown a direct link between happiness and [being able to express yourself](#) through artistic and creative activities. By engaging in creative outlets, you place yourself in a flow. This flow allows you to be mindful and pull your focus to the task at hand rather than having your mind wander in a hundred different directions. Don’t worry if you doubt your artistic abilities—everyone has the capacity for creative expression. Here are a few creative outlets to explore:

- **Writing or journaling** – Write freely without judgment or criticism to help you better understand yourself.
- **Drawing, painting or coloring** – If words aren’t your strength, visual arts offer a way to process and

Continued on [page 6](#)

How to Prevent Falls at Home: Safety Tips From Physical Therapists

Courtesy of [Hinge Health](#)

About 60% of falls happen at home. As you get older, or as a loved one ages, you may worry about the risk of falling. It’s understandable. [One in four adults over the age of 65](#) experiences a fall every year, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). And many of those falls take place at home.

There’s a lot you can do around your home to reduce the risk of falls, reassures Caleb Wolters, PT, DPT, a physical therapist at Hinge Health. “A few simple steps can go a long way to improve safety,” he adds.

Practical Ways to Prevent Falls at Home

The following strategies can help to keep you safe at home, and confident as you move around.

Wear shoes inside. It might not seem as comfy, but one study in the journal [Footwear Science](#) found that wearing slippers or padding around in just socks at home more than doubled the risk of a serious fall.

Stay strong. “The best way to build balance is to build strength,” says Dr. Wolters. “The stronger you are, the [faster you’ll be able to walk](#), and the better reaction time your muscles will have if you do lose your balance.” There are simple moves you can do at home, like [sit to stand](#), body weight [squats](#), and even [seated marches](#).

Keep your mind sharp. Keep your brain strong, too. “... It’s harder to keep our brain focused on a task, especially if we’re doing more than one thing at once, like walking while talking to someone,” explains Dr. Wolters.

Better your balance. One effective way to do this is through mind-body practices, like tai chi. Tai chi has been found to significantly lower fall risk in older adults,

Join us for [Are You at Risk? Fall Prevention Workshop](#) on September 12 at 12:30 p.m. at Public Works in Clearwater.

Continued on [page 6](#)

Heart Work

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



Shannon Parks

While most of us don't think much about our heart from day to day, it's working for us non-stop around the clock – or at least we hope it is. It can be easy to overlook heart health, but the impacts of ignoring heart health are grave and the numbers are staggering. According to the [Centers for Disease Control](#), cardiovascular disease is responsible for 1 in 5 deaths in the

United States, totaling more than 859,000 deaths annually. Statistically speaking, a [U.S. adult dies every 33 seconds from heart disease](#). Working toward heart health doesn't have to take hard work, just H.E.A.R.T work. Check out the acronym to the right for ways you can [start improving](#) your cardiovascular health today.

Did you know you can receive [Wellness Incentive Program](#) rewards of \$50 cash or 12,500 points for cardiovascular health? Whether you're looking to discover new, heart-healthy recipes; better understand your lab work results, diagnoses, or medications; or want

Inside

- 3 September & October Wellness Activities
- 4 Understanding a Piece of Suicide Prevention, Congratulations Summer Self-Care Challenge Winners!
- 5 BayCare VIP Mammogram Days
- 6 Join Us for Our Wellness Weekly Breaks
- 7 Wellness 2 U, Garden for Life: Make Your Own Seed Tapes Workshop, Division of the Inspector General's Yoga Class
- 8 Heart Disease — Prevention, Diagnosis, and Treatment Webinar
- 9 Fall Out of Stress Challenge
- 10 Wellness Champion Spotlight: Shan Fernandez, Wellness Champion Meeting Recap
- 11 Hinge Health Webinars, EAP Wellness Webcast, Blood Drives, Tobacco Cessation Programs
- 12 Paws for Prevention Suicide Awareness Walk & Event
- 13 Chiles en Nogada Recipe
- 14 September Group Fitness Class Schedule

to talk strategy for reducing elevated blood pressure or cholesterol, your [onsite health coach](#) can help. Reach out today!

H.E.A.R.T Work

H – Health history. Know your risks and talk to your doctor about your personal and familial health history.

E – Eat a healthy diet. Making healthy food choices like more fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean meats, and low-fat dairy while reducing adding sugar, saturated fat, and salt.

A – Active lifestyles help! Get at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity activity every week, plus muscle-strengthening exercise twice a week.

R – Register for your annual health exams with your in-network primary care provider and in-network dentist to get quicker diagnoses and faster treatment for any medical conditions that may arise.

T – Take your medications as directed. If you take prescription medication, follow the instructions carefully. Always ask questions if you don't understand something and never stop taking medication without first discussing it with your doctor.



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

Can I Get Your Number?

By Cigna Health Coaching

With the deadline for biometric screenings around the corner (November 30, 2024), you may be wondering what some of these lab tests are, and why they're important.

What is cholesterol?

[Cholesterol](#) is a waxy substance made by the body that plays an important role in making hormones and cell membranes. Sometimes, however, too much of a good thing can be bad. Excessive amounts of cholesterol in the blood can build up within the vessels and lead to the hardening of arteries, heart attack, and stroke.

What are triglycerides?

[Triglycerides](#) are the most common type of fat found in the body. They are found in foods like butter and oils and can also come from extra calories we eat. When

Continued on [page 8](#)



September & October Wellness Activities

Ayurveda's Perspective on Menopause



[Register now](#) for a 1-hour webinar on **September 24 at 12:15 p.m.** to discover the Ayurvedic perspective on menopause and how this ancient science embraces this phase of life and assists with alleviating menopausal symptoms.

Mental Health Webinars



- [Thriving Through Uncertainty](#), **September 17**, 12:00 to 1:00 p.m.
- [Talk Saves Lives](#), **September 18**, 12:15 to 1:15 p.m.
- [Seasonal Affective Disorder](#), **October 9**, 12:15 to 1:15 p.m.

Fall Out of Stress Challenge



[Register now](#) for a 4-week challenge from **October 7 to November 1** to take control of your emotions and explore new ways to embrace a stress-free fall season. If you meet challenge requirements, you will be eligible for \$25/6,250 rewards points.

Cook Along: Plant Based Burgers



[Register now](#) for a 1-hour cooking demonstration webinar on **September 25 at 12:15 p.m.** and join Onsite Health Coach Shannon to discover the delicacy of cholesterol-free plant based burgers that taste great and improve heart health.

Ayurveda Kitchari Cooking Demo



[Register now](#) for a 1-hour onsite cooking demonstration in Clearwater on **September 20 at 12:15 p.m.** to learn how to create this delicious Indian comfort dish. *Can't make it in person?* [Register for the live webinar.](#)

Garden for Life Events



- [Designing a Container Garden Webinar](#), **September 27**, 12:45 to 1:45 p.m.
- [Onsite Make Your Own Kokedama Workshop](#), **October 24**, 12:30 to 1:30 p.m., Largo

Wellness Weekly Breaks



- **NEW** [Midweek Movement Snack Break](#), Wednesdays, 2:45 p.m. Join us for a 15-minute energizing break to wake up your body and shake off midweek stress. Enjoy simple work-friendly exercises and stretches while discovering their benefits.
- [Meditation Mondays](#), 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.
- [Friday Stretch Break](#), 10:00 a.m.

Financial Well-Being



- [Securian Estate Planning Basics Webinar](#) **September 19**, 12:30 to 1:30 p.m.
- [Onsite Securian Retirement Income](#) **October 14**, 12:15 to 1:15 p.m., Clearwater
- [Onsite Securian Social Security and Medicare](#) **October 22**, 12:30 to 1:30 p.m., Clearwater



Scan the QR code to register.

Pinellas County Wellness Program
www.pinellas.gov/wellness (727) 464-3367, option 1



Understanding a Piece of Suicide Prevention

By Lorelei Keif, LCSW, Cigna EAP Counselor



Lorelei Keif

The word *suicide* conjures up many emotions. Survivors of suicide (friends and family of someone who completed suicide) will say they experienced shock, grief, anger, and a multitude of other feelings. But in my experience, pain is the word I hear universally. And pain is what usually comes *before* a suicide attempt or completion.

Physical pain, emotional pain, pain over finances or the lack thereof, all kinds of pain. Just prior to someone attempting suicide, they may experience less pain — they have a plan and see an end to it. But it's a tragic plan that brings on ripples of more pain. Understanding, recognizing, and asking about someone's pain may make a huge difference.

Yes, you can ask. Whether it is a stranger, a co-worker, a neighbor, or a loved one, you can ask. Often people shy away from asking because they don't know what to do if someone shared that they may hurt themselves. Stay with them and make a call. You can call the suicide hotline (988) or 911 if you cannot remember 988 in the moment. Someone will talk you through what to do next. Think of it this way — not everyone is trained in CPR. But we

are still encouraged to call for help. A 911 operator will talk you through performing CPR. It works the same way in suicide prevention.

Having to call the emergency number doesn't happen often, right? And by no means is calling in an emergency the only method of trying to prevent suicide. But letting someone know you see their pain, that you notice their pain, is a gift.

Understanding the pain around suicide is complex. Most often suicidal ideation or gestures are signs and symptoms of mental illness. Depression is an illness. Depression can be treated. Reminding the people we are concerned about that there are treatment options is vital. And reminding ourselves that depression is not contagious is tantamount, too. A conversation is a great place to start.

As County employees, please know you and your family members can [reach out to me](#) or to a [Cigna Employee Assistance Program \(EAP\) Counselor](#) if you have any questions or concerns.



Cigna EAP Counselor [Lorelei Keif](#) provides counseling and behavioral/mental health support.

Congratulations Summer Self-Care Challenge Winners!

Employees embarked on a 4-week challenge to prioritize healthy routines and seasonal mindfulness during the Summer Self-Care Challenge. Through the support and motivation from coworkers in the Teams and ChallengeRunner chat, employees were able to take control of summertime spending, stay safe in the sun and keep an eye on their hydration.

Congratulations to the following employees who earned the most points! And a huge thank you to everyone who participated in the challenge. The Wellness team wishes you the best in your continuous self-care journey.

1st Place — Shauna Benish, Jordan Blending, Kevin Campanaro, Travis Cool, Kathleen Gavagan, Yuan-Chen Kung, Jamie McLane, Stephanie Rayman, Brooke Reitz, Jesse Shelton, and Dana Whitaker

2nd Place — Dwight Terry

3rd Place — Karen O'Conner



Find it Fast: HR from A to Z



Use our [A to Z Index](#), found on the left-hand side of any Human Resources webpage, to find what you need on the Human Resources website quickly.



Start each day with [MyPinellas](#), the County's 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 program gives first access to appointments.

WHO

The events are open to all Pinellas County Government employees with County or other insurance as well as covered spouses. If you are not on the County medical plan, please check with your insurance provider.

WHAT

A 3D mammogram screening is covered at 100% as an annual preventive screening for women age 40 and older. This program does not include diagnostic mammograms.

WHERE & WHEN

Susan Cheek Needler Breast Center

Morton Plant Hospital-Axelrod Pavilion
400 Pinellas St., Suite 100, Clearwater
October 29, 1:00 - 5:30 p.m.
November 1, 1:00 - 5:30 p.m.
November 6, 1:00 - 5:30 p.m.
November 14, 1:00 - 5:30 p.m.

BayCare Imaging – Carillon

900 Carillon Parkway, St Petersburg
October 29, 12:30 - 5:00 p.m.



To learn more and register:

www.pinellas.gov/mammogram



express emotions through a physical medium.

- **Music** - Whether singing, playing, or listening, music has long been a powerful tool for self-expression and emotional release.
- **Dance** – Allow your feelings to flow through your body by dancing, an expressive and liberating form of movement.
- **Spend time in nature** – Disconnect from electronics and enjoy the calming effect of being immersed in the natural world.

Stress is an inevitable part of life, but how you respond to it makes all the difference. Learn to recognize your signs of stress and explore personalized management strategies, such as creative outlets, to better navigate life’s challenges and protect your physical and mental health. If you are struggling to manage your stress, the [Employee Assistance Program](#) (EAP) can be a great place to start. Additionally, join the 4-week [Fall Out of Stress Challenge](#) beginning October 7 to master your emotions for a stress-free fall season.

Join Us for Our Wellness Weekly Breaks

Weekly breaks are quick and easy ways to recharge during the workday! All it takes is 15 minutes to kick-start your morning or boost your energy in the afternoon. You can register and add the links to your calendar or hop on using the links below.



[Meditation Mondays](#) – Build a healthy habit and start the week off in the right mindset with a guided live meditation every Monday at 9:00 a.m. and/or 3:00 p.m.



[Midweek Movement Snacks](#) – Shake off the midweek slump and rejuvenate your mind and body with work-friendly stretches and exercises every Wednesday at 2:45 p.m.



[Friday Stretch Break](#) – Sitting for long periods of time can wreak havoc on your posture and health. Combat muscle stiffness with gentle, full body stretches to release tension every Friday at 10:00 a.m.

according to a [2017 review](#). Other good [balance exercises you can do at home](#) include standing on one foot or walking heel to toe.

Do a medication review. About a quarter of all falls that lead to being hospitalized occur in people who take more than four prescription drugs, according to a [2020 study in the journal BMC Public Health](#). Meet with your doctor or pharmacist to go over current medications to determine which ones you do or don’t need, which ones have side effects that can impact balance, and which ones may interact negatively with each other.

Get your eyes checked. Stay current with annual eye check-ups to make sure any age-related vision changes aren’t putting you at unnecessary risk. If you wear glasses, make sure your prescription is up to date.

If you’re worried about falling, you’ll unconsciously limit physical activity, which leads to an even greater loss of muscle strength and balance. Knowledge is power. Understand what situations make you most unsteady at home and then take the necessary steps to reduce fall risk, while working to improve your balance.

Cast Iron Skillet



Using a cast iron skillet is one of the easiest ways to add iron to your meals. A rough estimate says we gain about 6-8 mg of iron per cup of food cooked in a cast iron skillet, which is nearly 100% of the recommended daily intake of iron for men and 33% of the daily recommended iron intake for women!

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

Share Your Good News

Please consider sharing your stories and successes by emailing wellness@pinellas.gov.

Tell It Well features stories of you or your spouse/domestic partner making healthy life changes.

Caregiver Corner shares stories of caregiving experiences including resources that you found particularly helpful.

High Five is a feature that recognizes you for something wellness-related such as completing a race, etc.





Wellness 2 U

The Wellness Team Comes to You

The Wellness team is available to visit your worksite! Choose from a variety of topics and activities:

- Wellness education classes
- Introduction to the Wellness Program and Incentives
- Stress management and other workshops
- Stretching activity

Email your request to wellness@pinellas.gov or call us at (727) 464-3367, option 1.

Clerk's Technology and Court Records' Wellness Education & Activity

Wellness Technician Sydney and Onsite Health Coach Shannon visited Clerk's Technology and Court Records where they led a fun stretching activity and provided important education about colorectal health.



Garden for Life: Make Your Own Seed Tapes Workshop

A huge thanks to IFAS Extension, the Master Gardeners Program, and the Farm Bureau for hosting our Make Your Own Seed Tapes workshop. Employees learned how to make seed tapes which can then be planted in prepared beds or soil.



Division of the Inspector General's Yoga Class

As part of their Employee Appreciation Week, the Division of the Inspector General participated in a yoga class together at the downtown Clearwater Wellness Center.



Food Trucks on Wednesdays

Connect with your co-workers during Food Truck Wednesdays at three County locations: [Clearwater Campus](#), [Justice Center](#), [STAR Center/Raytheon](#).



our body doesn't need these extra calories right away, they're changed into triglycerides and stored in fat cells. [High levels of triglycerides](#) can increase the risk of heart disease, insulin resistance or diabetes, fatty liver disease, and pancreatitis. Ideally, [triglyceride levels](#) should be less than 150mg/dL.

What is HDL?

HDL stands for high-density lipoprotein cholesterol. This is known as the "[good](#)" cholesterol, and elevated levels of it are associated with a lower risk of heart disease. One easy way to remember HDL is the "H" stands for "higher"; this number is best when it is over 40mg/dL. HDL helps [move the bad cholesterol \(LDL\)](#) from our blood stream into our liver. From there, our liver metabolizes the bad cholesterol, and it is eliminated from the body. Ways to increase your HDL include increasing physical activity, maintaining a healthy

Heart Disease — Prevention, Diagnosis, and Treatment

BayCare Presents Health and Wellness From the Experts Webinars

Thursday, September 12, 12:00 to 12:45 p.m.
Presented by: Clauden Louis, MD

Heart disease remains the leading cause of mortality worldwide, but with early detection and state-of-the-art surgical interventions, we can significantly improve patient outcomes. Preventing heart disease involves lifestyle modifications as risk factors from an imbalance increase risk.



Please [register](#) in advance. View [past presentations](#).



Feeling Stressed or Anxious?

EAP offers confidential assessment and short-term counseling at no cost for up to 6 free visits per issue per year per person.
Visit www.pinellas.gov/EAP.

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

weight, choosing [foods with better fats](#), limiting alcohol, and quitting smoking.

What is LDL?

LDL stands for low-density lipoprotein cholesterol. This is sometimes called the "[bad](#)" cholesterol, and elevated levels can increase risks of heart disease, heart attack, and stroke. Too much LDL can cause a buildup in your arteries, causing them to narrow and harden. If you are otherwise healthy, the goal is for LDL to be less than 100mg/dL. However, if you are already at risk for a heart attack, your LDL needs to be under 70mg/dL.

What is total cholesterol?

[Total cholesterol](#) is the sum of all 3 types of cholesterol in the blood: HDL, LDL, and VLDL (very low-density lipoprotein). The desirable result for total cholesterol is less than 200mg/dL.

What can I do to improve my numbers?

Have a full lipid panel drawn by blood at least annually to keep an eye on your triglycerides and cholesterol levels. Ways to improve your numbers and reduce your risk of developing chronic conditions include maintaining a healthy weight, engaging in physical activity regularly, limiting sugar and other refined foods, limiting alcohol, avoiding smoking, and be mindful of the types of fats you eat.

If you'd like personalized guidance, please [email Onsite Nutrition Health Coach Shannon](#) to set up an appointment.



Did You Know?

Good and Bad

Confused about cholesterol?

Low-density lipoprotein (LDL) is "bad" cholesterol which can increase your risk of heart disease and stroke. High-density lipoprotein (HDL) is "good" cholesterol.

To learn more, see [Cholesterol and Triglycerides Tests](#). To find out your current cholesterol levels, get a [biometric screening](#).





Fall Out of Stress Challenge

October 7 to November 1, 2024

Take control of your emotions and explore new ways to embrace a stress-free fall season for a better you.

- Earn points by identifying your life stressors and taking the steps to manage them.
- Prioritize stress management by focusing on emotional expression, community engagement, physical movement, and financial wellness.
- Share your journey and get inspired by others throughout the challenge by participating in the Fall Out of Stress Teams Channel.

Earn \$25 or 6,250 points in wellness rewards.

**Register for the Fall Out of Stress Challenge
(deadline October 8)**

Must be signed in to Okta to register.



Pinellas County Wellness Program
wellness@pinellas.gov
(727) 464-3367, option 1



9/4/24

WELLNESS CHAMPION SPOTLIGHT

Shan Fernandez

Communications

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?

24 years; 10 years at Utilities and the rest at Communications.

Tell us a little about yourself.

Born and raised in beautiful St. Petersburg, I love our local sports teams (go Rays!). My life outside the

office is NEVER a dull moment. I have three daughters and the Mrs. at home. I enjoy tennis, pickleball, biking, Turner Classic movies, coffee, and annoying my girls.

Why did you want to serve as a Wellness Champion?

A while back, I suffered a heart attack from a 99% blockage of the left anterior descending artery of the

heart. I survived by some miracle, and the fact that I was so active improved my odds of survival. My director at the time figured I would be a good role model and inspiration to others.

What do you do to take care of yourself?

I believe a healthy mind and body is crucial to getting optimum performance out of our lives. We are what we eat, so I remind myself to purchase the majority of food from the outer walls of a grocery store (where “fresh foods” are located). I also strive to reduce stress by practicing meditation/mindfulness with moderate physical activity.

Wellness Champion Meeting Recap

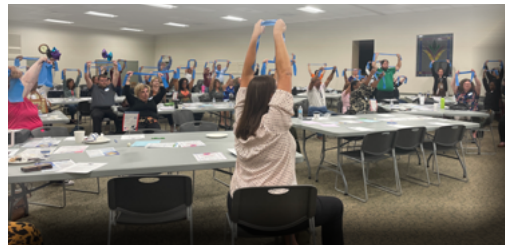
On August 7, Wellness Champions and their supervisors gathered at their annual Wellness Champion meeting, which centered around the theme “To Wellness and Beyond” and included education about suicide prevention, beating the “blahs”, and colon cancer prevention. Attendees also participated in a [Movement Snacks](#) stretch activity.

The Wellness team extends our heartfelt appreciation for all that the Champions do to support employee well-being. We could not do it without them!

View the [Wellness Champion list](#) to find your department's Champion.



Onsite Claims/Customer Service Representative Shevella Carridice and Onsite EAP Counselor Lorelei Keif greet Champions at the sign in table



Wellness Technician Sydney Szczesniakowski leads the room in a movement snacks stretch activity



From left to right: Wellness Technician Sydney Szczesniakowski, Onsite Claims/Customer Service Representative Shevella Carridice, Wellness Program Manager Jane Grannis

Not pictured: Onsite Nutrition Health Coach Shannon Parks, Onsite Nurse Health Coach Brittany Hartup



Hinge Health Webinars

Unpacking Pain: Contributing Factors and Getting Support



September 11, 1:00 - 2:00 p.m. ([Register](#))

If you struggle with persistent back, knee, or other joint pain, you know it can take a toll on your physical and emotional wellbeing. But you can overcome your pain. Dive into the science of pain, explore factors affecting your experience, and discuss how exercise therapy can help improve your overall health and wellbeing.

Connecting the Dots: Mental Health & Movement

October 9, 1:00 - 2:00 p.m. ([Register](#))

If you struggle with persistent back, knee, neck or other joint pain, your mental and emotional health may be impacted as well. Discover what pain is, why it occurs, and how movement using exercise therapy can help improve your overall mental and emotional well-being.

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](#). Bookmark [upcoming drives](#).

- **Airport**
14700 Terminal Blvd. St., Clearwater
September 12, 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.
- **Clearwater Courthouse**
315 Court Street (west parking lot)
October 16, 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- **South County Tax Collector**
2500 34th Street North, St. Petersburg
September 11, 11:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
- **STAR Center**
7887 Bryan Dairy Road, Largo
September 26, 9:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Wellness Center Orientations

Looking for access to our free 5,900 square foot state-of-the-art [Wellness Center](#)?

[Register](#) for an orientation to gain 24/7 entry to our fitness center featuring treadmills, free weights, ellipticals, and more!



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.

- **September 18 – Age is Just a Number: 50 and Beyond** – Aging brings new challenges, but also new opportunities. Discover the many ways you can make the most of this stage of life.
- **October 2 – Coaching in the Workplace for Managers** – Looking for a way to boost performance on your team? Explore when and how to apply a coaching strategy and key skills.
- **October 16 – Relationships & Money** – Learn how money matters impact your relationships and discover best practices to improve communication with others.

Tobacco Cessation Programs



If you use tobacco, complete an eligible tobacco cessation program between now and March 31, 2025 to save \$500 on your 2025 medical plan premium due to the [tobacco surcharge](#). There are a variety of ways to complete a program.

- Sign up for tobacco cessation coaching with [Onsite Health Coach Shannon Parks](#).
- 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 [my.Cigna.com](#).
- Register for a Tobacco Free Florida class series.
 - [Tuesdays, 12:30 - 1:30 p.m., Sept. 10, 17, 24, Oct. 1](#)
 - [Thursdays, 12:15 - 1:15 p.m., Sept. 19, 26, Oct. 3, 10](#)
 - [Wednesdays, 12:00 - 1:00 p.m., Oct. 2, 9, 16, 23](#)
 - [Tuesdays, 12:15 - 1:15 p.m., Oct. 8, 15, 22, 29](#)

View more [tobacco cessation resources](#).

Discounted Event Tickets

Pinellas County is pleased to offer discounted tickets to area events for our employees. Visit the [Special Discounts on Events Tickets](#) page on *MyPinellas* to view current offers. Bookmark the page or scroll to the Upcoming Events, Classes & More section on the *MyPinellas* homepage to access the page.





Join Pinellas County Wellness at the **Paws for Prevention Suicide Awareness Walk & Event**

**Sunday, September 29, 2024
10 am - 12 pm**

Walsingham Park

12615 102nd Avenue, Shelter 7, Seminole

The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention raises money to fund research, education, advocacy and support those affected by suicide, but donations are not required to participate.



Join us to show support for our community, loved ones, and the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention's mission to save lives and bring hope to those affected by suicide.

- Friends, family, and dogs are welcome.
- Pet Parade (short walk, dogs optional)
- Family-friendly activities including arts and crafts, yard games, story time, kids' playground, paw-ty time at the dog park, and more.
- Registration is not required; however, those who [sign up](#) and attend the event will receive a Wellness Program t-shirt. Meet at Shelter 7 at 10 am for a group photo!



**American
Foundation
for Suicide
Prevention**



Pinellas County Wellness Program
wellness@pinellas.gov
(727) 464-3367, option 1



To learn
more, scan
the QR code.

Chiles en Nogada Recipe

September 16 is Mexican Independence Day, which commemorates the day when priest Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla gave a since-famous grito (Mexican battle cry) in the town of Dolores, rallying Mexicans to rise up against the colonial government of Spain. Every year, on the eve of Independence Day, Mexico re-enacts the grito from the balcony of the National Palace in Mexico City, while ringing the same bell Hidalgo used in 1810.

One of the common dishes cooked to celebrate this day is called Chiles en Nogada, a roasted and stuffed poblano pepper that is covered in walnut cream and garnished with red pomegranate seeds and green parsley – the white, red, and green colors paying tribute to the Mexican flag. To decrease overall and saturated fat content, this recipe calls for turkey instead of pork. It contains many vegetables and herbs high in antioxidants, which benefit the body by repairing cellular damage. The vibrantly colored produce used in this recipe provide fiber, vitamins A, C, E, and K, as well as minerals such as magnesium, selenium, and zinc, and a host of immune boosting impacts.

Ingredients

- 6 large poblano peppers (about 6 inches long each)

Filling:

- 10 oz lean ground beef
- 10 oz ground turkey
- 1 medium carrot
- 1 medium white onion
- 1 medium waxy skinned potato (not russet)
- 1 medium zucchini
- 3 plum or roma tomatoes
- 1/2 cup peas
- 8 oz dried fruit of choice
- 1/2 cup raisins
- 1/2 cup almonds
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt

Nogada:

- 1 and 1/4 cup Mexican cream (do not use sour cream)
- 1/2 cup shelled walnuts
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- Garnish with the seeds from 2 small pomegranates and 1 bunch of parsley

Directions

1. Brown both the ground beef and turkey in the same pan until cooked through. During the cooking process, make sure the meat is as finely chopped as possible. Remove the meat from the pan and reserve any/all cooking liquids.
2. Chop the onion, carrot, zucchini, potato, and dried fruit into 1/4 inch cubes, set aside without combining.
3. Mince the almond very finely, set aside.
4. Prepare the tomato base: Slice tomatoes in half and add them to a blender with 1/2 cup reserved cooking liquid (combined with water if not enough cooking liquid remains). Blend until smooth, but not liquified.
5. Saute the onions in olive oil for 2-3 minutes until softened. Add the potatoes to the pan, cooking for 5 minutes. Add the cooked meat to the pan and combine. To this mixture, add the pureed tomatoes, carrots, zucchini, and raisins; cook for 5 minutes until tomato puree starts to reduce.
6. Add the peas, dried fruit, and almonds, and stir to combine. Cook for 15 minutes or until all vegetables are cooked and tender and the liquid is reduced.
7. Prepare the poblano peppers: Place the chiles over open flame on the burner of your stove (or grill), blacken and blister on all sides. When you've roasted all the chiles, place them in a plastic bag to sweat them (this softens the peppers).
8. Scrape the skin of the chiles with the blade of a knife to remove the skin, then split the chili down the side without cutting all the way through the tip. Remove the seeds without tearing the chili.
9. Prepare the nogada: Place the Mexican cream, walnuts, and cinnamon into a blender. Blend until smooth and incorporated completely.
10. Fill each poblano chili with enough filling so that it just closes. Place 1 stuffed chili on each plate, spoon nogada over it until it is completely covered. Sprinkle with pomegranate seeds and chopped parsley.

View the [full recipe](#).

Yield: 6 servings

Serving size: 1 stuffed poblano pepper

Nutritional information per serving:

Calories 624, Carbohydrate 67 gm, Fat 24 gm, Fiber 5 gm, Protein 27 gm, Sodium 606 mg, Sugar 47 gm (8 gm added sugar)



September 2024 Group Fitness Classes

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
AM				Sep. 5, 12, 19, 26 6:30 to 7:10 Yoga Flow Shannon	
LUNCH	Sep. 9, 16, 30 12:15 to 12:45 Core & Balance Shannon	Sep. 10, 17, 24 12:10 to 12:40 Cardio Bootcamp Sydney	Sep. 4 12:10 to 12:40 Cardio Bootcamp Sydney	Sep. 5, 12, 19, 26 12:10 to 12:40 Full Body HIIT Sydney	Sep. 6, 13, 27 12:30 to 1:15 Restorative Yoga Shannon
PM		Sep. 10, 17, 24 5:15 to 6:15 Solely Strength Sydney	Sep. 4 5:15 to 6:15 Solely Strength Sydney	Sep. 5, 12, 19, 26 5:15 to 6:15 Solely Strength Sydney	
PM	Sep. 16, 23 5:30 to 6:00 EMOM HIIT Sydney		Sep. 4, 11, 18 5:30 to 6:30 Step 'n' Sculpt Lisa		
PM			Sep. 4, 11, 18, 25 5:30 to 6:30 Urban Line Dancing (Parks) Jolanda		

All classes are modifiable for all fitness levels.

Cardio Bootcamp (30 minutes): Challenge your endurance with a variety of equipment.

Core & Balance (30 minutes): A core dedicated workout to strengthen mid-body muscles.

EMOM HIIT **NEW** (30 minutes): Every Minute on the Minute (EMOM) is a high-intensity, full body workout that challenges your mental and physical endurance.

Full Body HIIT (30 minutes): A dynamic full-body workout with brief rest periods to maximize results.

Restorative Yoga (45 minutes): A restful yoga practice with long holds for deeper stretches.

Solely Strength (1 hour): Improve your strength and bone density using free weights and circuit machines.

Step 'n' Sculpt (1 hour): Step your way to a healthy heart and tone your core.

Urban Line Dancing (1 hour at Parks Magnolia Room): Dance is an excellent stress reducer.

Yoga Flow (40 minutes): Join Cigna Onsite Health Coach Shannon Parks for yoga and meditation.

All classes, except Urban Line Dancing, are held at the Wellness Center, 324 South Fort Harrison Avenue, Clearwater.

www.pinellas.gov/group-fitness-classes

