

# To Your Health

Human Resources  
Helping U Succeed

Pinellas County Wellness Program | *Wellness for Life*

Visit [www.pinellascounty.org/hr/wellness](http://www.pinellascounty.org/hr/wellness) or contact Wellness staff at 464-4049 or [wellness@pinellascounty.org](mailto:wellness@pinellascounty.org) JUNE 2018



## TELL IT WELL EMPLOYEE FEATURE

This month's featured employee is **Carlos Ayala**, an Appraiser I with the Property Appraiser's Office.

### *What or who inspired your healthy lifestyle?*

A few years ago my XXL shirts were getting tight on me and spurred my need to make some attitude and lifestyle changes. I started with walking on the treadmill and eventually progressed to running,



Carlos Ayala  
"before" photo

biking and weight training. It was very difficult as I worked out on average 10 times a week and had nothing but clean food during that time frame. Foregoing pasta and rice was the hardest thing on the planet, but I got my health under control. Within five months I went from 298 pounds to 217 pounds.

Over the long term, however, I quickly learned that it was impossible to sustain that level of intensity. I am now around 235 pounds most

days and much happier knowing that I will never get close to wearing an XXL again.

### *Tell us more about your history/experience with exercise and/or healthy lifestyle?*

When I began my journey, my first goal was to complete a 5K. Once I did, I gained confidence and signed up for 8K, 10K, 15K, and a few half marathons.

### *How did you become interested in the activities that you do now?*

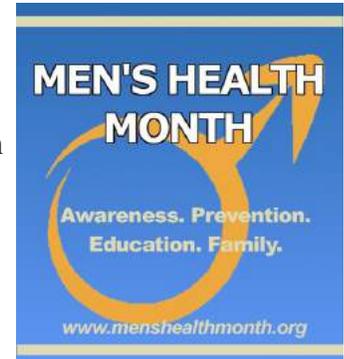
I met other runners who introduced me to trail running and mud obstacle course runs, and I instantly fell in love with those types of races. My proudest moment was crossing the finish line at the Marine Corps Marathon in Washington D.C. I keep trying to get into the NYC Marathon but haven't yet been selected.

*Continued on page 3.*

## June is Men's Health Month

The purpose of Men's Health Month is to heighten the awareness of preventable health problems and encourage early detection and treatment of disease among men and boys.

Alarming statistics show that men's health is at great risk. On average, men die almost 6 years younger than women and suffer higher mortality rates for the top causes of death. The lives of hundreds of thousands of men will continue to be threatened unless immediate action is taken to combat this growing crisis.



Research shows that:

- ▶ Men do not see physicians for a physical exam nearly as often as women
- ▶ Men are dying of the top causes of death at higher rates than women
- ▶ Men are more likely to be uninsured than women
- ▶ Approximately 30,000 men in the US die each year from prostate cancer

Check out the A-Z list of men's health issues, men's health fact sheets, a prostate health guide, and more from [www.menshealthnetwork.org](http://www.menshealthnetwork.org).

Men live sicker and die younger. Wear blue to help raise awareness about men's need to seek regular checkups.

**Wear Blue  
Day is  
June 15**



Take a photo of your workgroup wearing blue and send it to [wellness@pinellascounty.org](mailto:wellness@pinellascounty.org) for inclusion in next month's *To Your Health* newsletter.



Your  
UHC  
Nurse  
*Amy*

## Checklist for Diabetics

By Amy Hertog, RN, BSN, Clinical Nurse Liaison

In addition to the need for monitoring daily blood sugar levels and taking medications, diabetics have other special needs that require ongoing monitoring. Routine care can prevent serious complications down the road.

- **Annual eye exam:** *Diabetes is the leading cause of blindness.* Diabetic retinopathy is a serious complication that is more likely to occur in people with Type 1 diabetes but may develop in anyone with diabetes. Tight blood glucose control can significantly reduce the incidence and severity of diabetic retinopathy, but the only way to identify this and other eye problems in their earliest and most treatable stages is to have annual comprehensive eye examinations.
- **Dental care:** *One in five cases of tooth loss is linked to diabetes. Periodontal disease, the most common dental disease, affects nearly a quarter of those diagnosed with diabetes.* It's important to visit your dentist at least **twice a year** for regular cleanings and checkups. Studies show that treating gum disease can help improve blood sugar control in patients living with diabetes, decreasing the progression of the condition.
- **Hemoglobin A1C (or A1C):** *Achieving and maintaining stable glucose control helps prevent more serious complications of diabetes.* According to the American Diabetes Association (ADA), people who are meeting their treatment goals and who have stable blood glucose control should get A1C testing **at least twice a year**. People whose treatment has been changed recently or who are not achieving their blood glucose targets should be tested four times a year.
- **Kidney test:** *Diabetes can lead to kidney disease.* The microalbumin test measures the amount of albumin, a protein, in your urine and compares it to the level of creatinine, a waste product. The ratio of albumin to creatinine lets your doctor know if your

kidneys are functioning properly. Get this test **at least once a year**.

- **Blood pressure checks:** *Diabetes makes you more likely to have high blood pressure, which can put you at increased risk for stroke and heart attack.* Have your blood pressure checked **every time** you see your primary care doctor.
- **Cholesterol test:** *Having diabetes increases risk of heart disease.* It is important to have a blood test to check your cholesterol as part of your **annual exam, or more frequently** if your cholesterol levels are high.
- **Foot Exam:** *Diabetic foot wounds can quickly become problematic. The most common amputations in people with diabetes are the toes, feet, and lower legs.* Experts recommend that people with diabetes have a thorough foot exam **once a year** to check for signs of neuropathy (**and standard checks at every office visit**). The ADA recommends a monofilament test plus one additional sensation test—either pinprick, vibration, or ankle reflex—to screen for nerve damage. Additionally, it is recommended that diabetics examine their feet at home **every day**.

Help is available for those who medically qualify and have their medical plan through the County. The [Chronic Condition Management](#) program offers a \$100 wellness incentive in addition to the personal health benefits. To enroll, call United Healthcare at (888) 478-4752. Alternatively, if you are identified as qualifying through your medical claims data, you may receive a phone call invitation.

[Visit Amy's web page](#) or contact her at 464-5579 or by email at [amy\\_hertog@uhc.com](mailto:amy_hertog@uhc.com).



### Ask a Personal Trainer

Have an exercise question for a personal trainer? Wondering if you're performing an exercise with good form? Email your questions to [Jane Grannis](#), Certified Personal Trainer, and she will answer them. Please include ASK A TRAINER in the subject line. We may even feature your question (and the answer) in a future Ask the Trainer column. All questions are kept confidential unless you allow publication.



### ***Have you experienced any major setbacks? If so, how did you overcome them?***

Like everyone else, making healthy choices is a daily challenge. There are times where tackling that run in the morning, preparing healthy meals and eating right is easy. Other times it's hard to find the motivation.

The last several months have been hard. I lost momentum and have slacked off on running and eating healthy. Both my waistline and my well-being are feeling the negative effects. The most important thing is to start again, and I am getting back to better habits because I know I will feel so much better. Several friends have agreed to keep me accountable and devised a plan. Having outside support is really key to getting back on track. I'll get back to marathon-ready for sure!



Ayala at Spartan Mud Run

Recently I completed my 4th Ragnar Race which is a team relay race of 12 crazy people running about 200 miles. We

began in Nantasket Beach, MA and finished in Provincetown, MA. It wouldn't be a Ragnar Race if you didn't face the elements. My second leg of the race began at 4:09 a.m., it was a chilly 45 degrees and, during my last leg, Mother Nature decided to water all the plants in Cape Cod. So that was "fun." In the end it was an experience that I will never forget, and I plan to run one in Canada next year with the race ending at Niagara Falls.

**We want to hear from you!**



**TELL IT WELL**  
EMPLOYEE FEATURE

If you or your spouse/domestic partner has improved their life by making healthy changes, *To Your Health* wants to feature and congratulate you! Contact Jane at [jgrannis@pinellascountry.org](mailto:jgrannis@pinellascountry.org) for details on how to share your story.

## **Men and Depression**

Information adapted from *The National Institute of Mental Health*  
Contributed by Kris Boyle, Health & Wellness Associate

It is not unusual to occasionally feel sad, irritable or have trouble sleeping. But when these feelings or problems last longer than a few weeks, they could be warning signals that you may be battling depression. What if instead of

sad, you find yourself more angry, irritable or aggressive?

Symptoms of depression in men may manifest themselves in a variety of ways making depression harder to recognize by family and friends, and sometimes even doctors.

Yet depression actually affects

a large number of men, and can occur at any age.

Some signs and symptoms of depression in men include:

- ▶ Anger, irritability, or aggressiveness
- ▶ Feeling anxious, restless or on edge
- ▶ Loss of interest in work, family or previously pleasurable activities
- ▶ Lack of sexual desire and performance
- ▶ Feeling sad, empty, hopeless or "flat"
- ▶ Trouble concentrating or remembering details
- ▶ Feeling tired, difficulty sleeping or sleeping too much
- ▶ Overeating or lack of appetite
- ▶ Suicidal thoughts or suicide attempts
- ▶ Aches and pains, headaches, digestive problems
- ▶ Inability to meet work or family responsibilities
- ▶ Engaging in high-risk activities
- ▶ A need for alcohol or drugs
- ▶ Withdrawing from family and friends or becoming isolated

Some men may experience only a few of the above mentioned symptoms, and others may experience many.

If you or someone you know seems to be battling the above symptoms, a good first step is a visit to your healthcare provider. Employees can also obtain confidential professional assistance through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) by contacting [ComPsych GuidanceResources](#) at (866) 615-3047, who are available 24 hours/day. With the right treatment—sometimes medications or talk therapy or a combination—most men with depression can feel better and regain their interest in work, family and hobbies.

For more information regarding men and depression, visit the [National Institute of Mental Health, Men and Depression](#) online.



## Why Do Women Live Longer on Average than Men?

Information from United Healthcare "United at Work" [podcast](#) on men's health

Contributed by Kris Boyle, Health & Wellness Associate

Greater longevity in women may be at least partly due to their increased likelihood of having routine health checkups and screenings. According to a survey commissioned by the American Academy of Family Physicians of over 1,000 men, more than half the participants had not had a routine physical in the previous year and over a third only saw a doctor when "extremely sick."

A yearly physical may catch an abnormality or illness in its early stages when preventive measures can delay or prevent a chronic health condition.

Along with scheduling an annual exam, good health care requires good communication. Health care is a team effort, so arrive at your checkup prepared to provide as much about your health history as possible. Information regarding previous health concerns, medications, and any problems that you are currently having will be important to share with your doctor. Prepare for your appointment as well by writing down any questions you may have. Bringing a family member or friend along may also be beneficial in remembering the doctor's answers.

And while on the subject of taking care of your health, don't forget about the importance of taking care of your mouth. Along with daily brushing and flossing, a regular dentist visit will not only provide a thorough cleaning, but will screen for gum disease, tooth problems and signs of oral cancer or precancerous conditions. Just as with your primary health care provider, good communication and being armed with questions prior to your visit will allow for the best care and your best health.

The Wellness program believes staying healthy is of utmost importance. We offer [Wellness Incentives](#) of \$30 or 7,500 points for an annual physical and one of the following screenings:

- Mammogram
- Colonoscopy
- Pap test

Schedule yours today.

## The Stress-Proof Brain Learning Series a Huge Success

This series was developed in response to health surveys completed in 2016, which indicated that a majority of employees experienced at least moderate stress on a regular basis, yet most did not believe it had an impact on their health. It was important to address this lack of awareness.



The series provides information on how stress affects the body, the increased health risks resulting from unmanaged stress, what happens in the brain when we experience stress, and tools to recognize and keep stress reactions under control.

Over 600 employees participated in the spring learning series. The feedback from employees has been overwhelmingly positive. Our goal is to support you and we encourage you to continue to use the information, tools and strategies in managing stress. We've completed the series full of enthusiasm and momentum, so let's maintain a stress-proof brain in the months to come!

All four sessions have been recorded and are [available on the wellness website resources page](#). Other resources include links to videos and apps, as well as a digital copy of the workbook (which you'll need to do the assessments and exercises).

These resources are a great way to refresh what you've learned. Access the links we used in class and explore other resources, which are for everyone so you can share with family, friends and co-workers who did not have a chance to participate but would like to benefit from the information offered in the class.

### Testimonials

*"I think this was a very timely and important topic and would like to see more classes regarding dealing with stress."*

*"It was a very educational, informative class, really enjoyed joining that class."*

*"I loved it. I shared what I learned with family and friends and have implemented changes in my life to help me maintain my health."*

Keep an eye out for a month of mindfulness in July. We've got a calendar full of daily activities and practices to maintain that stress-proof brain!



## Summer Travel-Friendly Workout

Summertime travel is perfect for disconnecting from work and connecting with family, but the change in routine and environment can really derail healthy habits. Traveling does not have to derail your workouts if you're willing to be flexible (no pun intended) and change up your routine. These exercises are a great way to work your entire body, are short enough that they won't cut into your fun, and don't require any special equipment. It's important to maintain proper form to prevent injury or undue pressure on your joints.

Perform each exercise for one minute without resting in between to create a circuit that will not only work your muscles, it'll ramp up your heart rate for a bit of cardio. Repeat the circuit at least once.



### Push-ups

- ▶ Begin on your hands and knees with your hands underneath your shoulders but slightly wider than your shoulders.
- ▶ Come onto the balls of your feet and the heels of your hands, and then walk the feet back until you're in the plank position. Keep your hips lifted to avoid the lower back bowing so the belly sags towards the ground.
- ▶ Begin to bend your elbows, lowering your body in one solid piece down towards the floor. Your elbows will bend out to the side, not behind you. Keep your abdominal and leg muscles engaged throughout the entire movement. Your head should stay in line with your spine, not droop.
- ▶ Lower yourself down until your chest is in line with the elbows and then slowly push yourself back up to the starting position. Push through the heels of your hands in order to return to the starting position.



#### Tips

- ▶ *Don't let your back sag down or your hips rise up.*
- ▶ *To modify, start with your knees on the floor and your hips tucked.*
- ▶ *Start conservatively to avoid shoulder injury.*
- ▶ *Pushups should be avoided by anyone suffering from neck or shoulder injuries.*

### Squats

- ▶ Stand with your head facing forward and your chest held up and out.
- ▶ Place your feet shoulder-width apart or slightly wider.
- ▶ Sit back and down like you're sitting into an imaginary chair making sure you're pushing through your heels. Pushing through the balls of the feet and allowing the knees to go past the shoelaces will place unwanted pressure on your knee joint and potentially cause injury.
- ▶ Lower down so your thighs are as parallel to the floor as possible, with your knees over your ankles.
- ▶ Keep your body tight, and push through your heels to bring yourself back to the starting position.



### Lunges

- ▶ Keep your upper body straight, with your shoulders back and relaxed and chin up (pick a point to stare at in front of you so you look straight ahead). Always pull your belly button in to engage your core.
- ▶ Step forward heel first with one leg. Make sure you're putting pressure on the back half of the foot, not on the ball of the foot. Lower your hips until both knees are bent at about a 90° angle (modification: lower down only as far as you are able if you're a beginner or suffer from knee problems). Make sure your front knee is directly above your ankle, not pushed out too far, and make sure your other knee doesn't touch the floor. Keep the weight in your heels as you push back up to the starting position.



Exercises continue on next page.

### Plank

- ▶ Lie face down on the floor or on an exercise mat. Pull the belly button in to engage your core and protect the back. Come onto your elbows and knees and then lift your knees off the floor so that your body is in a straight line with the shoulders, hips and ankles aligned.



- ▶ Keep your shoulders relaxed and your head looking down slightly (do not drop the head). Avoid dropping the hips into a swayback position—this will put your spine out of proper alignment and may cause back strain or pain.
- ▶ Hold it for 10 seconds if you're starting out. Gradually increase the time you can hold as you get stronger.

### Other easy cardio



- ▶ Walk the stairs (set a timer and minimize breaks on the landings)
- ▶ Swim laps in the pool instead of just floating
- ▶ Tread water (bonus: toned legs and glutes!)

### To Your Health

A monthly publication by the Pinellas County Wellness Center and the Human Resources Department.

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Contact To Your Health at [wellness@pinellascounty.org](mailto:wellness@pinellascounty.org).

## NEW Smoking Cessation Class Sign Up Today!

Thursdays, July 12 – August 16  
12:00 - 1:00 p.m.

Criminal Justice Center, 2nd Floor Conf. Room  
14250 49th St. North, Clearwater

Registration is required.

Contact (813) 929-100 or [info@gnahec.org](mailto:info@gnahec.org).



## Secondhand Smoke

[www.smokefree.gov](http://www.smokefree.gov)



Secondhand smoke **exposure among babies and children can cause:**

- Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)
- Lung problems
- Ear infections
- Asthma attacks



Secondhand smoke **exposure among adults can cause:**

- Heart disease
- Stroke
- Lung Cancer

Source: [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](http://Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

## Tobacco Premium Differential Deductions

Employees who designated themselves as **tobacco users\*** during the 2018 Annual Enrollment period and had NOT completed a tobacco cessation program by 4/30/2018 have been assessed the tobacco premium. The amount for 2018 has been pro-rated to a total of \$400 which will be divided over the 17 remaining pay periods in 2018, for a deduction of \$23.53 per pay.

The tobacco premium can be discontinued by completing a [tobacco cessation program](#) during 2018. However, there will be no reimbursements issued for past deductions. Additional information can be found by visiting the [Tobacco Premium FAQs](#).

*\* I have used tobacco, defined as cigarettes, e-cigarettes, cigars, pipes, chewing tobacco, dip, snuff, or hookahs at least once a week in the past 3 months.*



# Summer Health and Safety Tips

*From the Centers for Disease Control*

*We're all looking forward to enjoying summertime activities with our family and friends. In addition to sun safety, following these health and safety tips will allow us to maximize our fun and minimize summer health risks.*

## Heat Exposure

Heat exposure causes over 650 deaths per year in the United States. Most heat-related deaths occur in the hot summer months, and the elderly, the very young and people with chronic health problems are most at risk. Because even healthy people can fall victim to summer heat, take the following precautions to reduce your risk:

- ☺ Drink plenty of water or other non-alcoholic beverages, and do not wait until you are thirsty to drink.
- ☺ Wear lightweight, loose-fitting clothing that is light in color.
- ☺ Reduce strenuous activities or do them during the cooler parts of the day. If you become lightheaded, confused, weak or faint, stop exercising and rest in a cool or shady area.
- ☺ Don't get trapped in a hot car—it takes only 10 minutes for the temperature to rise by 20°, even with the windows cracked. Children's body temperature increases 5 times faster than adults.
  - ☺ Check to make sure children are not in the back seat before you get out of the car.
  - ☺ Don't let children play unsupervised in the car; they may accidentally lock themselves in.

## Food Safety

Summer is the season for outdoor barbecues and picnics; however, food-related illness can put a damper on those outdoor fests. CDC estimates that 76 million Americans get sick from food-related illness every year. More than 300,000 end up hospitalized and about 5,000 die each year from foodborne illness. Protect yourself and your friends and family in these ways:

- 🍴 Cook meat, poultry and seafood thoroughly. Use a meat thermometer to be sure your grilled meats are "done." Ground beef, for example, should be cooked to an internal temperature of 160°.
- 🍴 Don't cross-contaminate one food with another. Wash your hands, utensils and cutting boards after they have been in contact with raw meat or poultry and before they touch another food.

- 🍴 Bacteria can grow quickly at room temperature, so refrigerate leftover foods promptly
- 🍴 Wash produce thoroughly to remove visible dirt, and discard the outermost leaves of a head of lettuce or cabbage.

## Water Safety

Thousands of Americans drown each year, and thousands more are injured or killed in boating accidents. Drowning happens very quickly and quietly. It is the second leading cause of injury-related death for children age 14 and under. Follow these common-sense precautions for safe summer fun in the water:

- 🏊 Always have an adult closely supervise young children any time they are swimming, playing or even bathing in water. Keep barriers up and secured around bodies of water so that children cannot access them without the supervision of an adult. The supervising adult should avoid distracting activities such as playing cards, reading books, texting or talking on the phone.
- 🏊 Never swim alone or in unsupervised locations. Teach your children to always swim with a buddy.
- 🏊 Never drink alcohol before or while swimming, boating or water skiing, and never drink alcohol while supervising children.
- 🏊 Learn to swim and perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). Swimming lessons benefit adults and children age 4 and up.
- 🏊 Properly maintain your pool to help prevent the spread of infectious diseases. Never swallow pool, lake, or river water.

## Florida Beaches

- 🏖 Be aware of dangerous rip currents and marine life.
- 🏖 In the event of thunderstorms, stay out of the water for at least 30 minutes after the last thunder rumble.
- 🏖 If accidents, cuts, scrapes or illness occurs, head over to Urgent Care right away.



# June 2018 Group Fitness Classes



Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	<p><b>12:15 to 12:45 pm</b>  <b>Spin*</b>                      Instructor: Melissa K                      (6/5, 6/12, 6/19, 6/26)</p>		<p><b>12:15 to 12:45 pm</b>  <b>**NEW**</b>  <b>The Workout Buddy</b>                      Instructor: Melissa K                      (6/7, 6/14, 6/21, 6/28)</p>	
<p><b>5:15 to 6:15 pm</b>  <b>**NEW**</b>  <b>Total Strength</b>                      Instructor: Kelli                      (6/11, 6/18, 6/25)  <b>NO CLASS 6/4</b></p>	<p><b>5:45 to 6:30 pm</b>  <b>**NEW**</b>  <b>FitMix</b>                      Instructor: Lisa                      (6/5, 6/12, 6/19, 6/26)</p>	<p><b>5:15 to 6:15 pm</b>  <b>Yoga</b>                      Instructor: Kelli                      (6/6, 6/20, 6/27)  <b>NO CLASS 6/13</b></p>	<p><b>5:15 to 6 pm</b>  <b>Gentle Yoga</b>                      Instructor: Amanda                      (6/7, 6/14, 6/21, 6/28)</p>	

**\* Separate orientation required for Spin class.**

All group fitness classes are held in the Wellness Center located in the basement of the old courthouse at 324 South Fort Harrison Avenue in downtown Clearwater, and are free for all members. If you're not a member yet, contact our staff to schedule an orientation at [wellness@pinellascounty.org](mailto:wellness@pinellascounty.org).

*Classes are subject to change.*

See [exercise class descriptions](#) and [satellite fitness center locations](#).

Pinellas County Wellness Program  
 (727) 464-4049

[www.pinellascounty.org/hr/wellness](http://www.pinellascounty.org/hr/wellness)

**\*\*NEW\*\***

## Total Strength

Total body workout perfect for all fitness levels using dumbbells, body bars, and resistance bands to increase endurance and strength while toning and building lean muscles.

## FitMix (formerly Step, Core, Stretch)

Same great class taught by Lisa, with a bit more variety thrown in just for fun. Get your heart rate up on an adjustable step, tone your core and abs with a variety of equipment, and show your muscles some love with a feel-great stretch!

## The Workout Buddy

Meet up with Melissa K. and friends to do a fun circuit-style workout video every week. Staying motivated is so much easier when we've got others to keep us accountable!

