### Should You Get the Measles/Mumps/Rubella (MMR) Vaccine?

**What is Measles?**

According to the Florida Department of Health—Pinellas (DOH), measles is an acute, highly contagious viral disease. The symptoms of measles generally begin approximately seven to 14 days after a person is exposed to someone with measles. Symptoms include fever, runny nose, cough and rash. Measles is spread through the air by breathing, coughing or sneezing.

Although it is usually considered a childhood disease, it can be contracted at any age. Generally, preschool children, adolescents, young adults and inadequately immunized individuals comprise the majority of measles cases in the United States.

**Talk to Your Doctor and/or Pediatrician**

The DOH says, “Anyone older than 12 months of age should receive the MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) vaccine for protection.” Check your child’s health records or with their pediatrician to make sure. And ask your doctor if you need the shot.

**Am I Covered?**

If you need the shot, you’re covered 100% under the County’s Health Plan. The vaccine can be obtained at your doctor’s office or at these convenience care clinics.

**Shingles Vaccine Update**

Shingrix manufacturer, GlaxoSmithKline, advises that delays and back orders are expected to continue into 2019.

### Social Connection, Loneliness and Your Health

Relationships are crucial to both physical and psychological wellbeing. Through research, we now know that there is a connection between social isolation, loneliness and both physical and mental health. Individuals lacking in strong relationships, both individual and community, are at a higher risk for developing arthritis, Type 2 diabetes, and heart disease among others. There may also be a connection to cognitive decline, dementia and Alzheimer’s.

Interaction with others and supportive networks increase the quality of life because they fill a fundamental human need. They reduce emotional stress, and thus reduce the constant release of stress hormones, which lead to an inflammatory response and increased risk for disease.

**In a 2018 study**, Cigna found that loneliness is an epidemic in the United States. The survey of more than 20,000 U.S. adults ages 18 years and older revealed some alarming findings:

- **Nearly half** of Americans report sometimes or always feeling alone (46 percent) or left out (47 percent).
- **One in four** Americans (27 percent) rarely or never feel as though there are people who really understand them.
- **Two in five** Americans sometimes or always feel that their relationships are not meaningful (43 percent) and that they are isolated from others (43 percent).
- **One in five** people report they rarely or never feel close to people (20 percent) or feel like there are people they can talk to (18 percent).

*Continued on page 4.*
May is Stroke Awareness Month

By Amy Hertog, RN, BSN, Clinical Nurse Liaison

According to the American Heart Association, someone in the United States has a stroke about once every 40 seconds. Stroke is the leading cause of disability in the U.S. and also accounts for 1 of every 19 deaths.

A stroke occurs when a blood vessel that carries oxygen and nutrients to the brain is either blocked by a clot or ruptures. When that happens, part of the brain dies because it cannot get the blood (and oxygen) it needs.

Keep your stroke risk low with regular checkups. Make sure to get treatment if you’re diagnosed with one of the conditions below because they all increase stroke risk.

- **High blood pressure**, or hypertension, is a leading cause of stroke and the most significant controllable risk factor. Know your numbers and keep them low.
- **Cigarette smoke** contains nicotine and carbon monoxide that damage the cardiovascular system.
- **Diabetes** is an independent risk factor for stroke. While diabetes is treatable, the presence of the disease still increases risk.
- **Diets high in saturated fat**, trans-fat and cholesterol can raise blood cholesterol levels. Diets high in sodium (salt) increase blood pressure. Diets with high calories can lead to obesity. Eating five or more servings of fruits and vegetables per day may reduce risk.
- **Physical inactivity**. Aim for being active at least 150 minutes a week—move more and sit less.
- **Excess body weight** and obesity are linked with an increased risk of stroke. Losing as little as 5 to 10 pounds can make a significant difference.
- **Low density cholesterol** (LDL) can build up and cause narrowing inside arteries, leading to poor blood flow and blood clots.

- **Carotid artery disease** is a condition where the carotid arteries (these are the arteries in your neck that supply blood to your brain) become narrowed by fatty deposits. When narrowed by fatty deposits, they may become blocked by a blood clot.
- **Peripheral artery disease** (PAD), is the narrowing of blood vessels carrying blood to leg and arm muscles. It’s caused by fatty buildup of plaque in artery walls. People with PAD have a higher risk of carotid artery disease.
- **Atrial fibrillation**, or AFib (a heart rhythm disorder), increases stroke risks fivefold. AFib causes the heart’s upper chambers to beat incorrectly, which can allow the blood to pool and develop a clot.
- **Other heart diseases** such as coronary heart disease, heart failure, dilated cardiomyopathy, heart valve disease, and some types of congenital heart defects can also increase risk.
- **Sickle cell anemia** causes “sickled” red blood cells which are less able to carry oxygen to the body’s tissues and organs. Sickled cells also tend to stick to blood vessel walls, which can block arteries to the brain.

Use F.A.S.T. to Remember the Warning Signs of a Stroke

- **Face**: Ask the person to smile. Does one side of the face droop or is it numb?
- **Arms**: Is one arm weak or numb? Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?
- **Speech**: Is speech slurred? Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence. Is the person unable to speak or hard to understand?
- **Time** to call 9-1-1: If the person shows any of these symptoms, even if the symptoms go away, call 9-1-1 and get them to the hospital immediately.

The American Stroke Association is solely focused on reducing disability and death from stroke.
Ride Your Bike!
May is National Bike Month including Bike To Work Day, Friday, May 17th

Ride your bike and reap these benefits:

- Save money
- Enjoy the outdoors
- Avoid traffic
- Boost your mood
- Combat stress and anxiety
- Breathe cleaner air
- Avoid parking roulette
- Increase brain power

Don’t forget to practice bike safety and familiarize yourself with Florida Traffic Laws for Cyclists. You’ll find plenty of bike routes throughout Pinellas County to get you to work safely.

View Bicycle Lanes, Sidewalks & Trailways provided by Forward Pinellas. You can zoom in and out and find just the right bike route for you.

Also, view the Pinellas County Green Spaces map (image on right) which shows services available on trails and at parks.

The Wellness Center at 324 S. Ft. Harrison St. in Clearwater also offers bike storage. Contact wellness@pinellascounty.org to register your bike.

Your Health is No Laughing Matter

Having a good laugh puts us in a great mood AND provides health benefits. Laughter strengthens the immune system, diminishes pain, and improves mental health by triggering healthy physical and emotional changes in the body. Grab a funny friend, watch a funny video or meme and have yourself a good chuckle. Read more at www.helpguide.org/articles/mental-health/laughter-is-the-best-medicine.htm.

BayCare Sick-Child Care Program

It can be very stressful for working parents when their child is sick and cannot attend daycare or school. BayCare offers a Sick-Child Care program in Clearwater for children 3 months to 13 years old where trained professionals provide care and supervision, allowing parents to go to work. Visit their website for details.
Americans who live with others are less likely to be lonely (average loneliness score of 43.5) compared to those who live alone (46.4). However, this does not apply to single parents/guardians (average loneliness score of 48.2) – even though they live with children, they are more likely to be lonely.

Only around half of Americans (53 percent) have meaningful in-person social interactions, such as having an extended conversation with a friend or spending quality time with family on a daily basis.

Generation Z (adults ages 18-22) is the loneliest generation and claims to be in worse health than older generations.

Social media use alone is not a predictor of loneliness; respondents defined as very heavy users of social media have a loneliness score (43.5) that is not markedly different from the score of those who never use social media.

Older adults are also particularly susceptible to social isolation as they become less mobile and must rely on others for transportation and visits. They have fewer friends and family members as they age. Living in a care or rehabilitation facility can also feel isolating.


On the flip side, those who already suffer from a mental health disorder such as depression sometimes withdraw from social interactions. They often feel alone and that others do not understand them. In an effort to help, friends and loved ones may suggest that going out is only a matter of adjusting to a more positive outlook when the problem is much more complex.


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**Canadian Bacon Pocket with Egg, Tomato & Lettuce**

You can eat this sandwich at your kitchen table or take it to go on days when you’re in a rush. Be sure to read Canadian bacon labels carefully and choose one that is nitrate-free (the safety of these compounds is still unclear).

**Ingredients**

- 1 slice nitrite and nitrate-free Canadian bacon (or nitrite and nitrate-free turkey bacon)
- 1/2 whole wheat pita
- 1 tablespoon light mayonnaise
- 1 hard-boiled egg, sliced
- 2 leaves romaine lettuce, chopped
- 2 slices tomato

**Nutrition Facts** (per serving)

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**To Your Health**

A monthly publication by the Pinellas County Wellness Program.

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Contact To Your Health at wellness@pinellascounty.org.
What foods are The Salty Six? Are there any good alternatives to salt for making food tasty? Watch the Two-Minute Tuesday video (any day of the week!): Are You Too Salty? Can’t watch a video at work? No problem; read the script.

Hepatitis A is on the rise in Tampa Bay.

You can stop the spread by washing your hands and getting vaccinated!

WASH YOUR HANDS OFTEN
- after using the bathroom
- after changing a diaper
- after touching public surfaces
- before eating or preparing food

GET VACCINATED
The best way to prevent hepatitis A is to get the hepatitis A vaccine. The Florida Department of Health in Pinellas County is offering the two-dose hepatitis A vaccine at no cost to adults and children. Visit PinellasHealth.com or call 727-824-6932 for more information.

There are NEW offers from YouDecide including discounts at 9Round, Shipt, the Clearwater Threshers, and LasikPlus. Learn more by visiting www.YouDecide.com/pinellas today!

May is Skin Cancer Awareness Month

For more information, go to www.SkinCancer.org.

General Facts

- More than 5.4 million cases of non-melanoma skin cancer were treated in over 3.3 million people in the U.S. in 2012, the most recent year new statistics were available.
- More people are diagnosed with skin cancer each year in the U.S. than all other cancers combined.
- One in five Americans will develop skin cancer by the age of 70.
- Actinic keratosis is the most common pre-cancer; it affects more than 58 million Americans.
- The annual cost of treating skin cancers in the U.S. is estimated at $8.1 billion: about $4.8 billion for non-melanoma skin cancers and $3.3 billion for melanoma.

Practice Sun Safety

The Skin Cancer Foundation has always recommended using a sunscreen with an SPF 15 or higher as one important part of a complete sun protection regimen. Sunscreen alone is not enough, however. Follow these prevention tips:

- Seek the shade, especially between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- Do not burn.
- Avoid tanning and UV tanning beds.
- Cover up with clothing, including a broad-brimmed hat and UV-blocking sunglasses.
- Use a broad spectrum (UVA/UVB) sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher every day. For extended outdoor activity, use a water-resistant, broad spectrum (UVA/UVB) sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher.
- Apply 1 ounce (2 tablespoons) of sunscreen to your entire body 30 minutes before going outside. Reapply every two hours or immediately after swimming or excessive sweating.
- Keep newborns out of the sun. Sunscreens should be used on babies over the age of six months.
- Examine your skin head-to-toe every month.
- See your physician every year for a professional skin exam.
Pinellas County Employees Took Stepping to the Next Level: Over 46 Million Steps!

Forty seven teams competed in the 9-week Stepping Into Your Health 2019 walking/whole health challenge. The teams had a great time completing fun, healthy activities that kept them on track to achieving their New Year’s goals.

All of the teams worked hard, supported each other and together walked over 46 million steps!

1st place Trainosaurus Flex (Animal Services) 1,734 points and 1,820,000 steps. L-R: Casey Miller, Aimee Janvrin, Lynn McCabe. In front: Ashley Skubal (Wellness Center). Missing from photo: Tricia Carter (captain).

2nd place The 4 Heartbeats (Clerk Finance) 1,726.5 points and 2,115,000 steps. L-R: Dawn Powell, Dawn Seddon, Sheri Bowers (captain), Christine Brill.

3rd place Cake Time (Emergency Medical Services) 1,721.5 points and 1,975,000 steps. L-R: Ashley Skubal (Wellness Center), Julio Chopite, Donna Willhate, Robin Kelly (captain), Karen Cervone-Nitz.

Despite falls that resulted in a broken tooth, a skinned knee, and scrapped up face, Cake Time stayed strong and supported one another to complete the challenge.
Have something wellness-related you’ve done that you want to brag about? Email photos to wellness@pinellascounty.org and the name and date of the race, walk, etc. We’ll give you a well-deserved “High Five!”

High Fives!

“On April 15th, Kathleen Roach (our Utilities Lab Manager) completed the 2019 Boston Marathon in 4 hours and 6 minutes! Way to go Kathleen! We are proud of you!”

From the staff at the Lab

Terrain Race—February 16th: Ashley Johnson (Marketing & Communications), Ashley Skubal (Human Resources), Feddy Azofeifa (Marketing & Communications), Bruno Rivera (Marketing & Communications)

Blood Drives
www.oneblood.org

Please consider donating blood at these locations, on these dates:

**June 11**, Mid-County Tax Collector, 13025 Starkey Rd., Largo, 8:00 - 1:00

**June 12**, North County Tax Collector 29399 US Hwy. 19 N., Clearwater, 11:00 - 4:00

**June 13**, ERB - Public Works 22211 Hwy. 19 N., Clearwater, 12:00 - 5:00

**June 19**, Downtown Clearwater Courthouse 315 Court St., 11:00 - 4:00

**June 19**, Utilities Building, Clearwater 14 S. Fort Harrison Ave., 8:30 - 1:30

Dunedin 5K—March 16th: Ashley Johnson, Feddy Azofeifa, Ashley Skubal, Bruno Rivera
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 S. Fort Harrison Ave. 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.

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

Quarterly Incentive Payout Schedule

The Incentive Payout Schedule has been updated. The Wellness Incentives are reported and processed quarterly. It can take about 8 weeks to process once the quarter ends. To learn more about the Wellness Incentive Program, visit www.pinellascounty.org/hr/incentive.