

Coping with Grief and Loss

By Jane Grannis, Wellness Program Manager

All of us will at some point experience loss. Although we often associate grief with the loss of a loved one, grief includes many forms of loss, including losing a pet, a job, going through a divorce or diminishing good health. Anything meaningful or valuable holds the potential for grief.

Grief is experienced in different ways by different people. Some engage in anticipatory loss (which occurs before the actual loss, like a dying relative or friend). Grief can be experienced emotionally, as well as physically. For some, outward signs of sadness include tears, anger and anxiety, while others turn their emotions inward. Physical appearances of grief include weight loss or gain, sleeplessness and a weakened immune system.

Ignoring the pain will not make it go away. In order to become at peace with grief, the process, however painful, should be allowed to happen. It is imperative that sadness, anxiety, anger and frustration associated with loss not be ignored. During the coping period, individuals may become depressed. Learning to accept and acknowledge these feelings is crucial to the healing process. It may be helpful to join a support group or get the help of a licensed professional.

There is no set amount of time for grief, and there's no deadline. Depending on the type of loss, individuals have their own timeline to grieve and may



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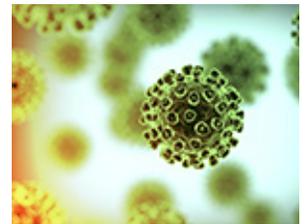
Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Information in this article is from official Pinellas County Government press releases dated March 3 and 4.

Pinellas County is participating in local coordinating meetings with the Florida Department of Health in Pinellas, which is the local lead agency on COVID-19 (part of the coronavirus family).

Prevention

Coronavirus (COVID-19) is a respiratory virus that is transmitted like the flu and symptoms can include fever, cough and shortness of breath.



The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends the following steps to keep you and your family safe:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Refer to the CDC website before traveling overseas to identify areas of outbreak concern.
- If you are returning from any of these areas, residents are asked to self-isolate for 14 days.
- Follow the CDC's recommendations for using a facemask.
 - The CDC does not recommend that people who are well wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19.
 - Facemasks should be used by people who show symptoms of COVID-19 to help prevent the spread of the disease to others. The use of facemasks is also crucial for health workers and people who are taking care of someone in close settings (at home or in a health care facility).

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find that it is not a direct path. There may be periods where they feel “normal” and then cycle back to the feelings of loss.

Those working through grief tend to isolate themselves. Isolation decreases immunity and increases health risk.

It’s important to reach out for help from a family member or friend, faith-based or cultural community, support groups, etc. If you’re helping someone work through their pain, help them stay connected.

Another way to work toward acceptance is to honor the lost by remembering them. Celebrating important dates, donating to a charity, planting a tree or naming a child in their honor are a few ideas. Doing so acknowledges the importance of the relationship as well as the acceptance of their passing.

Behavioral/Mental Health Provider Change – March 31, 2020 Deadline

(This does not apply to our retirees who are on the Medicare Advantage PPO Plan.)

If you or a dependent family member are enrolled in the UnitedHealthcare Choice Plus POS or HSA health plans, please take note of the following important information.

As of January 1, 2020, the Behavioral/Mental Health Program moved from ComPsych to UnitedHealthcare (see [Administrator Change FAQs](#)). Employees and dependent family members should transition to an in-network UnitedHealthcare provider by March 31, 2020. After that date, any bills for a provider who is not in the UHC network will be processed as out-of-network which will result in higher costs for you.

To learn more about the behavioral/mental health benefits available from UnitedHealthcare, please see www.pinellascounty.org/hr/behavioral.

Pinellas County Benefits

400 S. Fort Harrison Ave.

Clearwater, FL 33756

(727) 464-4570 | Fax 464-5291

employee.benefits@pinellascounty.org

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
 - If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.

Coronavirus Scams

[Pinellas County Consumer Protection](#) is advising citizens to look out for and report scammers exploiting residents’ fears around coronavirus (COVID-19).

Exploitative tactics including phishing, fraudulent donation requests, and attempted sales of health products with unfounded claims have already been observed in areas affected by the virus.

Here are a few tips to help keep you safe online:

- Watch for emails claiming to be from the CDC or experts saying that have information about the virus. For the most up-to-date information about the coronavirus, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO).
- Ignore online offers for vaccinations. If you see ads touting prevention, treatment, or cure claims for the coronavirus, ask yourself: if there’s been a medical breakthrough, would you be hearing about it for the first time through an ad or sales pitch?
- Residents can file a complaint if they feel they were overcharged for applicable products. Pinellas County Consumer Protection coordinates with the appropriate partner agencies to investigate and prosecute unfair business practices.

For more information on scams or to file a complaint, contact Consumer Protection at (727) 464-6200.

Human Resources is closely monitoring updates and have created a web page dedicated to this issue.

www.pinellascounty.org/hr/coronavirus.

There you will find information about best prevention practices, and links to valuable resources.

Glowing Skin Starts with Nutrition

New skin care products promise young, glowing, radiant skin with a vitamin-infused serum or lotion in a fancy bottle, but often don't deliver. Healthy skin starts with what goes on your plate and in your body. Little research has been done on specific foods for healthy, glowing skin, but eating a diet packed with nutrient dense foods can provide all the antioxidants, collagen, vitamins, and oils your body and organs, including your skin, need.



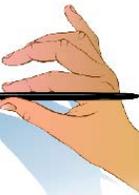
On the other hand, a diet high in processed, refined carbs and unhealthy fats can be damaging to the skin and contribute to aging as well as other health risks and complications. So rather than focusing on specific foods, aim for an overall healthy diet.

Choose:

- Carrots, apricots and other yellow and orange fruit and vegetables
- Tomatoes
- All types of berries
- Beans, peas and lentils
- Salmon, mackerel and other fatty fish
- Nuts

Make sure you are drinking enough water to hydrate the skin. For an additional antioxidant boost, you can include a little red wine and dark chocolate. Strive for variety as you are making healthy choices. A healthy, balanced diet can mean the difference between the skin you want and a dry, dull complexion.

Colors of Pinellas



Registration is Open

Deadline to register is Friday, March 20.

Submit your favorite photograph, painting, drawing, craft, sculpture, jewelry, ceramic, wood carving, mixed media, weaving — and so on — in the 2020 Colors of Pinellas Art Show.

There is no entry fee and the show is open to all Pinellas County employees, retirees, interns, volunteers and their family members. All skill levels are welcome.

Get more information on our web page www.pinellascounty.org/artshow.



Bloomin' Lillies, retiree Karen Cunningham's submission, won 3rd place in the intermediate works on paper category in 2018.

Eat Healthy For Less

Source: www.uhc.com/health-and-wellness/nutrition/eat-healthy

Healthy eating doesn't have to be a pricey proposition. By planning ahead and buying smart, it's possible to get more nutritional bang for your buck.

Here are five smart strategies to help you do just that:

1. Make a money-saving menu

Check store fliers or websites to find out which healthy foods are on sale — and draw up a menu that features them. Once your menu is set, write a shopping list — and stick with it.

2. Shop in season

Not only are produce picks such as berries and tomatoes less expensive when they're in season — they may also be more delicious.

3. Buy in bulk

You may find great deals on beans, whole grains, unsalted nuts and seeds in your market's bulk section.

4. Be a now-and-then vegetarian

Going meatless even once a week can be budget-friendly. Make chili with black beans instead of your usual beef. You could even do breakfast for dinner. Veggie omelets, anyone?

5. Ward off waste

Pay attention to "sell by" or "best used by" dates so you know how long your food will stay fresh. Use highly perishable items first — and save the longer-lasting items for later in the week.

Want to Volunteer?

Explore a deep new purpose when you volunteer after retirement. Join other volunteers who contribute their knowledge, skill, compassion, make new friends, and make a difference in our community.

Pinellas County Government offers a wide range of opportunities such as:

- Helping out at Gulf Beaches Historical Museum
- Caring for dogs and cats at Animal Services
- Gardening or gift shop sales at the Florida Botanical Gardens

There are many more options. Interested? Visit www.pinellascounty.org/volunteer or contact us at (727) 464-8477 or by email at volunteers@pinellascounty.org.



Looking for a low stress volunteer opportunity in a beautiful place? Volunteer at Florida Botanical Gardens as a Gift Shop Assistant and conduct sales transactions, help the customers, and interact with visitors as a “goodwill ambassador” for the Gardens. Join our VIP team today!



Volunteer to read to our shelter dogs and cats at Pinellas County Animal Services.

REPCO News

The next REPCO meeting will be Monday, April 13, 2020 at Applebee’s Restaurant located at 5110 East Bay Drive. The meeting will start at 11:30 a.m. A representative from the Pinellas County Sheriff’s Office will join us and provide a presentation on Personal Safety. To learn more, contact Rudy Garcia at (813) 855-3466 or rdgarcia@verizon.net.

Retiree Resources

Medicare Health Plan:

- ◇ UnitedHealthcare MAPPO
(800) 457-8506
(includes Rx and behavioral health)
UHCRetiree.com
- ◇ Davis Vision (800) 999-5431
DavisVision.com

Human Resources
Helping U Succeed

Non-Medicare and Traditional Medicare Health Plan:

- ◇ UnitedHealthcare
(888) 478-4752 myuhc.com
- ◇ Express Scripts (866) 544-9221
Express-Scripts.com
- ◇ Davis Vision (800) 999-5431
DavisVision.com

Dental Plans:

- Cigna (800) 244-6224
myCigna.com

Florida Retirement System (FRS): (866) 446-9377

myfrs.com

Pinellas County Retirement Information:

www.pinellascounty.org/hr/retiree

