

To Your Health

Human Resources
Helping U Succeed

Pinellas County Wellness Program - *Wellness for Life*

PHYSICAL | EMOTIONAL | SOCIAL | FINANCIAL

Visit www.pinellascounty.org/hr/wellness or contact Wellness staff at 464-4049 or wellness@pinellascounty.org.

MAR 2021

The Power of Sleep (Always, But Especially During the Pandemic)

By Jane Grannis, Wellness Manager

We've touched on a variety of wellbeing topics during the pandemic: establishing routine, managing stress and grief, staying connected to people and understanding COVID fatigue, to name a few.

In honor of World Sleep Day, this month our focus is on sleep. Why sleep? Even prior to COVID-19, this country has been facing a sleep loss epidemic. The [Centers for Disease Control](#) reported that a third of Americans were not getting at least 7 hours of rest.

With pandemic-induced disruptions in routines and heightened stress levels, the number of people suffering from poor sleep has skyrocketed exponentially, so much so that the phenomenon got its own moniker: "coronasomnia." This is a huge problem, because lack of quality sleep poses many serious health risks, including reduced immunity, depression, anxiety, heart disease and diabetes.

Although research is in its early stages, the National Institute of Health noted a [study](#) that reported "very high rates of clinically significant insomnia," along with acute stress, anxiety and depression during the pandemic.

Now more than ever, and for so many reasons, getting good rest is extremely important. I invite you to attend our one-hour webinar to learn more about the benefits of sleep and the steps you can take to improve it. [The Power of Sleep: Catnap Version](#) is a condensed version of our four-part series *The Power of Sleep: Your A to Zzzzz Guide to Good Health*, which was originally presented in 2019.

It may feel overwhelming to take on exercise or eating more vegetables, especially during times of high stress, but that's

not the only way to take care of yourself and your health. Sleeping more, and sleeping better, can significantly improve how you feel.

To sign up or find more information about the webinar, please [view the flyer](#). If you'd like to watch the full class, head to our [Wellness Resources page](#) to watch the [videos](#) and download the [handbook](#).

Read more about sleep during COVID-19:

[National Institutes of Health](#)

[UC Davis Health](#)

Sleep Facts

- All living beings sleep – even flies!
- People who are sleep deprived do not have the ability to gauge how tired they are.
- Drowsy driving causes more accidents than alcohol and drugs combined.
- The optimal sleep temperature is about 65 degrees Fahrenheit.

INSIDE

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Register for
The Power of Sleep: Catnap Version Webinar

The Power of Sleep
Your A to Zzzzz Guide to Good Health

March 19 is World Sleep Day
In honor of World Sleep Day, we bring you an hour-long information-packed webinar from 12-1 p.m. on the power of sleep.

Learn about:

- the connection between sleep and disease
- types of sleep
- ways to improve sleep
- disorders and treatment

This class is condensed from our original 2019 4-week wellness series, *The Power of Sleep: Your A to Zzzzz Guide to Good Health*, which is also available via recording on our website.

Don't miss this highly informative class!

Improve Immunity
Memory
Mood
Relationships
Sleep quality

Reduce Depression/anxiety
Disease risk (pressure, heart disease, etc.)
Fatigue
Stress

REGISTER HERE IN ADVANCE for the March 19 1-hour Catnap Version webinar 12-1 p.m.

WELLNESS for you

Colorectal Cancer Screening Awareness: Alternative Screening Option



Your
UHC
Nurse
Amy

By Amy Hertog, RN, BSN,
Clinical Nurse Liaison

March is Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month. Not counting some types of skin cancer, colorectal cancer is the **third leading cause of cancer-related deaths** in the United States. It is the third most common cancer in men and women.

Researchers have found that the ability of a colon tumor to metastasize (spread) arises early in its development. The research also suggests that once a colon cancer develops, if it is going to spread outside the colon, it will do so in less than two years. Therefore, it is important to diagnose colorectal cancer before it can spread to other parts of the body.

Preventive colorectal cancer screening is recommended for adults, age 50-75. Under the County's health plan, a **preventive** colorectal cancer screening is covered at one hundred percent.

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, some individuals may have delayed their recommended preventive screenings. According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), because of concerns about COVID-19, an estimated 32% of U.S. adults have delayed or avoided routine care. If you or

a loved one have delayed your preventive colorectal cancer screening, there may be other options.

It may be possible to have an at-home colorectal cancer screening. Cologuard® is intended to screen adults who are at average risk for colorectal cancer by detecting certain DNA markers and blood in the stool. Please note that unlike a colonoscopy, Cologuard does not allow a doctor to see inside the colon and rectum to detect pre-cancerous polyps, which are small clumps of cells that form on the lining of the colon and have the potential to develop cancer.

A positive Cologuard test result does not confirm the presence of cancer. If you have a positive result, you should be referred for a **diagnostic colonoscopy**. A negative test result does not confirm the absence of cancer. If you have a negative test result, discuss with your doctor when you need to be tested again. False positives and false negative results can occur. In a clinical study, 13% of people without cancer received a positive result (false positive) and 8% of people with cancer received a negative result (false negative).

If you or a loved one needs a colorectal cancer screening, please discuss options with your primary care physician.

As an additional resource, those who are on the County's health plan and **medically qualify** have access to **Cancer Support Services** and access to an Oncology Resource Nurse. This service is not limited to colorectal cancer. To enroll in Cancer Support Services, please call the telephone number on your member ID card: **(888) 478-4752**.

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

See the Tell It Well Employee Feature on [page 3](#), where an employee shares their experience with the home colon cancer screening.

Wellness Incentive Payout

Wellness Incentives completed between July 1 and December 31, 2020 will appear in your points bank or your paycheck on March 19th. If you expected to earn rewards during that time period, please check your paystub or [point balance](#).

REMINDER: BayCare Labs are In-network

Contact Benefits if you have questions at 464-4570 or employee.benefits@pinellascounty.org.





TELL IT WELL EMPLOYEE FEATURE

This month our author chose to remain anonymous.

My Experience with Colorectal Cancer Screening at Home

I turned 50 years old in 2020 and had my first colorectal cancer screening. COVID-19 made getting a screening a bit challenging. First, elective procedures were cancelled. When elective procedures were allowed again, COVID cases rose and I wasn't sure that I wanted to go to a facility but also wanted to be proactive about my health.

I used a telemedicine visit to speak with my provider and asked if I could try an at-home colorectal cancer screening test. After reviewing my health history, my provider agreed to order the Cologuard® test for me. Even though a home screening test is accurate in detecting cancer, it does not detect polyps. We both agreed that doing the at-home test was better than doing nothing. My UnitedHealthcare® health plan covered this preventive screening at 100%.

Within a few days, the testing kit arrived at my

home. It included specific (yet easy to understand) instructions as to how to collect the stool sample and return it to the testing center. The kit included an insert for a toilet seat, a specimen container, a bottle of preservative, a zip-lock bag, and labels for the specimen.

Exact Sciences, the company that manufactures the Cologuard test, was great. They sent an email to ask if I had received the test and provided a telephone number for any questions or issues. I never felt that I was on my own, even though I was at home.

The specimen must be mailed back within a certain time frame after it is collected. The return postage was pre-paid and all I had to do was drop off the box at a local UPS store.

It didn't take long to get the results. My provider called me to report that no cancer was detected, and I received a report in the mail. At some point in the future, I will still need to have a regular preventive colonoscopy, but for now, I have some peace of mind that I did something that was proactive for my health. The best part of my experience was that I was able to get screened from home.

Life Insurance & FSA Special Enrollment in OPUS is Open

Life Insurance: Since March 1, Pinellas County's new life insurance administrator is Securian Financial. Your life insurance coverage transferred automatically to Securian.

- Participate in this special enrollment if you would like to enroll in or change supplemental or dependent life.
- If you are not making changes, no action is required.

Flexible Spending Accounts: In order to utilize carryover from 2021, you must be enrolled in FSA. If you would like to enroll in a *new* FSA.

- You must enroll with the minimum amount of \$260 in order to open a 2021 FSA.
- Includes Health Care, Dependent Care and Limited Purpose FSA.

- If already enrolled in FSA and just want to make changes to contributions, use the [2021 FSA Change Form](#).

View these helpful links:

[Special Enrollment FAQs & OPUS Screenshots Guide](#)

[OPUS Special Enrollment Demo Video](#)

[Life Insurance web page](#)

[Flexible Spending Accounts web page](#)

Any changes you make will become effective April 1, 2021.

This Special Enrollment period ends Friday, March 12 at 5 p.m.



Mark Your Calendars: Wellness Activities for You

Behind the Belly Button Series

The Microbiome Explained is the third in the five-part series. You'll want to know about these superbugs! Our body has over 100 trillion (yes, with a "T") microbial cells known as the microbiome.

When this complex ecosystem tips out of balance, we get sick. [View the flyer](#) with links to register.

Gut Health

[Watch the video](#) to uncover the mysteries of the gut and learn ways you can improve your own gut health.

Digestion and Nutrient Absorption

[Watch the video](#) for a closer look at how digestion works to break down food to usable forms of energy, vitamins and minerals and how they're absorbed into the body.

Other Wellness Class Videos

There are many videos of past Wellness classes available for you to watch online, such as *The Stress Proof Brain*, COVID-19 webinars, and *Cooking from the Roots*. They can be accessed at [Wellness Classes](#).



Bone Health Webinars

Presented by Healthy Bones Tampa Bay

Build and keep your bones healthy and strong for life.

Get practical tools and tips on maintaining strong bones; learn simple exercises you can do at home to improve balance, strength and flexibility; and find out how to prevent broken bones.

- **Beginning March 9,**
Eating for Healthy Bones

- Stepping Out Strong

- Posture Power

[View the flyer](#) for more information and for links to register.



NEW Biometric Screening Process in 2021

There are important improvements to getting a biometric screening in 2021, to ensure the correct lab work is completed and confirmed in Rally. The process auto-populates the lab work portion of the Rally health survey with your current results.

There are two ways to get your biometric screening:

Option 1: Quest Diagnostics (must schedule through Rally)

Option 2: Physician Results Form

Before you get a biometric screening, get familiar with the new process. We've made it easy with a variety of resources.

- Watch a previously recorded [demonstration](#)
- Review the [webpage](#) including [FAQs](#) and the [Rally Help Guide](#) with step-by-step instructions and screenshots for every step in the process.



National Nutrition Month

It's Nutrition Month! We're celebrating by sharing the revised nutrition labels released by the FDA in 2020. With last year being what it was, we're pretty sure this didn't make headline news for you. We think you'll like the changes.

Also, take a sneak peak into Jane and Amy's recipe boxes ([page 7](#)). No boring here! Amy's green smoothie is a great way to ease yourself into the whole "green" thing. Jane's recipe turns unhealthy loaded potato skins into a nutritious and delicious meal!

What's New with the Nutrition Facts Label

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has updated the Nutrition Facts label on packaged foods and drinks. The FDA is requiring changes to the Nutrition Facts label based on updated scientific information, new nutrition research, and input from

the public. This is the first major update to the label in over 20 years. The label's refreshed design and updated information will make it easier for you to make informed food choices that contribute to lifelong healthy eating habits.

To continue reading this article and to find the details, [see the new label](#).



Complete a Tobacco Cessation Program by March 31! to be Exempt from the \$500 Tobacco Premium

If you attested "Yes" to tobacco use at Annual Enrollment you must complete a tobacco cessation program by March 31, 2021 to be exempt from the \$500 premium.

The only tobacco cessation program option you have now is online.

2. ONLINE

- Rally Coach, in partnership with United Healthcare, offers a free online program to help you create a self-paced personalized tobacco quit plan.

- To register, visit [Rally Coach](#).
- The Quit Tobacco program provides online lessons with strategies and resources such as videos and activities.
- If you need support, you have access to direct coaching through live chat, secure email, or telephone.

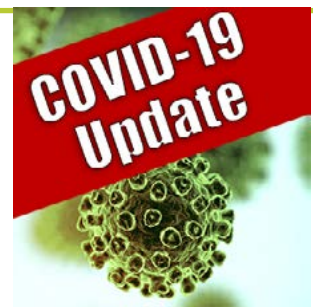
View [Tobacco Premium](#) for more information.



COVID-19 Vaccination Resources

Visit our [COVID-19 for County Employees](#) page for these links and more:

- [Pinellas County vaccine information](#)
- [CDC vaccine information](#)



Stepping Into Your Health High Fives

Over 65 employees are participating in *Stepping Into Your Health*, a stepping and healthy habits challenge. Since the end of January, Steppers have collectively logged over **15,000,000 steps** and they're not done yet! Participants accrue points for steps and other healthy habits like stretching and drinking water.

The points are tracked on a map of Pinellas County. This route is not an actual route, but rather a figurative representation of point accumulation. The map progress is not a 1-1 step/mile conversion on the map because we convert steps to points per step, and add the points accrued for the other activities.

A few intrepid walkers shared their experience so far. No matter if they walked 10,000 or 300,000 steps, they're an inspiration!

Kevin Karr (*Office of Technology & Innovation*)

I just walk through my neighborhood. The streets are a quarter mile-ish long so that makes it easy and doesn't seem to be as overwhelming. Also, when I go to Costco I just park in the first open spot that I see, which means walking into the building and then I walk down each aisle, even if there isn't anything I need. You can do some serious steps in a Costco!

Donna Verrett (*Tax Collector's Office/Skyway*)

My husband and I are both currently training for a 26.2-mile Ruck March called the Bataan Death March coming up in April. It is usually held each

year in New Mexico, but due to COVID-19 it will be a virtual event this year. Last week, I achieved

40,000 steps in one day for the very first time. ****whew**** That's a lot of steps!! We enjoy getting out in the beautiful Florida weather right now spending time together and getting fit at the same time.

Don Melone (*Public Works/Stormwater Engineering*)

The achievement I'm most proud of so far is consistently walking, which includes my teenage son (he needs 30 minutes for online PE class). It's afforded us some quality bonding time over spent calories.

Pamela Akon (*Clerk's Office/Court Technology*)

I'm enjoying the challenge!

Terese Del Rio (*Clerk's Office/Court & Operational Services*)

I'm not as far as I'd hoped to be at this point. Some weeks are better than others. I am enjoying the challenge and now that I have looked at where I am, I plan to "step it up"! Thanks for your encouraging email.

Derelynn Revie (*Clerk, Probate*)

I do run the Dunedin Causeway on Mondays after work.



You are invited to the

Bike Your City Scavenger Hunt

Now through March 1-31

Join Forward Pinellas for this free self-guided scavenger hunt and discover biking-related treasures in your own neighborhood!

You could win t-shirts, bike lights and more!

Register today.

www.ForwardPinellas.org/BikeYourCity



bit.ly/byc2021





Tex Mex Potato Skins

Prep: 20 minutes Yields: 8 servings

- 4 large russet potatoes
- 1 large red bell pepper, finely diced
- 1 tsp. fine salt, separated
- ¼ + ⅛ tsp. ground black pepper, separated
- 1 (15 oz.) can low sodium black beans, drain, rinsed (or 1½ c. cooked)
- ¼ tsp ground cumin
- 1½ c. frozen corn
- ½ c. jalapeno slices (fresh or from jar), chopped
- 1 large avocado
- ½ Tbsp. lime juice

These potato skins are loaded with vitamins, minerals and healthy fiber and heart healthy fat. When potatoes are prepared properly, they're actually very good for you. They're rich in vitamin C, potassium and manganese.

Scrub the potatoes well and eat with the skin on, which is a good source of vitamin B6. Beans are a great source of healthy carbohydrates/fiber and protein. Bell peppers are also full of antioxidants. Cumin is known to be a rich source of iron, have anti-cancer properties and control blood-sugar. Avocados contain healthy fat. The recipe calls for cooking the potatoes in the microwave to save on time, but you can bake them in the oven if you prefer. To maintain the pretty colors in this dish, cook the beans and corn separately and add them together at the end. If you're not worried about that, you can cook them together.

1. Preheat oven to 450F degrees.
2. Spear potatoes with a fork and cook in the microwave. They'll give a little when they're done. Cook time varies depending on size and how many you put in at the same time.
3. Add bell pepper to a small sheet pan lined with parchment paper and season with the ¼ tsp salt and 1/8 tsp pepper. Set aside.
4. Add beans, cumin, salt and pepper to small pot. Add corn to small pot (or combine with beans if desired)
5. Once potatoes are done, allow to cool then cut in half lengthwise. With a spoon, scoop out the flesh leaving about ¼ potato along the sides and bottom.
6. Flip skins over skin side up and lightly spray with cooking oil, placing them on a sheet pan lined with parchment and season to taste with salt. Put them in the oven and roast for 15 minutes, or until nice and crispy.

7. At the same time, place bell peppers on the second shelf in the oven. They should be done about the same time and will be slightly charred along the edges.
8. While waiting for the potatoes and peppers, heat the beans and corn.
9. Fill the potatoes with beans, corn and peppers and stir the mixture a bit.
10. Top with jalapenos.
11. Mash avocado with fork and add lime juice. Add a dollop to each potato.

Nurse Amy's Sneaky Green Smoothie

If you're veggie averse, or green smoothies sound awful, ease yourself into it with more fruit and a bit of greens. Increase the amount of veggies gradually as your taste buds adjust.

This smoothie has an orange-banana flavor and the spinach isn't noticeable other than the green color. Plain yogurt adds a bit of protein. Stay away from sweetened yogurt or ice cream, which bump up the sugar and calories and it becomes dessert, rather than a healthy small meal or snack. If you can't eat yogurt, substitute protein powder.

This smoothie will contain between 120-175 calories (depending on the type of yogurt or protein shake brand), 19% of the recommended daily value for Vitamin A, and 47% of the recommended daily value for Vitamin C.

Ingredients:

- ½ cup water
- 1 tangerine
- ½ of a medium banana
- ½ cup fresh spinach leaves, packed
- ¼ cup plain regular or Greek lowfat yogurt
- 3 ice cubes

Combine all ingredients in a blender. Blend until ingredients are well combined.

Optional healthy boosters:

Protein powder - adjust liquid as needed

Chia seeds - antioxidants, protein, fiber, Omega 3s

Flax seed - omega 3s, fiber and other health-protective compounds





Pinellas County Tax Collector Employees Have Their Hearts Set on Heart Month

From a February press release

The offices of the Pinellas County Tax Collector had their hearts in the right place this past February showing their support for heart health and the [Florida Heart Research Foundation](#).

For several years now, they have partnered with the Florida Heart Research Foundation for *Heart Month* which occurs each February. The offices share heart-healthy facts, wear red in support of heart health and advocacy, and raise funds for the Florida Heart Research Foundation through the sale of heart-themed merchandise and specialty license plates.

Customers who visited the Tax Collector's office this February and switched to the *Stop Heart Disease* license plate were eligible for a rebate of up to \$85.

This covers the cost of the first year of the specialty plate annual use fee, Florida's original replacement license plate fee, and processing fees. Future renewal revenue goes to the Florida



Heart Research Foundation for cardiovascular disease education and prevention. To receive a rebate check, drivers must mail a voucher form along with a copy of their receipt to the Florida Heart Research Foundation.

Customers who took advantage of this special offer also received one free *Stop Heart Disease* gift of their choice. Those who donated a \$1 or more to the Florida Heart Foundation this month will receive a special thank you gift, plus there is heart-themed merchandise available for sale, with all proceeds sent to the Florida Heart Research Foundation.

“We are proud to once again partner with Florida Heart Research Foundation this year,” Tax Collector Charles W. Thomas said. “A healthy community is a happy community and at our offices, we're all about making our community a better place, while giving back as much as we can.”

The Florida Heart Research Foundation was founded in 1944 and was the first heart hospital and research center in the world. It supports cutting-edge research to save lives and funds heart disease

education and prevention efforts like *Heart Month*. For more information about the organization and the *Stop Heart Disease* license plate, visit floridaheart.org.





More Wear Red Photos



Arrrrrrggghhh!

The only Buccaners in a sea full of Chiefs!

#GoBucs
#APiratesLifeForMe
#TampaBayBuccaners

Wear Red for Heart Health meets Team Spirit Day at Solid Waste

Wellness Center Info

Current Hours

Monday, Wednesday and Friday
5 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Tuesday and Thursday
11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

COVID-19 Safety Measures and Limitations

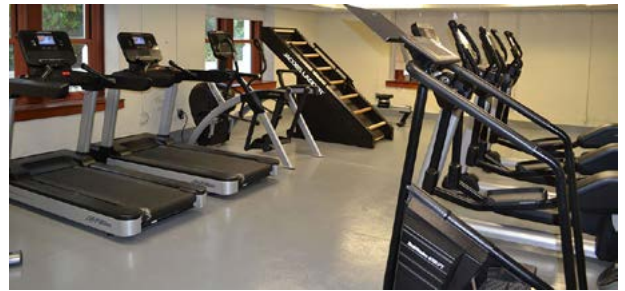
See the [Important Wellness Center Reopening Information](#).

Orientation

To schedule, use the [Orientation Sign-up](#).

Questions?

Contact Wellness at wellness@pinellascounty.org or 464-4049.



St. Pete Branch, Clerk's Office



Free Legal Consultation

Get a 30-minute attorney consultation at no charge by phone or in person with the Employee Assistance Program.

Visit www.pinellascounty.org/hr/EAP.



Keep Your Kids' Teeth Healthy

Check out Cigna's [10 Tips to Keep Your Kids' Smiles Happy and Healthy](#), then view other [dental health resources](#) such as overcoming dental anxiety, stress and oral health, and how to handle dental emergencies.

