

City of Tampa Healthy Heartbeat





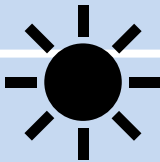

Health and wellness newsletter for COT Employees and families, and COT Retirees

July 2025



Summertime Health

Summertime health is an important part of staying well during the summer season, as this time of year poses different health risks than other months. Specifically, summertime safety includes water, food, and sun, all of which impact our bodies. Follow these guidelines to maximize your fun in the sun.

<div>Fluid intake</div> <div>Fluid intake is dependent upon several factors including the climate you live in, your gender, and physical activity level. It is recommended that women and men consume the following amounts of fluid per day on average:1<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Women: 11.5 cups of fluid or 92 ounces daily• Men: 15.5 cups of fluid or 124 ounces dailyAlthough fluid intake may come from several sources, it is best to meet fluid intake recommendations by drinking mostly water.</div>	<div>Healthier Eating</div> <div>Healthier foods, such as fresh produce, are available during the summer months, making it easier to enjoy a variety of foods and colors from nutritious food sources. Healthier foods may help you live longer, boost immunity, fight diseases and maintain a normal weight. Healthier eating tips include:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase fiber consumption• Reduce sodium and added sugar intake •• Burn as many calories as you consume</div>
<div>Sun exposure</div> <div>Though you may enjoy spending time in the sun, being exposed to too much sun can be harmful to our bodies. Luckily, the use of eye protection and sunscreen may aid in protecting you from dangerous levels of UV rays while outside in the summer. Do not forget to protect your eyes. You may do so by wearing UV-blocking sunglasses, wearing a hat with sunglasses, and never looking directly at the sun. You may also choose to stay inside when the sun is at its strongest — midday to early afternoon, at higher altitudes, and when reflected off water.</div>	<div>Sunscreen</div> <div>Additionally, it is recommended to use sunscreen not only to protect from sunburn, but also to prevent skin cancer. When it comes to sunscreen, remember the 5 W's to prevent sun damage:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Who: Everyone exposed to the sun• What: Broad spectrum SPF 15 or higher• When: Every day• Where: All exposed skin• How: One ounce to entire body• Why: Reduce your risk</div>

Health tip: Summertime health

Hydration and Healthier Beverages

Water is very important to our bodies. It makes up over 60% of an adult’s body and plays an important role in several bodily functions. A good general rule is to drink half your body weight in ounces of water each day – or more if you’re sweating heavily.

Make a Splash! Fun Ways to Flavor Your Water!		
Freeze your fruit!	Squeeze in Citrus!	Go Herbal!
Add frozen berries for flavor and color or freeze pureed fruit or 100% juice in ice cube trays.	Squeeze in citrus Cut fruit into wedges or slices — or just splash the juice in.	Add unique flavors with chopped or whole herbs and spices
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Very Berry• Mango Delight• Marvelous Melon	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lemon Lover• Luscious Lime• Orange Fusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Minty Refresher• Juicy Ginger• Basil Sipper

Health tip: Hydration & healthier beverages

Skin Care Tips, Conditions, and Treatments:



Our skin is the body’s biggest organ. And yet, when we think of skin care, we often only focus on our face. A radiant face is important, but it's just as important to take care of the skin on our whole body. Skin conditions can appear just about anywhere on our bodies. And when they do, it’s important to catch them early, learn how to take care of them — and know when to see a dermatologist.

Common skin conditions

Maybe you've found an unusual rash or itchy patch of dry skin recently. Things like inflammation, changes in color and texture, and new spots could be from an infection, chronic skin condition or allergies. There are **lots of skin conditions** — some that may need a doctor’s attention and others very easy to manage on your own. Common skin conditions are often harmless — but may be unpleasant to deal with at times.

To learn more about some of the most common adult skin conditions, ways to keep your skin healthy, and for information on skin self-exams and when to see a dermatologist, keep reading here:



[Skin care tips, conditions and treatments | Health & wellness | UnitedHealthcare](#) or scan the QR code.

July Celebrations!

July 1	National Gingersnap Day	
July 4 th	 Independence Day!	
July 4 th	National BBQ Spareribs Day	
July 13 th	Barbershop Quartet Appreciation Day	
July 25 th	National Talk in an Elevator Day	



July’s Health Actions:

- Make an appointment with a dermatologist
- Schedule your dental cleaning



July is Dental Health Awareness month!

Here are some great health tips from United Healthcare to help you maintain excellent dental health:

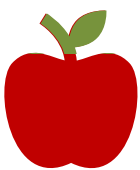
DID YOU KNOW... Due to water fluoridation and fluoride toothpaste, the baby boomer generation is the first to keep their natural teeth over their entire lifetime. However, threats to oral health, including tooth loss, poses a risk to all generations. Poor dental hygiene is correlated with several other diseases not directly in the mouth, including diabetes, heart disease, pneumonia and rheumatoid arthritis.



A healthier mouth for a lifetime includes:

- Regular dental visits
- Brush twice a day for at least 2 minutes
- Floss once a day
- Do not use tobacco products
- Limit sugary and alcoholic beverages

Brushing is probably the most obvious mouth hygiene component. It’s recommended that you brush your teeth twice a day for at least 2 minutes. Gently brush back and forth in short strokes. Be sure to brush outer, inner, and chewing surfaces of the teeth and the tongue. It is a good idea to replace your toothbrush every 3-4 months.



Other ways to maintain good oral hygiene:

- Proper nutrition
- Drink plenty of water
- Limit the number of snacks you eat
- Eat a variety of foods from each of the five major food groups, including:
 - whole grains – lean sources of protein – fruits
 - low-fat/fat-free dairy foods – vegetables



More Fun Facts About Dental Health:

- 26% of adults in the United States have tooth decay
- 46% of adults aged 30 years & older have signs of gum disease
- Oral cancers are more common in older people, particularly those who drink and/or smoke
 - Besides brushing, there are other tools to keep your mouth healthy like flossing and using mouthwash

Health tip: Healthier Dental Habits

Here’s some more helpful information from your dental insurance provider:



Humana

To keep your teeth and gums healthy and avoid tooth loss, you need to prevent dental issues from happening. What’s the best way to do this?

Preventive Dental Care

The purpose of preventive dental care is to:

- Lower your risk of developing gum disease , tooth decay and other serious dental issues
- Promote good oral hygiene habits for you and your family
- Allow your dentist to examine your mouth, jaw and neck to identify any related problems
- Find and fix small problems before they become big (and possibly expensive) problems
- Help reduce dental issues related to chronic medical conditions, such as diabetes, certain cancers and osteoporosis

Most preventive dental care starts with you. Your dentist will provide professional cleanings and exams, but it’s up to you to:

- Brush your teeth for 2 minutes, 2 times a day, every day
- Floss daily to remove food that’s stuck between teeth
- Use mouthwash to rinse food particles out of your mouth
- Eat foods that are good for your teeth
- Use a mouth guard when playing sports or riding a bike
- Wear a night guard if you grind your teeth while you sleep
- Don’t smoke or use tobacco products



For questions about your dental coverage and services, reach out to Humana Dental: (800) 233-4013 | www.humana.com | Group: #773466

July 2025 Wellness Incentive Activities:

Play it Safe This Summer
Wed, Jul 16 2025, 12 - 1pm



Register here: [Benefits Calendar](#) | [City of Tampa](#)

Eligible employees and spouses/domestic partners may earn \$100 per quarter toward your wellness incentives by participating in a UHC Nurse Class; repeatable every quarter for a max \$400/year.

Healthier Dental Habits
Wed, Jul 23 2025, 12 - 1pm



Register here: [Benefits Calendar](#) | [City of Tampa](#)

Eligible employees and spouses/domestic partners may earn \$100 per quarter toward your wellness incentives by participating in a UHC Nurse Class; repeatable every quarter for a max \$400/year.

15 – Minute Stretch Breaks w/ Coach Stef



- 7/3 – Thursday – 7AM – **Wastewater Collections**
- 7/7– Monday – 2PM – **Hanna City Center** – (Community Room)
- 7/9- Wednesday- 1PM – **McKay Bay Building #120** (outside – weather permitting)
- 7/10 – Thursday – 7:30AM – Advanced Wastewater Treatment Plant (**AWTP**) – Lg training room
- 7/11 – Friday – 12:00PM **Solid Waste Admin Building**
- 7/14 – Monday – 10AM - **TMOB** – courtyard
- 7/18 - Friday – 2PM – Columbus Municipal Office Building (**CMOB**) – upstairs training room
- 7/23 - Wednesday – 8:30AM - **Mobility** – Muster Room

These 15-minute stretch breaks will count towards incentive “engage w/ UHC health coach (3 sessions),” for eligible participants.

****BONUS** – Prizes will be available for all who participate (while supplies last) **Questions?** Reach out to Coach Stef @ cotcoach@uhc.com or 813-535-0482

City of Tampa
Benefits Calendar:





Big News in Sleep Research!

On May 23, 2025, a group of 29 U.S. Representatives co-signed a bipartisan Congressional letter in support of prioritizing sleep medical research and public awareness at a national level. This letter notes the troubling lack of coordinated sleep activities in public health and urges the CDC to modernize sleep public health.

Starting on Monday, May 5, sleep advocates took action across the country. This year, 90 powerful advocates reached 80 Congressional Offices on Capitol Hill, resulting in 29 co-signers. ...This continued momentum is critical to advance sleep health, sleep equity, and sleep disorders at a national level.



29 U.S. REPRESENTATIVES JUST SUPPORTED SLEEP RESEARCH & PUBLIC AWARENESS!



Have you heard about project sleep?

Project Sleep is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to raising awareness about sleep health, sleep equity, and sleep disorders. Project Sleep aims to improve public health by educating individuals about the importance of sleep health, sleep equity, and sleep disorders. Project Sleep educates and empowers individuals using events, campaigns, and programs to bring people together and talk about sleep as a pillar of health. Our very own Edgar Castro Tello from the SW – Recycling Dept is on the Board of Directors! Check out the Project Sleep website – and Edgar’s story – here: [Project Sleep - Find Sleep Help and Sleep Resources](#)

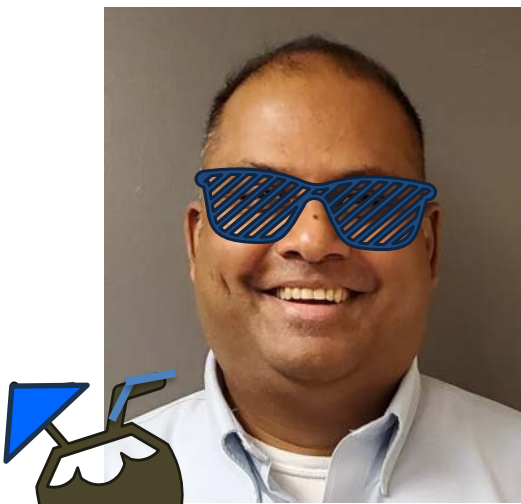


Tips for Choosing the Right Healthcare Provider:

- 1. **Ask for recommendations.** Your friends, family or coworkers might have a great doctor or nurse practitioner they can recommend.
- 2. **Ask the right questions:**
 - Do they participate in your health plan?
 - Do they have office hours that fit your schedule?
 - How do they handle after-hour emergencies?
 - If applicable, how much do common procedures usually cost?
 - Do they have a missed appointments policy?
- 3. **Review their credentials.** It’s a good idea to research a prospective provider’s education, experience and whether they engage in continuous training.
- 4. **Understand your insurance coverage and costs.** Study your insurance plan – and talk to your onsite UHC rep, Savio – so you’ll know what services it does/doesn’t cover and which providers are in your network. Staying within your plan’s network could help you minimize out-of-pocket costs.
- 5. **Research their reviews.** Many practices have patient reviews available online. Find a trusted online review platform and look for highly rated providers in your area. Take a close look at any low ratings to understand the complaint.

<https://www.humana.com/dental-insurance/dental-resources/how-to-choose-a-dentist>

Your Dedicated United Healthcare Team



Onsite Representative
Savio Crasto
Email: cotonsiterep@uhc.com
Phone: 813-274-8279



Nurse Liaison
Debbie Johns, RN
Email: cotnurse@uhc.com
Phone: 813-482-4856



Health Coach
Stephanie Olstad, BSW
Email: cotcoach@uhc.com
Phone: 813-535-0482

“Kitchen Sink Cookies”

Are you looking for something new and delicious to have for breakfast? Well, here’s a GREAT recipe that was shared with me from our very own **Maria Monroy** at Columbus (CMOB)!



The recipe calls them “**Breakfast Cookies**”, and while they have just the right amount of light sweetness for dessert, they are definitely hearty and nutritious enough to eat for breakfast!

Maria says she often gets creative with the ingredients, adding or changing whatever extra /leftover nuts, dried fruits, coconut etc. she has in the pantry (or the “kitchen sink”) to make this delightful cookie new and different every time!

I’ve both written out and linked the recipe below - **Thanks Maria! ☺ Enjoy, everyone!!**

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 sticks unsalted butter
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 3/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 eggs
- 2 heaping cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 heaping cup quick oats
- 1/2 cup shredded coconut
- 1/4 cup flax seeds
- 1/4 cup sunflower seeds
- 3/4 cup dried apricots, chopped
- 1/2 cup dried cherries
- 1/2 cup chopped pecans
- 1/4 cup golden raisins

Directions

- 1.Preheat oven to 375 degrees F.
- 2.Using an electric mixer, cream the butter together with the brown sugar and granulated sugar. Add vanilla and eggs. Next, add the flour, baking soda and salt. Then add the oats, coconut, flax seeds and sunflower seeds. Fold in the apricots, cherries, pecans and raisins.
- 3.Drop the batter onto cookie sheets with a cookie scoop or two spoons. Bake for 12 minutes, then cool on a rack. Yields 18 servings.

[Breakfast Cookies Recipe | Ree Drummond | Food Network](#)



Fun Fact: Most of the fat you burn exits your body through your lungs! According to 2014 research published in the British Medical Journal, 84% of the fat we lose is converted to carbon dioxide and leaves the body through our lungs. The remaining 16% is converted to water and exits our body through sweat, tears, urine, or other body fluids.

(Best Life, “50 Science-Backed Health Facts That Will Blow Your Mind”, <https://bestlifeonline.com/health-facts/>, © 2025)



Walking Through Grief and Loss

Hello City of Tampa Friends:

We ran this article in the February 2025 newsletter and felt it might be helpful to run again this month. There are some grief counseling resources listed at the end; please reach out for support if you have experienced loss and need someone to walk through it with you.

Grieving is the normal emotional process and life adjustments we go through after experiencing a loss. Depending on who you are and the nature of your loss, **each person’s process of grieving is different** from other’s experiences. In any case, the emotions surrounding grief and loss can be **intense and sometimes overwhelming**.

If your grief feels all-consuming or if you have difficulty getting through the day, **please reach out and find support or counseling**. It can seem hard to believe at first, but it is possible to learn how to work through the pain of grief. **You are not alone; there are people and resources available to you that can help you navigate these strong and complicated emotions and life changes.**

Here are some suggestions:

Employee Assistance Program (EAP). Your EAP vendors are available 24/7 with just a phone call. Their services are provided as part of your wellness benefits, at no additional cost to you.

- **People First EAP Wood & Associates**
 - Hillsborough: (813) 870-0392 - Pinellas: (727) 576-5164 - Out-of-Area: (800) 343-4670
 - www.woodassociates.net
- **Optum EAP UnitedHealthcare**
 - (866) 248-4096
 - www.Liveandworkwell.com - Access code: Tampa
- **New York Life EAP (new benefit)**
 - (800) 344-9752
 - www.guidanceresources.com – web ID: NYLGBS

There’s also help on www.liveandworkwell, where you will find information on grief support, how to connect with a therapist or counselor, and browse several helpful articles on understanding the grieving process and how to take care of yourself during this especially difficult time.

Video: Understanding Grief and Loss - This brief recorded presentation gently walks you through understanding the different stages of grief, ways to manage grief, and how grief might look in children and teens.

How to deal with strong feelings of grief | News & articles | UnitedHealthcare –This article offers help identifying some of the symptoms of grief, as well as how to cope, self-care strategies, and finding support.

Grief Support Groups: You don’t have to walk through your grief alone. Here are some community and national organizations – not affiliated with United Healthcare or the City of Tampa - that offer grief support groups and workshops throughout the Tampa Bay area:

- **Grief Share** - a safe, welcoming place where people understand the difficult emotions of grief. 13-week support group...discover what to expect in the days ahead and what’s “normal” in grief. ... learn helpful ways of coping with grief and gain solid support each step of the way. www.griefshare.org
- **Gulfside Hospice** – offers bereavement support groups and grief workshops free of charge for anyone ages 18 and older who have lost a loved one. Sessions led by professional counselors who abide by standards of integrity and confidentiality and are available in person, or via Zoom or phone.
- **The Compassionate Friends** - The Compassionate Friends provides highly personal comfort, hope, and support to every family experiencing the death of a son or a daughter, a brother or a sister, or a grandchild, and helps others better assist the grieving family.

As always, your UHC team is here to support you. If you have any questions about any of the United Healthcare/City of Tampa resources for grief support, please don’t hesitate to reach out.
Take good care of you.

Other Wellness Activities!

Yoga Classes at Hanna City Center

Every other Monday from 5:15PM – 6:00PM
In the Community Room, 1st floor

Registration is required:
Yoga@Hanna



**** This class is only for COT Employees! ****

Cooking Demo: Skillet Skirt Steak and Spaghetti Squash Chow Mien

Tue, Jul 8 2025, 12 - 12:45pm

Register here: [Benefits Calendar | City of Tampa](#)

This presentation is NOT eligible for any wellness incentives – but it’s a lot of fun!

Rally Engage FAQs:

Q: I completed the (fill in activity here) last month; why am I not seeing the money in my Rally Engage dashboard yet?

A: Great question! Remember, some of the activities are unique to the City of Tampa and must be manually validated and added to your dashboard. Classes with Nurse Debbie, activities with Coach Stef, the PHA (“Biometrics”) at the wellness centers, and a few others may take up to 60 days to show on your Rally Engage dashboard.

Q: I can’t find where I attest to being tobacco free (or to the dental, eye exam)

A: From the Rally Engage Home screen, click on “Explore” (at the bottom of the screen). That will take you to the “Rewardable Activities”. You will need to click “View All” once or twice to view the entire list of activities, including the attestations.

Q: What is my “HealthSafeID”?

A: Your HealthSafeID is the password you use to sign into your www.myuhc.com account. If you don’t know what yours is, or you haven’t set up your myuhc.com account yet, follow the “forgot password” prompt to create your new HealthSafeID for your Rally Engage account.

Rally Support line: **1-877-370-1130**



CareATC Client Newsletter | June 2025



About Dietary Supplements:



I receive a lot of questions about various dietary supplements and whether they can help manage some of our health risks. It seems like there’s a pill or a plant or a salve or a tincture out there for just about everything that ails us. But are they **safe and effective**? What **evidence** is there that they work? Even vitamins and aspirin have side effects – what are the **side effects** of these? And who’s watching over **manufacturing and labeling standards** to keep us safe?

Always talk to your doctor or pharmacist before taking any supplements and check out these helpful resources:

[Questions and Answers on Dietary Supplements | FDA](#)

[Dietary Supplement Fact Sheets](#)

[Dietary Supplement Manufacturing - USP Verified Mark | USP](#)

