

MARCH/APRIL 2025 • VOLUME 20 ISSUE 2

# COMMUNITY WELLNESS

## NATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH WEEK

### What is Public Health?

Public health focuses on protecting and improving the health of individuals and communities.



This field promotes healthy lifestyles, investigates disease and injury prevention, and identifies, prevents, and addresses infectious diseases. Ultimately, public health aims to protect the health of entire populations, whether they are as small as a local neighborhood or as large as a country.

Public health begins with creating a positive change in our homes and communities. The environments where we live, work, and play significantly impact our overall well-being.



National Public Health Week is from April 7-13, 2025. Join us in giving recognition to all our community partners and health care workers for continuing to make a positive change in our communities, as well as improving the environments where we live, work, and play!

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Community Health Division Director

# NOURISH, REST, REPEAT

## The Link Between Diet and Sleep

You may have heard the saying, “There will be plenty of time to sleep when you’re dead.” While that may be true, we don’t want to give up sleep, because it could lead to a shorter, unhealthy life span. Sleep is needed for your body to repair and restore itself.

Consistently low levels of sleep (less than seven hours a day for adults) have been linked to obesity, type 2 diabetes, and cardiovascular disease. The reason may be due to an increased consumption of high fat and high sugar foods in place of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Research has shown that lack of sleep has a negative impact on our overall health, especially as we age.

While sleep can affect our diet, what we eat can also affect our sleep. There are specific nutrients that play a role in our sleep-wake cycle. One of these nutrients is tryptophan.

Tryptophan is an essential amino acid and found in high protein foods like meat, poultry, eggs, soy/tofu, and milk. Think about how you feel after you consume a large amount of turkey and a glass of milk, similar to a Thanksgiving meal. You may begin to feel a little sleepy. Tryptophan is used by your body to create melatonin and serotonin. Both of these chemicals play a role in how well you sleep and increasing your intake of tryptophan may help you have a deeper and longer sleep each night.

Alcohol also has a negative impact on our sleep cycle. It can reduce the production of melatonin in our bodies leading to more trouble sleeping. While alcohol may make you feel drowsy shortly after you consume it, in the long run it can cause you to wake up more often throughout the night.

Caffeine is another compound that leads to less sleep. Caffeine works on our nerve cells by reducing tiredness. Those who consume alcohol and have trouble sleeping may turn to caffeine during the day to stay awake and then alcohol again in the evenings for that initial feeling of drowsiness. Why not replace your evening glass of wine with a warm cup of milk for extra tryptophan and a longer, more restful sleep.

While we often think that one thing causes another, in the case of diet and sleep, it seems to be a cyclical pattern. We cannot improve one without improving both, and improving both can help us live a longer, healthier life. Sleeping more than nine hours a night may not lengthen your lifespan but continuously getting less than six hours of sleep at night can reduce your lifespan by two to five years. So, let’s not wait until we are dead to sleep, take time now to get the rest you need!



# Mediterranean Chickpea Salad



This Mediterranean chickpea salad is your go-to for a vibrant, wholesome meal bursting with fresh flavors.

Tender chickpeas team up with crisp cucumber, sweet red bell pepper, and thinly sliced red onion, while briny Kalamata olives and creamy crumbled feta add rich, savory depth. Tossed in a tangy dressing of olive oil, white wine vinegar, and a hint of fresh lemon juice, this salad is brightened with a sprinkle of fresh parsley and a touch of crushed red pepper flakes for a subtle kick.

Whether you're meal-prepping for the week or bringing a dish to share, this salad is a colorful and crave-worthy Mediterranean delight!

## Ingredients

- 2 cans chickpeas, rinsed
- 1 cucumber, chopped
- 1 red bell pepper, chopped
- 1/2 red onion, thinly sliced
- 1/2 cup Kalamata olives, chopped
- 1/2 cup crumbled feta
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1/4 cup white wine vinegar
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 tbsp fresh parsley, chopped
- 1/4 tsp red pepper flakes

## Directions

### Step one:

In a large bowl, toss chickpeas, cucumber, bell pepper, onion, olives, and feta; season with salt and black pepper.

### Step two:

In a jar with a lid, combine oil, vinegar, lemon juice, parsley, and crushed red pepper flakes. Close jar and shake until emulsified; season with salt and black pepper.

### Step three:

Pour dressing over salad and toss to coat just before serving.

By Makinze Gore [Recipe](#)



# Debrief of the Healthy Hillsborough Collaborative Meeting and a Community Health Assessment (CHA) Mural



A healthy community is not something that can be created in a day, nor is it something individuals can achieve on their own. Attaining a healthy community takes efforts at the policy, community, and individual levels.

At the last steering committee meeting with the Healthy Hillsborough Collaborative, DOH-Hillsborough joined together with various partners to analyze issue statements and complete a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis. This allowed the committee to identify what the greatest needs are in Hillsborough County, and how to work together to make the community healthier.

After gathering data from our community surveys, key informant interviews, focus groups, and the photovoice project, the following six issue areas were identified: health care access and quality, morbidity and mortality, healthy behaviors, behavioral health, social and economic factors, and environment. As evident with the data collected and reflected in the CHA mural above, there is so much more to 'good health' aside from just physical health, which tends to be the focus when talking about health. This was also reflected in the survey results and the feedback received from community members. The meeting concluded by sharing a variety of community resources to help achieve goals in improving the health in Hillsborough County. A key takeaway was to draw from the current projects occurring that are already thriving, such as community gardens, food pharmacies, and housing assistance programs.

If you are interested in learning more about the CHA/CHIP (Community Health Assessment/Community Health Improvement Plan) process in Hillsborough County, please see the [Community Health Assessment/Community Health Improvement Plan](#) or call the Community Health Division in Hillsborough County at 813-307-8071. If you have any specific questions, suggestions, or feedback, please contact our CHA/CHIP Coordinator, Marcela Jimenez Ramirez, at 813-559-4180.

Thank you for joining the efforts to collaborate for a healthier and thriving Hillsborough County!

Author Avery Rodriguez, MPH, CHES®



# WIC CALL TODAY!

 **813-307-8074**

*WIC covers your kids  
until the age of 5!*



**FOOD PACKAGES  
WORTH UP TO:**

**\$130/month**

**Florida  
HEALTH**  
Hillsborough County



**SEE IF YOU QUALIFY:**

### WIC INCOME GUIDELINES

FAMILY SIZE	MONTHLY INCOME
1	\$2,322
2	\$3,152
3	\$3,981
4	\$4,810
5	\$5,640
6	\$6,469
7	\$7,299
8	\$8,128

Effective 6/21/2024

If you receive Medicaid, Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA), or Food Assistance, **you are income-eligible for WIC** and other proof of income won't be needed.


## WIC Clinic Locations:


 **North Hillsborough: (Town 'n Country)**  
9827 N Sheldon Road, Tampa FL 33635


 **College Hill: (Ybor)**  
2313 E 28th Avenue, Tampa FL 33605

 **Sulphur Springs:**  
8605 N Mitchell Avenue, Tampa FL 33604

 **University:**  
13601 N 22nd Street, Tampa FL 33613

 **Plant City:**  
307 N Michigan Avenue, Plant City FL 33563

 **Brandon:**  
1158 Bell Shoals Road, Unit 101, Brandon FL 33511

 **Joyce Ely: (Ruskin)**  
205 14th Avenue SE, Ruskin FL 33570



**Make an appointment  
TODAY!**



This institution is an equal opportunity provider.



# WIC LLAMA HOY!

 **813-307-8074**

*WIC cubre a tus hijos hasta los 5 años!*

**PAQUETES DE COMIDA CON UN VALOR DE:**

**\$130/mes!**

**Florida**  
**HEALTH**  
Hillsborough County



**CALIFICAS PARA WIC?**


**GUIAS DE INGRESOS:**

GRUPO FAMILIAR	INGRESO MENSUAL
1 .....	\$2,322
2 .....	\$3,152
3 .....	\$3,981
4 .....	\$4,810
5 .....	\$5,640
6 .....	\$6,469
7 .....	\$7,299
8 .....	\$8,128

Revisado 6/21/2024

Si recibe Medicaid, ayuda económica temporal (TCA) o estampillas, **usted es elegible para WIC** y no necesita otra prueba de ingresos.


## Clínicas de WIC:


 **North Hillsborough: (Town 'n Country)**  
9827 N Sheldon Road, Tampa FL 33635


 **College Hill: (Ybor)**  
2313 E 28th Avenue, Tampa FL 33605

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205 14th Avenue SE, Ruskin FL 33570



**¡Haz una cita hoy!**





# Foods that may AFFECT YOUR SLEEP

## Alcohol

Reduces the production of melatonin



## Caffeine

Reduces tiredness



## Tryptophan/Proteins

Increases the melatonin production



## Magnesium

Helps with the release of melatonin to increase sleepiness



## Sugar

Causes more late-night wake-ups and increases late-night snacking



## Vitamin D

Helps regulate the sleep-wake cycle.



## Saturated fats

Lead to lighter sleep



# Hurricane Season

The 2024 Hurricane season was certainly a wake-up call for the entire Central Florida area with three hurricanes impacting us. Debby, Helene, and Milton all impacted the Tampa Bay area, and each was progressively stronger. In fact, 2024 was the first time since 1921 for a major hurricane (Category 3) to impact Hillsborough County. Hurricanes Helene and Milton were the most devastating storms to impact us, but each brought a different kind of threat and damage.

Hurricane Helene's major threat was the storm surge. Areas around Tampa Bay (Town 'n Country, Davis Island, and Ruskin) experienced flooding above six feet, resulting in many residents losing their homes and possessions. For some residents, repairs are still ongoing.



Hurricane Milton, significantly more powerful, brought wind and rain. Extreme winds moved through Hillsborough County as Milton made landfall south in Siesta Key. Hillsborough County has never experienced this level of damage to the power grid, fallen trees, and impacted buildings. Excessive rains, up to 14 inches, fell in some parts of the county and flooded low lying areas, making them inaccessible. While the power company was able to restore over 95% of power within seven days, some areas of the county were out for more than 30 days.



With today's technology, information and warnings about tropical weather are being provided at a pace never seen before. Warnings can be sent to the public up to ten days before a storm's landfall, giving residents time to get prepared.



# STORM Prep



## The first step is to develop a plan.

We cannot stop a storm from impacting our area, but by taking a few steps, we can make dealing with the effects much easier. Develop a plan that addresses your own safety, safety of your family and loved ones, and your property or possessions. Your plan should address a few simple questions, but the most important one is where you can evacuate.

The safest place to be is out of the path of the storm. That is not always possible, but the decision to evacuate should be made as quickly as possible. If you cannot leave the area, then you should look to shelter with family, friends, or even a hotel. If you have no place safe to go, then the last choice should be to go to a general population or a medical shelter. Yes, shelters will keep you safe, but they are not very comfortable and will be shut down as soon as possible after the storm.

## Secondly, if you are staying in your home, what will you need to ride out the storm safely?

A few key items include food and water, medications, important papers (insurance, medical records, etc.), first aid kit, clothes, bedding, and hygiene products. Have enough to last for at least seven days, and ***don't forget about your pets!***

Next, prepare your home. Have your trees trimmed before hurricane season. As the storm approaches, make sure that you pick up smaller items that may be blown around, such as trash cans, lawn furniture, and general debris. These things can become very dangerous if they are being blown around.

We need to be prepared for future storms and now is the time to start preparing. Please visit [FloridaHealth.gov/SevereWeather](https://www.floridahealth.gov/SevereWeather) for tips and suggestions on how to safely weather the next storm.





# Step into Tampa's Nature: *Trails Waiting for You*



Exploring trails in Tampa is a fantastic way to increase your daily walking while discovering more of the beauty and charm your great city has to offer. Walking is one of the simplest and most accessible forms of exercise, offering a wide range of health benefits for people of all ages.

Just 30 minutes a day can lead to significant benefits for both your body and mind. It improves cardiovascular health, strengthens muscles and bones, and helps with weight management. As a low-impact exercise, walking is accessible to all fitness levels and ages, and it can reduce the risk of chronic illnesses like heart disease, diabetes, and high blood pressure.

To celebrate **Move More Together Month in April**, consider organizing or participating in community walks, setting personal step goals, or exploring local parks and trails with friends and family. It's the perfect time to embrace a more active lifestyle and inspire others to do the same.

**National Walking Day is April 2, 2025, so gather your nearest and dearest and get outside to move more together.**

Here are some great trails to visit in Tampa:

## \* **Al Lopez Park**

**4810 N Himes Ave., Tampa, FL 33614**

- 1.2-mile paved trail surrounded by oak trees, ponds, and green spaces
- Includes playgrounds and picnic shelters
- Family-friendly amenities

## \* **Lettuce Lake Park**

**6920 E Fletcher Ave., Tampa, FL 33637**

- Scenic 1.25-mile paved trail with lush greenery, a boardwalk, and an observation tower for river views and wildlife spotting
- Shaded trails and birdwatching

## \* **Curtis Hixon Waterfront Park Downtown Park**

**600 N Ashley Drive, Tampa, FL 33602**

- A shorter riverwalk offering Hillsborough River views and access to city attractions
- Vibrant backdrop, dining options

## \* **Upper Tampa Bay Trail**

**9201 W Waters Ave., Tampa, FL 33615**

- 7-mile paved trail popular for walking and cycling, with shaded areas and multiple entry points
- Scenic views, picnic areas, and fitness stations



More information on ways to Move More Together at [Heart.org](https://www.heart.org).



## Tips for Enjoying Hillsborough County's Trails and Parks

To make the most of your trail adventures, keep a few simple tips in mind:

- **Stay hydrated:** Always carry water, especially for longer trails like Flatwoods Wilderness Park.
- **Wear comfortable shoes:** Opt for walking shoes with good support to prevent fatigue.
- **Check the weather:** Florida's weather can be unpredictable, so plan accordingly.
- **Be mindful of wildlife:** Many parks are home to various animals; enjoy them from a distance.

**Move More Together Month is the perfect excuse to get outdoors, and Hillsborough County offers no shortage of free trails and parks to explore. Grab your walking shoes and discover the natural beauty right in your backyard!**

## Florida Department of Health: Your Partner in Wellness

DOH-Hillsborough is dedicated to helping residents achieve better health through education, resources, and programs. From promoting physical activity to providing tips on balanced nutrition, DOH-Hillsborough offers tools to support a healthier lifestyle. Whether you're looking for guidance on starting an exercise routine or information on wellness initiatives, DOH-Hillsborough is a valuable partner in improving your well-being.

[Learn more about their physical activity programs and resources.](#)



## Looking for more resources to explore trails in Tampa?

Visit [Tampa Parks and Recreation Greenways](#) for a comprehensive list of greenways and parks ready for your next outdoor adventure!

# Understanding Traveler's Diarrhea: Prevention and Treatment



Travel brings an air of excitement as you explore new destinations, however, as you prepare for your travel plans in the new year, it is important to stay safe and healthy.

A common ailment that many international and domestic travelers face is known as traveler's diarrhea (TD). Fortunately, through public health education, we know how to prevent and treat it to ensure your trip is not spoiled by your gut.



## Traveler's Diarrhea

TD refers to bowel movements that are loose or watery when you eat or drink contaminated food or water. Often, traveler's diarrhea is from bacterial infections. Common culprits are *Escherichia coli* (*E.coli*), *Salmonella*, *Shigella*, and *Campylobacter*. These bacteria can be transmitted through food, water, or surfaces.

Viruses that can cause TD include rotavirus and norovirus, often referred to as the stomach bug. And parasitic infections such as *Giardia* can also cause diarrhea.



## Symptoms

The main symptom of TD is loose stools. Other symptoms may include:

- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Abdominal cramps
- Fatigue
- Bloating

In many cases, symptoms do not last for more than a few days. If symptoms persist, visit a medical professional immediately.



## Treatment

TD often goes away with a few days of rest and replacing fluids. As diarrhea can lead to dehydration, it is important to drink lots of fluids to hydrate your body. If symptoms continue to persist, a health care professional might prescribe you antibiotics or antidiarrheal medication to help you recover.



## Prevention

Here are some key tips for prevention of TD:

- Only use bottled water or water that has been boiled or chemically disinfected for drinking, brushing your teeth, washing fruits and vegetables, washing utensils, and making ice.
- Do not eat or drink unpasteurized milk, cheese, ice cream, or yogurt.
- Do not eat raw meat or undercooked meat.
- Do not eat fruits or salad greens that have not been washed.
- Wash your hands with soap and water frequently.

**Enjoy your travel without the hassle.  
Prevent TD.**



# Want to be a healthier you? We can help!

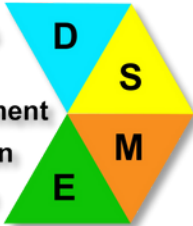
The Florida Department of Health has health education programs at no cost.  
Call 813-307-8009 to register or visit [GetIntoFitnessToday.net](http://GetIntoFitnessToday.net)

## BP F♥R ME

### BP For Me

The Blood Pressure Management Education Program is a five week program that helps participants understand blood pressure numbers and how increased blood pressure can increase your risk for heart attack, stroke, heart disease, heart failure, kidney disease, and more. With the guidance and education from our registered dietitian, you can learn how to control your blood pressure through the foods you eat and how you prepare them.

Diabetes  
Self-  
Management  
Education  
Program



### Diabetes Self Management Education

A six week program that gives participants the tools to monitor glucose at home, make lifestyle changes, learn valuable information on medications and insulin, and make informed choices about foods and carbohydrates to manage diabetes. The program is accredited by the Association of Diabetes Care and Education Specialists and participants in the program have an average reduction in A1C of 1.15!



### Diabetes Prevention Program

A year-long program with 26 sessions designed around behavior modification will provide resources to cope with stressors, choose healthy meals, and get into an exercise routine! This program is great for those looking for ongoing accountability, support, and permanent lifestyle changes. This is an evidence-based weight loss program and has a participant average weight loss of 6% of their body weight. Those who lose 5-7% of their body weight can reduce the risk for developing type 2 diabetes, reduce the risk for heart disease and some cancers, lower cholesterol, and improve blood glucose levels.



### Get Into Fitness Today

A 12-week program that is all things health and wellness. It utilizes science-based information to reduce chronic diseases through obesity prevention. This program is great for those who already know the basics of wellness and just need a refresher along with some motivation to help them lose weight. Our GIFT program has helped 90% of participants increase their physical activity, and is for anyone who is looking for a starting point to lose weight. You'll learn tools for healthy eating and how to be more physically active.



### Get Into Fitness Together – a Learning Emotional Activity Program (GIFT-LEAP)

Designed to encourage children ages 5-9 to make healthy choices so that they can lead a healthy lifestyle into adulthood. The program is six weeks long and covers healthy eating, physical activity, and how to deal with stress and emotions. Families are welcome to join in the program!

## BREAST AND CERVICAL CANCER EARLY DETECTION PROGRAM

We offer **free** mammogram and pap smear testing. For more information or to schedule an appointment, call 813-307-8082.

Upcoming mobile mammography:

*Tampa Family Health Center*

To schedule an appointment, call 813-284-4529.

## FL♥rida KidCare

The Florida health insurance for children for those that are eligible, birth through age 18, even if one or both parents are working. To apply by phone, call 888-540-5437, or TTY-877-316-8748.

## FL HEALTH CHARTS



Have you ever wondered about the health of your community or state and how it compares to other Floridians? If so, Florida Health Charts is a great resource for accurate health data.

Learn more at [FLHealthCharts.gov](http://FLHealthCharts.gov).

## PARKS AND RECREATION

**Florida State Parks**  
[FloridaStateParks.org](http://FloridaStateParks.org)

**Hillsborough County Parks, Recreation, and Conservation**  
[HillsboroughCounty.org](http://HillsboroughCounty.org)

**Plant City Parks and Recreation**  
[PlantCityGov.com/ParksRec](http://PlantCityGov.com/ParksRec)

**Tampa Parks and Recreation**  
[TampaGov.net/parks-and-recreation](http://TampaGov.net/parks-and-recreation)

**Temple Terrace Parks and Recreation**  
[TempleTerrace.com](http://TempleTerrace.com)

# CONTACT US

\* All numbers are area code, 813, unless otherwise indicated.

### MAIN OPERATOR

*and director's office* ..... 813-307-8000

### COMMUNITY HEALTH

Behavioral Health.....	235-3273
Breast/Cervical Cancer.....	307-8082
Community Health Director.....	307-8071
Diabetes.....	307-8009
Epidemiology.....	307-8010
Health Education.....	307-8009
Health Literacy.....	307-8071
Insulin Program.....	307-8009
Lead Poisoning Prevention.....	307-8071
Office of Minority Health.....	307-8066
School Health.....	307-8071
Tobacco Prevention.....	559-4760
Weight Management.....	307-8009

### DISEASE CONTROL

HIV/AIDS Specialty Center.....	307-8064
Immunizations.....	307-8077
Sexually Transmitted Diseases.....	307-8058
Anonymous Testing.....	307-8058
Tuberculosis (TB).....	307-8047

**ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH...** 307-8059

**NUTRITION/WIC.....** 307-8074

### PHARMACY

(HIV/AIDS care clients only) ..... 307-8072

**PUBLIC HEALTH PREPAREDNESS....** 307-8042

**PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER.....** 307-8044

### VITAL STATISTICS

(birth and death records)..... 307-8002

For questions or comments, email DOH-Hillsborough at  
[DLCHD29WebsiteDistribution@FLhealth.gov](mailto:DLCHD29WebsiteDistribution@FLhealth.gov).





Florida Department of Health  
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Health Education (70)  
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Tampa, FL 33675-5135

**MISSION:** To protect, promote, and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county, and community efforts.