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COMMUNITY WELLNESS

Public Health Provides A Shot In The Arm – Literally!

BY SARA ROBINSON

Public Health focuses on “The Three P’s:” Population, Prevention, and Promotion. We prevent disease, promote wellness and safety, and work to improve the health of large populations. Washing hands, social distancing, using masks, and quarantining are all public health strategies to help keep everyone safe! Improving health includes assisting people with transportation, affording care and treatment, and making sure they’re physically/mentally healthy. Finally, we must educate the public on preventive treatment. These are ways to keep people healthy and prevent an illness from ever

occurring. This includes vaccines, medication, and simple everyday tasks – which all aim to prevent disease outbreaks. Vaccinations are an important tool to prevent the spread of disease. Cont’d on page 9.



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Remaining Connected

LESLENE E. GORDON, PHD, RD, LD/N
COMMUNITY HEALTH DIRECTOR

In recent months the public discovered a new function of the health department - contact tracing. They further learned that this was being done by epidemiologists to track down and reduce the spread of COVID. The word epidemiologist has now become a more common part of the vocabulary for some. But contact tracing is not the only thing that epidemiologists do. Their work includes disease causation, transmission, outbreak investigation; disease surveillance; screening; biomonitoring; and the gathering and analysis of data for a variety of purposes. In public health departments they are often at the forefront of investigating and combating disease outbreaks in local communities. Derived from Greek, the word epidemiology, literally means "the study of what is upon the people". What was "upon the people" for 2020 was COVID and despite the hiring of hundreds of additional case investigators and contact tracers in health departments State-wide, and the large-scale movement of staff to support epidemiology functions, it was almost impossible for epidemiology staff to do their jobs when we experienced extremely high numbers of new COVID cases. They nevertheless worked almost around the clock trying to keep up with the never-ending growth of new cases. Their efforts, as well as efforts of other health department staff who kept other essential services running, are to be commended. Even with virtual everything, telehealth and telework challenges, we remained connected in our mission.

In addition to our phenomenal staff, the health department could not have functioned in recent months without the help of partners. The County and other government agencies, local hospitals, as well as private agencies and local academic institutions were all actively engaged in COVID interventions. Efforts we have made over the years to build bridges with our public health system partners have paid off with dividends as the pandemic has progressed. We are so grateful for partners who have shared the work with us.

The theme for National Public Health Week this year, "Building Bridges to Better Health," is therefore very relevant and real for our local health department. According to the American Public Health Association, "The COVID-19 pandemic has reminded us that building connections is more important than ever if we want to ensure the health and safety of all people within our communities." To put it plainly, public health departments do not have the resources to work effectively as a lone ranger. We must engage others in our system and maintain strong partnerships.

As I think about our public health system partnerships, I am reminded of the living root bridges formed from living tree roots that are common in the southern part of Northeast India. If the tree from which the bridge is formed remains healthy, the roots in the bridge can naturally grow thick and strengthen and can last for many hundreds of years. Without care, however, bridges can become unusable as they grow wild, decay and become unstable. I like the idea of growing bridges which may be a more delicate task than building a bridge, as complicated as that may be. Clearly, we are good at doing both in Hillsborough County. Our challenge will be maintaining these strong, living, dynamic connections as we enter a post-COVID era of competing priorities. To meet the needs of our community we will need to remain connected and to maintain the bridges that allow us all to deliver services and circumvent gaps.

Have a question or comment? Email us: DLCHD29WebsiteDistribution@flhealth.gov

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Healthy Recipes

Tofu Triangles with Creamy Peanut Sauce

Ingredients

- 1 package(s) tofu, firm ,14 ounces, drained
- 1 teaspoon oil, peanut, or sesame oil
- 2 tablespoon soy sauce, less sodium
- 2 tablespoon peanut butter, natural
- 1 tablespoon vinegar, rice wine
- 2 tablespoon sugar, brown
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper, red flakes
- 4 medium scallion(s) (green onions), finely chopped
- 1/3 cup(s) water
- 2 teaspoon sesame seeds, toasted



Instructions

- Slice the tofu crosswise into 1/2-inch slabs. Then cut each slab into 2 triangles. Blot with paper towels. Spray a large skillet with cooking spray. Heat the pan over medium to high heat and add the oil. When hot, add the tofu and fry over medium-high heat until golden.
- Turn and cook on the second side.
- While the tofu is cooking, combine soy sauce, peanut butter, vinegar, brown sugar, pepper flakes, two green onions and water in a food processor or blender and puree until smooth.
- When the tofu is lightly browned, pour the sauce over the tofu and cook until bubbling. Turn off the heat, scatter the remaining green onions and sesame seeds over the top and serve.

Serves 6

Safe Outdoor Activities During The COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic doesn't have to halt all of your outdoor fun. Here are several fun outdoor activities you can still enjoy.

The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic has affected activities for many people. Public health restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic have led to canceled festivals, concerts and other events. Many vacations and large celebrations have been limited or put on hold.

Despite the changes caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, there's still plenty of fun to be had. In fact, seeking out fun activities may be even more important now. Doing something you enjoy can distract you from problems and help you cope with life's challenges.

When activities are near where you live and allow plenty of space between you and others, outdoor activities pose a lower risk of spread of the COVID-19 virus than indoor activities do. Depending on the weather where you live, various activities may be available.

Why choose outdoor activities?

The COVID-19 virus is primarily spread from person to person among those in close contact, within about 6 feet. The virus spreads through respiratory droplets released into the air when talking, coughing, speaking, breathing or sneezing. In some situations, especially in enclosed spaces with poor ventilation, the COVID-19 virus can spread when a person is exposed to small droplets or aerosols that stay in the air for minutes to hours.

When you're outside, fresh air is constantly moving, dispersing these droplets. So you're less likely to breathe in enough of the respiratory droplets containing the virus that causes COVID-19 to become infected.

Being outside offers other benefits. It can provide an emotional boost and can help you feel less tense, stressed, angry or depressed. And sunlight can give your body vitamin D, too.

Low-risk ways to move more

Coming into close contact with people who don't live with you increases your risk of being exposed to someone infected with the virus that causes COVID-19. That's why, in general, any activity that allows you to keep a social distance of at least 6 feet from others is lower risk.

There are many activities you can enjoy close to home, whether you're visiting your favorite public, state or national park, or just spending time in your neighborhood. While various activities may not be possible during some seasons, there are many ways to be active outdoors throughout the year. Get moving with these low-risk outdoor activities during the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Walking, running and hiking
- Rollerblading and biking
- Fishing and hunting
- Golfing

- Kayaking, canoeing, diving, boating or sailing
- Fitness classes, held outside or virtually, that allow distance

Avoid crowded sidewalks and narrow paths and choose routes that make it easy to keep your distance. Wear a mask when you can't maintain at least 6 feet from people you don't live with. Don't wear a mask during activities in which it might get wet, such as swimming.

And don't let cold weather stop you from being active outdoors! Dress in layers and protect your head, hands and feet. Then head outside for a winter hike or go cross-country skiing. And aim to keep a positive mindset about winter. This may help you to enjoy the season and winter activities more.

Low-risk social activities

Depending on your location and the weather, many other outdoor activities can be good choices, too:

- **Picnics.** Pack food from home. Or pick up takeout from your favorite restaurant or food truck. In some places, you might be able to get your food delivered to you. Take it to enjoy at your favorite public park, or eat out on your patio or deck.
- **Outdoor farmers markets.** Wear a mask and maintain a social distance of at least 6 feet from others.
- **Gathering with friends.** Allow for social distancing between people from different households and skip the hugs and handshakes. Plan activities that don't require close contact, such as sidewalk chalk for kids and games like Frisbee. And offer hand sanitizer.

Remember that just getting together for a chat at a safe distance can offer a valuable opportunity to be with people you care about — and boost your mood at the same time.

- **Drive-in movies.** The COVID-19 pandemic has launched a drive-in movie theater comeback in the U.S. It's something many people can enjoy together with plenty of physical distance.

Low- to moderate-risk outdoor activities

Depending on how they're done, many popular outdoor activities also can be safe. While some of these may not be available in all seasons and locations, take advantage of them when the weather permits. Some ideas include:

- **Restaurant patio dining.** When the weather is appropriate to be outside, patio dining can be a good outdoor option. Outdoor patio dining at uncrowded restaurants where patio tables are spaced appropriately is safer than indoor dining. Wear a mask when not eating or drinking. In other areas of the restaurant, keep a distance of at least 6 feet from others. Avoid self-service food and drink options. And remember to wash your hands when you enter and leave.
- **Camping.** If you only have close contact with people you live with, camping is low risk. If you camp with people who don't live in your household, camp in separate tents spaced at least 6 feet apart and avoid sharing camping supplies, including food and drinks. Pack hand soap, hand sanitizer and supplies to clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces.

- **Swimming pools and beaches.** Close contact of less than 6 feet from others — not water itself — can make these activities risky. If you go to the beach and come into close contact with others, your risk is higher. Water itself doesn't spread the COVID-19 virus to people.
- **Boating with friends.** Canoeing, kayaking or rowing with people who don't live in your household is riskier than doing these activities with only those from your own household.
- **Barbecues, campfires and outdoor potlucks.** Grill out on the patio. Or if the weather is cool, bundle up in warm clothes and sit around a fire pit. Keep your gathering small, maintaining social distance from others. Plan activities that don't require close contact. You may even choose to have everyone bring his or her own food and drinks to enjoy the togetherness with less chance of virus spread. Wear a mask when not eating or drinking. And wash your hands when you arrive and leave the gathering.
- **Sports and sporting events.** Contact sports, such as wrestling and basketball, carry more COVID-19 risk than do other sports. Team sports such as tennis, baseball, softball and soccer pose less risk because players can maintain physical distance. It's important for spectators, players and coaches to keep social distance. Wear a mask, use hand sanitizer and ensure you have enough social distance — at least 6 feet — between you and other spectators, whether you're standing, sitting in chairs or sharing bleachers.

High-risk outdoor activities

Bringing many people together in close contact for a longer period of time poses the highest risk of COVID-19 spread.

Examples include:

- **Large gatherings.** Being in large crowds of people where it's difficult to stay spaced at least 6 feet apart poses the highest risk. The longer people are together in these situations, the higher the risk. Weddings, festivals and parades are examples.
- **Youth camp activities.** Camps are generally high risk because campers come from different locations and spend a lot of time together indoors, in close contact. Camps can pose less risk if campers are from the same area, don't share objects, wear masks and spend time outdoors with at least 6 feet between them.
- **Playgrounds.** The many frequently touched surfaces of playground equipment make it easier to spread the virus that causes COVID-19. However, in many areas, parks and playgrounds are open. Children who use playground equipment should maintain distance from others, avoid touching their faces and wash their hands afterward to help prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

Think safety and enjoyment

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, it's important to take care of yourself and those around you. Practice precautions such as washing your hands often, not touching your face, avoiding close contact of less than 6 feet with others and wearing a mask when you can't avoid being near other people. These steps are especially important for those with a higher risk of serious illness from COVID-19.

At the same time, well-being also includes doing things that make life worth living. With the right information, you can make thoughtful choices about ways to bring a sense of normalcy and joy to your life during the COVID-19 pandemic.

NO COST DENTAL CARE

The following services are available to Hillsborough County residents through the Community Dental Health Program:

Infants and Children

6 Months – 5 Years

- Twice yearly professional cleanings and exams including x-rays
- Fluoride and sealants
- Fillings and extractions
- Other emergency and restorative work

Children and Young Adults

6 Years – 20 Years

- Fillings and extractions
- Other emergency and restorative work

Pregnant and Post-Partum Women

- Screenings and preventive services
- Early and urgent care
- During all trimesters
- Up to 6 months after birth



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12 Locations in Hillsborough County

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Income Restrictions Apply.

<http://hillsborough.floridahealth.gov/>





NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH

CELEBRATE YOUR HEALTH!

Don't know where to start? Join us in this 4-week challenge.

Week 1: Eat a variety of nutritious foods every day! Try this - when choosing fruits and vegetables, remember to "eat the rainbow" and include an assortment of colors on your plate.

Week 2: Plan your meals for the week! Surf the web and search for new healthy recipes. Consider meal prepping to save time throughout the week and get your friends and family in on the fun!

Week 3: Learn new skills to create healthy meals! Use this week to learn a new cooking technique. Here's an idea: cook a vegetable in 3 different ways and rate the technique you like best. For example, try grilling, sautéing, and roasting broccoli. Then have a taste-test with your loved ones and talk about your preferences. You may learn something new!

Week 4: Consult a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN)! If you're interested in learning more about nutrition or receiving personalized advice to meet your nutrition goals, ask your doctor for a referral to an RDN! Thrive through the transformative power of food and nutrition.



PERSONALIZE YOUR PLATE

Add some personality to your meals by adding fun garnishes or cutting foods into different shapes and sizes. If you have children, get them involved and use cookie cutters to cut shapes into food items like fruit, bread, cheese and deli meats.

Public Health Provides A Shot In the Arm - Literally!

Since the 1800's, scientists have used vaccinations to keep individuals safe and protect others. According to the Center of Disease Control, fourteen diseases have been almost eliminated using vaccines. These include Measles, Tetanus, Polio, Hepatitis A & B, Chicken Pox, Mumps, and many more. Annually, the flu vaccine saves countless lives by protecting vulnerable populations. Researchers are at the cutting edge in the development of vaccines. Once a potential vaccine is discovered, it needs to go through widespread testing to determine its safety. We are all aware of these procedures from the approval of various vaccines for the COVID-19 pandemic. Once a vaccine has been approved for public use, Public Health focuses on how to get it to the people. The issue of access to a successful vaccine is also an important Public Health matter. Issues that need to be confronted are health inequalities, socioeconomic concerns, transportation to vaccination centers, age, employment, and countless others. Public Health provides the umbrella under which all medical professionals can achieve their common goals: a safe and healthy population.



Ways To Change Unhealthy Eating Habits



Grabbing a bagel on your way to work might be as routine as brushing your teeth. Changing eating habits you've developed over the years — even unconsciously — can feel as tough as trying to move a mountain. Yes, learned behaviors are hard to undo, but if you take it step-by-step, it's certainly possible. Try these behavior-changing approaches, and focus on the ones that speak to you.

ABC approach

Heading off problems before they develop is the crux of this approach. “A” stands for antecedent, “B” stands for behavior and “C” stands for consequence. Most behaviors have an antecedent — or cause. And causes lead to consequences. By addressing antecedents first, you can prevent unwanted consequences. For example, you might decide not to buy ice cream, because keeping it in the freezer leads to the behavior of eating most or all of it in one sitting, which has the consequence of disrupting your weight program.

Distraction approach

This is a way to change unhealthy eating habits by focusing your attention on something else when food cravings start. To use this approach, when you feel a craving coming on, remind yourself that it will last for 20 minutes at most. Then do something — call a friend, read a book, revisit your goals, take a walk — anything that will distract you until the feeling passes.

Confrontation approach

This approach to behavior change requires that you confront yourself mentally about the negative impact of your behavior. For example: If you're craving cookies, think about the unnecessary calories and fat you'll be consuming — and how tired and sluggish you'll feel afterward. Remind yourself that this isn't what you want to do with your life.

Shaping approach

Try changing your behavior gradually, one step at a time. Instead of eliminating evening snacks altogether, start with a rule of no snack one night a week. Increase that to two nights a week. Eventually you might be able to scale back to a snack one evening a week. As you succeed with step-by-step changes, you'll build confidence that will start fueling even more successes.

Big lifestyle changes take time, but keep at it. The mini successes you'll achieve along the way will be enough to keep you going, and the new habits that were challenging at first will start feeling more natural before you know it.

APRIL IS NATIONAL MINORITY HEALTH MONTH

From the Office of Health Equity

WHAT IS HEALTH EQUITY?

Health equity is the opportunity to be as healthy as possible, no matter who people are or where they live (DOH - Hillsborough, 2020). A health inequity is a difference in health which is avoidable, unnecessary, and unjust. These differences in health are often the result of social conditions called the social determinants of health (Braveman, 2014).

Social Determinants of Health



Social Determinants of Health
Copyright 4100

Healthy People 2030

WHAT FACTORS IMPACT HEALTH EQUITY?

Social determinants of health are the conditions in the environments where people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes and risks (Healthy People 2030). These factors present options for good health or obstacles to achieving good health.

AN EXAMPLE OF HOW COVID-19 IMPACTS HEALTH EQUITY

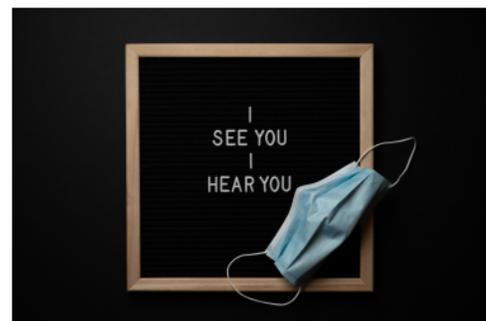
A recent article described that nearly 2/3 of home health care workers are women of color. Though many have been considered essential employees during the COVID-19 crisis, many are also considered contractors and are not provided with benefits such as health insurance and paid sick leave. Though their jobs put them at risk of being infected, most cannot afford to see a doctor or take time off from work if they become ill. These differences in employment setting and access to healthcare can contribute to increased risk of COVID-19 infection, illness, and death. (Yearby R., 2020)

The Office of Health Equity is working to make good health an option for everyone. To learn more, you can visit our website to view the Health Equity Profile and Video:

<http://hillsborough.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/community-health-planning-statistics/health-equity/>

FOR MORE INFO:

- [DOH - Hillsborough - Office of Health Equity, 2020](#)
- Healthy People 2030, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. Retrieved Feb 15, 2021, from <https://health.gov/healthypeople/objectives-and-data/social-determinants-health>
- [Braveman P. What are health disparities and health equity? We need to be clear. Public Health Rep. 2014;129 Suppl 2\(Suppl 2\):5-8](#)
- Yearby R., "Structural Racism and Health Disparities: Reconfiguring the Social Determinants of Health Framework to Include the Root Cause", *The Journal of Law, Medicine & Ethics* 48, (2020): 518-526



What's The Best Way To Dispose of Your Meds?

Rummage through your medicine cabinet and you'll likely find one or two expired medications. What should you do with them?

To correctly dispose of extra, unnecessary or expired medication — whether prescription or nonprescription — follow these recommendations:

- **Seek out local drug take-back locations or events.** This is usually the preferred way to get rid of unwanted medications. To find these programs, search on the Drug Enforcement Administration website. You can also ask your local pharmacy or law enforcement office.
- **Consult the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) flush list.** If you can't find a local take-back option, check to see if the drug is on the FDA flush list. You can find this information on the FDA website or in the medication instructions.

Flushing down the toilet or sink is reserved for drugs that could be dangerous if taken by others, like kids or animals.

If you can't find a take-back location and the drug doesn't need to be flushed, you can throw it away. Follow these guidelines:

- Transfer the medication from its original container to a leak-free, disposable container like a sealable plastic bag.
- Add something to the container, like cat litter or used coffee grounds, before throwing it away. This will help keep people and animals out.
- Remove or obscure the prescription label on the original container to protect your personal information.

To dispose of an unusual medication like an opioid lozenge, syringe, needle or inhaler, check the medication instructions for guidance. Or ask your pharmacist or other health care professional.

And be aware that disposal directions vary by area. For instance, some states instruct residents not to flush medication. Ask your pharmacist or other health care professional if there's anything you should know about disposing of medications in your area.



GIFT @ Work

A Worksite Wellness Program

HOW IT WORKS



Increases In:

- Productivity
- Employee Morale
- Self-Esteem
- Overall Health Outcomes



Decreases In:

- Absenteeism
- Employee Turnover Rate
- Stress Levels
- Healthcare Costs



It is known that a productive company would not exist with unhealthy employees. Daily chores that we make can aid creating healthier, stronger, and happier versions of ourselves at work and at home. The Community Health Division within the Florida Department of Health in Hillsborough County is offering any businesses a corporate wellness program to improve the overall health of their employees.

If your business is interested, please call **(813) 559-4152** and learn how you can get started!

**EVERY DOLLAR
INVESTED YIELDS \$6
IN HEALTH-RELATED
SAVINGS**



Interested in receiving a copy of the newsletter?!

The Florida Department of Health in Hillsborough County's bi-monthly newsletter is available online at <http://hillsborough.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/community-health-planning-statistics/community-wellness-newsletter/index.html>.

The newsletter can be printed and mailed to your address for your convenience.

To preserve your privacy, if you would like to be added to the email distribution list or receive a mailed copy, please call (813) 307-8071 or email to DLCHD29WebsiteDistribution@flhealth.gov.

Want to be a healthier you? We can help!

The Florida Department of Health has **FREE** health education programs.

Call **813-307-8009** to register.

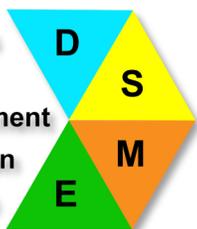


BP F  R ME

[BP For Me](#)

This 4 week program is designed for individuals who have high blood pressure and want to improve their heart health and reduce their risk for complications.

Diabetes
Self-
Management
Education
Program



[Diabetes Self Management Education](#)

If you have been diagnosed with diabetes, learn how to better manage your condition in 7 weeks through reducing risks of complications, improving nutrition, increasing physical activity and self-monitoring, learning about medications, and practicing coping skills.



PREVENT T2
A PROVEN PROGRAM TO PREVENT OR DELAY TYPE 2 DIABETES

[Diabetes Prevention Program](#)

This program can help anyone who is overweight, pre-diabetic, or at risk for Type 2 diabetes. Participants will learn and practice skills on healthy eating, being active, and positive coping for a healthy lifestyle change.



[Get Into Fitness Today](#)

In a 6 week or 12 week program, participants learn about healthy eating, physical activity and ways to live a healthier life.



[Get Into Fitness Together- a Learning Emotional Activity Program \(GIFT-LEAP\)](#)

This program is designed to encourage children ages 5-9 to make healthy choices so that they can lead a healthy lifestyle into adulthood. The program is 6 weeks long and covers healthy eating, physical activity, and how to deal with stress and emotions. Families are welcome to join their 5-9 year-olds in the program!

BREAST AND CERVICAL CANCER EARLY DETECTION PROGRAM

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To apply by phone, call **1-888-540-5437**, or

TTY-877-316-8748.

To apply online, visit: www.floridakidcare.org.



FL HEALTH CHARTS

Have you ever wonder how healthy your community or state is? Or how your own health status compares to other Floridians? If so, Florida Health Charts is a great resource that paints an accurate picture of the health status of our state — with factual information.

The website continues to provide the most up-to-date health statistics you'll find in Florida. Be sure to bookmark the new site: www.FLHealthCHARTS.com.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Hillsborough County Parks, Recreation, and Conservation
www.hillsboroughcounty.org/

Plant City Parks and Recreation
<https://www.plantcitygov.com/parksrec>

Tampa Parks and Recreation
<https://www.tampagov.net/parks-and-recreation>

Temple Terrace Parks and Recreation
www.templeterrace.com/

Farmers Markets around Tampa Bay
<https://www.americantowns.com/tampa-fl/local-food/>

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Breast/Cervical Cancer 307-8082
Diabetes 307-8071
Florida KidCare 307-8082
Weight Management 307-8071
Health Literacy 307-8071
Insulin Program 307-8082
Lead Poisoning Prevention 307-8071
School Health 307-8071
Sterilizations 307-8082
Office of Health Equity 307-8066

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 HEALTH 307-8059

HUMAN RESOURCES 307-8031

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 & death records) 307-8002

* All numbers are area code (813) unless otherwise indicated.



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