

# COMPASS

## Online fitness groups offer **MOTIVATION, SUPPORT**

by **julie estlick**

**L**ucinda Bowen never felt like she belonged in the gym. But two years ago, the freelance writer and mother of two weighed over 260 pounds, rarely exercised and took medication to keep her depression at bay. Seeking a path to better health but unsure of where to begin, she joined an online fitness group.

“I was looking for something to motivate me to live a healthier lifestyle,” Bowen says. “I wanted to stop taking my antidepressants and I believed that fitness might help me make that happen.”

Bowen turned to a virtual community page for college alumni on Facebook, the popular social networking site, for a way to connect with others who could model what a fit lifestyle looked like for them. The group’s 300-plus members share their fitness goals, successes and setbacks through written posts, clicking the “like” button to show support and uploading funny videos and photos from workout sessions.

Fast-forward two years. Bowen has dropped nearly 40 pounds and went from running less than a quarter mile without stopping to completing a half-marathon last month. She’s tried Zumba and Pilates classes, performed 100 pushups in a single day as part of a group challenge and—best of all—carries herself like an athlete when she steps in the gym.

“Thanks to the relationships in this group, I have discovered sports, wellness and fitness activities that I really enjoy and have learned how to work them into my daily habits,” she says. “I did not know how brave I could be, how strong I could get, or how much grit and endurance I had until I joined this online community.”

It’s no secret that the right support system can make the difference between someone skipping a workout and lacing up those running shoes, but what if your friends and family don’t share your enthusiasm for fitness? If you own a computer, tablet or cell phone, there is a virtual world at your fingertips filled with people who enjoy every kind of sport, exercise and workout imaginable. Over 65 percent of adults in the U.S. use social networking sites, according to the Pew Research Center, and there are hundreds of social media fitness groups to connect you with others who share similar goals but may live miles, or even continents, away.



**L**ucinda Bowen completed a half-marathon in Asheville, N.C., with a push from her online fitness pals.

*Photo courtesy of Paul Jackson Photography*

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**meetings** Board meetings are usually held monthly on the fourth Tuesday at 5:30 p.m. at the Health District office. The public is welcome; call 224-5209 to confirm meeting dates and times.

**programs and services**

Cholesterol and Blood Pressure Testing

Dental Connections

Family Dental Clinic

HealthInfoSource.com  
*A partnership with Larimer County Department of Health & Environment*

Healthy Mind Matters  
*Mental Health and Substance Abuse Issues and Solutions*

Integrated Primary Care/ Mental Health Program  
*A partnership with Salud Family Health Centers and Family Medicine Center*

Larimer Health Connect  
*Connect for Health Colorado and CHP/Medicaid Outreach Project, Prescription Assistance*

Mental Health Connections  
*A partnership with SummitStone Health Partners*

Step Free from Tobacco

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**Ah, artichokes.** For the unacquainted, the spiny, funny-looking globes can be intimidating, but underneath their tough-looking armor are tender leaves full of tasty, nutritious possibilities for your springtime plate.

The Mediterranean variety of artichoke, prized by the Greeks and Romans, is really a variety of thistle cultivated for its flower bud. The edible parts are the fleshy lower portions of the triangular scales—the leaves—and the base, referred to as the “heart.” Canned artichoke hearts are great for salads and snacks, but fresh artichokes are easy to cook and can be eaten on their own or cut up and added to pastas and casseroles.

“Artichokes are packed with nutrition and a good source of vitamin C, folate, magnesium, and potassium,” says Jessica Clifford, a registered dietitian and extension specialist with the Food Science & Human Nutrition Department at Colorado State University.

And if you’re looking for a low-calorie, high-fiber side dish or snack, one medium artichoke provides 7 grams of fiber, Clifford notes.

Proper artichoke eating etiquette is easy to master, she says: “After boiling or steaming an artichoke, pull the outer petals off and work toward the center. The fleshy base of the petals can be eaten by pulling the flesh through the teeth. When you get to the center of the artichoke, spoon out the fuzzy center piece above the artichoke heart and discard. The heart, or innermost bottom portion of the artichoke, is fully edible and nutritious!”

Harvested in California in the spring and the fall, now is the time to skip canned and frozen artichokes and head straight for the produce aisle. When shopping for globe artichokes, choose ones that feel heavy for their size and without any cuts or bruising. Its leaves should be compact (tightly together), dark green and squeak slightly when squeezed, according to nutrition-and-you.com.

**Did you know?**

- Artichokes are one of the oldest foods known to humans. Artichoke origins date back to the time of the Greek philosopher and naturalist Theophrastus (371-287 B.C.), who wrote of them being grown in Italy and Sicily.
- In the 16th century, eating artichokes was reserved only for men. Women were denied the pleasure because the artichoke was considered an aphrodisiac.

**Grilled Garlic Artichokes**

**Ingredients:**

- 2 large globe artichokes
- 1 lemon, quartered
- 2/3 cup olive oil
- 4 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper

**Directions:**

- Fill a large bowl with cold water. Squeeze the juice from one lemon wedge into the water.
- Trim the tops from the artichokes, then cut in half lengthwise. Place halves into the bowl of lemon water to prevent them from turning brown.
- Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Meanwhile, preheat an outdoor grill for medium-high heat.
- Add artichokes to boiling water, and cook for about 20 minutes. Drain. Squeeze the remaining lemon wedges into a medium bowl. Stir in the olive oil and garlic, and season with salt and pepper.
- Brush the artichokes with a coating of the garlic dip, and place them on the preheated grill.
- Grill the artichokes for 5 to 10 minutes, basting with dip and turning frequently, until the tips are a little charred. Serve immediately with the remaining dip.



**If** your feet say they're hurting, listen up. Ignoring foot pain can lead to more serious problems that could affect the whole body.

"The majority of patients I see have pain because they're not wearing the right shoes—not just the style but the size, too," says Emily Webb, a podiatrist with Save Your Sole Foot and Ankle Specialists in Fort Collins. "As we age our feet get wider and longer."

Poor footwear choices can cause arch pain, heel pain, plantar fasciitis, bunions, and neuroma (a pinched nerve between the toes), and can affect the well-being of the whole body, says Webb.

"Lower back pain also can be aggravated by poor shoe choice," she adds.

Wearing high heels habitually can be especially detrimental, placing extreme pressure on the ball of the foot and changing the wearer's center of gravity. This affects the body's alignment, from the toes, ankles, and knees, up to the hips and spine. "This isn't something you want to do on a regular basis," Webb advises. "It's just a matter of time before you start experiencing pain."



That pain can result in a harmful cycle Webb observes in many of her female patients: Wearing high heels hurts their feet so much that they're not able to exercise. Not exercising leads to weight gain. Gaining weight makes them feel worse and exacerbates their foot pain.

Flat shoes with no arch support, such as flip flops, are also problematic. Your toes must grip the sandal so hard that you risk getting hammertoes—mild deformities that, left untreated, get worse over time.

## Happy Feet



## are Healthy Feet

Wearing the right shoes is important to your health

by kathy hayes

It's easy to determine if your shoes are causing your foot pain, says Webb. "Just change your shoes. If your feet feel better in the other shoes, then you'll know. If your foot pain is acute and new, and you just started wearing new shoes a couple of weeks ago, it's likely the shoes that are causing the pain."

Think of your feet as "tools" that help you stay healthy, provided you take good care of them, she suggests. "If you wear comfortable, supportive shoes on a regular basis, you can still walk or run at the end of the day or on weekends. This helps you maintain an ideal body weight and improves your overall health."

If you do have foot pain, orthotics, which provide arch support, can help alleviate that pain.

For those who don't have severe foot problems, over-the-counter orthotics can be effective. Foot clinics generally offer more supportive OTC orthotics than those available in stores, and podiatrists can modify the supports to make them more customized for the patient.

"Patients may get some improvement but still might need custom orthotics, particularly if they have severe flat feet or a very high arch," Webb notes.

For custom orthotics, a podiatrist makes casts of the patient's feet, writes a prescription, and orders the orthotics from a lab. Many insurance companies will help pay for orthotics, which range from \$400-\$600, according to Webb.

A lot of foot problems can be resolved, or avoided entirely, by wearing shoes that make your feet happy.

"Listen to your feet. It's really as simple as that," says Webb. "If you come home and can't wait to take your shoes off, you shouldn't be wearing those shoes." ✨

### Choosing the perfect pair

- Go shoe shopping near the end of the day, when your feet are more swollen.
- Get your feet measured each time you shop for shoes.
- The lower the heel, the better. If you must wear a heel, choose a wedge-type shoe in which the drop from heel to toe is less severe.
- Choose shoes that evenly distribute your weight across the entire foot.
- Look for sandals that have arch supports and a heel cup.

See "10 Tips for Finding the Right Shoes": [health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/10-tips-for-finding-the-right-shoes](http://health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/10-tips-for-finding-the-right-shoes)



# Remember to VOTE

## What's being decided?

The Health District is governed by a five-member, publicly elected board. Three candidates are vying for two four-year seats in the May 3 election.

## Who can vote

To vote in this election, a person must be an eligible elector in the Health District, someone who is:

- Registered to vote in Colorado; and
- A resident of the district or someone who owns, or whose spouse owns, taxable real or personal property within the district, regardless of whether he or she lives in the district.

## Where to vote

On May 3, polling places are open 7 a.m.–7 p.m.

- Health District

120 Bristlecone Dr., Fort Collins  
 • Spirit of Joy Lutheran Church  
 4501 S. Lemay Ave., Fort Collins

## Voting by mail

To vote by mail, you use an absentee ballot, even if you will be in town during the election. An application for absentee ballot is printed on page 5. You can also download an application from the Health District website: [healthdistrict.org/2016-election](http://healthdistrict.org/2016-election).

The application must be signed and returned to the Health District by April 26 to receive your ballot by mail. Return applications to Gail Bridger, by mail: 120 Bristlecone Dr., Fort Collins, CO 80524; by fax: (970) 221-7165; or by email (as a scanned attachment) to [gbridger@healthdistrict.org](mailto:gbridger@healthdistrict.org).

If you asked to be on our permanent mail voter list in a previous Health District election and have not received your ballot, call 224-5209.

## Candidates forum

An April 6 candidates' forum moderated by The League of Women Voters of Larimer County will be replayed on the city's Cable Channel 14.

Check [fcgov.com/cable14](http://fcgov.com/cable14) for dates and times.

# Health District Board Election – May 3, 2016

[healthdistrict.org/2016-election](http://healthdistrict.org/2016-election)



**Robert Calhoun**

**Age:** 66

**Occupation:** Licensed Psychologist

**Education:** B.A., Dartmouth College; Ph.D., University of Texas at Austin

**Family:** Wife, Sandra; Children, Grant and Claire

### Why are you running for the Health District board of directors?

I have lived in Larimer County for the past 37 years and raised my children here, and I want to give back to this community I love by supporting, through the wise allocation of citizens' hard-earned tax dollars, programs and initiatives that further the health and well-being of all who call Larimer County home.

### What special skills or qualifications will you bring to the board?

As a psychologist, I have provided outpatient mental health counseling in various settings since 1979, including community mental health, private practice, and therapist training. I hold a broad view of mental health needs in our county, have knowledge of public agencies' programs as well as the practitioner community, and understand the challenges related to access of services and insurance shortfalls.

### What do you hope to accomplish?

I hope to meet the greatest health needs of the community with the limited resources available. This requires a clear understanding of the issues faced by our community, and a thoughtful, compassionate, evidence-based approach to decision making. The Health District has a long history of doing good work and I wish to keep supporting that work.

### What is the most pressing health-related issue facing our community?

Many issues impact the well-being of all who live in Larimer County. I believe the major goal of the Board is to continue fostering a community ethic which encourages a healthy lifestyle and timely access to services for all who seek and need them. The challenge of the Board is to stay hopeful in this effort.



**Faraz Naqvi, M.D.**

**Age:** 55

**Occupation:** Physician focused on elderly care, skilled and assisted living care and management of health professionals

**Education:** B.A., Colorado College; M.D., Harvard Medical School; M.S., Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Econ., Trinity College, Cambridge University

**Family:** Married, two children

### Why are you running for the Health District board of directors?

I would like to help the community that I have been part of since 1965. I believe thoughtful policies and management of resources are critical to Larimer County given that the cost of healthcare to both communities and individuals has been escalating, while need continues to increase.

### What special skills or qualifications will you bring to the board?

As a physician serving the elderly and often uninsured, I am acutely aware of the need for thoughtful policy and wise resource utilization. Additionally, I have experience managing businesses, working with large corporations/organizations, as well as a financial background.

### What do you hope to accomplish?

I would like to help participate in policy and budget decisions that serve the interests of all members of the community, allowing for input and suggestions from all interested parties with the goal of improving and wisely managing the health delivery of the county.

### What is the most pressing health-related issue facing our community?

The cost and access of healthcare are clearly critical issues facing not just our community, but our country as well. With a growing population of elderly and uninsured/underinsured, it is critical to face policy decisions with consideration of best provision of healthcare with attention to resource constraints.



**Deirdre Sullivan**

**Age:** 41

**Occupation:** Program Supervisor, CanDo and Vida Sana at UCHealth Community Health Improvement; Facilitator, Family Leadership Training Institute, CSU Extension

**Education:** B.S., Human Development and Family Studies, Colorado State University

**Family:** Husband, Jason Campbell; Children, Anna, Soren and Emille

### Why are you running for the Health District board of directors?

I hope to bring a public and community health perspective to the board. I want to share my experience in eliminating health disparities in collaboration with other community partners including the Larimer County Health Department, our hospital systems and providers, the City of Fort Collins, Poudre School District and the many businesses and non-profits working to improve community health.

### What special skills or qualifications will you bring to the board?

I have worked in health care and community health for two decades in Fort Collins addressing preventable chronic diseases through program and policy implementation. Also, as a result of my work to improve student health in PSD as a parent of three and a health professional, I bring a unique connection to the school district.

### What do you hope to accomplish?

With the Affordable Care Act, we are at a crossroads of developing next steps for a tax-supported health district. I hope to build upon the Health District of Northern Larimer County's leadership to maximize the impact of the health organizations, improve the use of the Community Health Survey data to address needs in partnership with other organizations, and avoid duplication of services.

### What is the most pressing health-related issue facing our community?

Access to healthcare, including behavioral health, and addressing health disparities are the most pressing health-related issues. While Fort Collins ranks as one of the healthiest cities in the country, we have a widening gap among certain populations and with the rising cost of living and an absence of affordable housing and other services, this gap will grow without appropriate interventions.



## APPLICATION FOR ABSENTEE BALLOT

IMPORTANT!

- Application must be filed by the close of business on Tuesday, April 26, 2016.
- Absentee ballot must be received by Election Judge or Designated Election Official by 7:00 p.m. on Election Day, Tuesday, May 3, 2016, to be counted.

Applications may be mailed to: Health District of Northern Larimer County, ATTN: Designated Election Official, 120 Bristlecone Drive, Fort Collins, CO 80524; faxed to (970) 221-7165; or by email (as a scanned attachment) to [gbridger@healthdistrict.org](mailto:gbridger@healthdistrict.org).

TO: Designated Election Official  
 Health District of Northern Larimer County ("District"):

I, \_\_\_\_\_, whose date of birth is \_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_\_\_, am requesting an absentee ballot on behalf of (select one):

- myself, or
- \_\_\_\_\_ (enter name), a family member related by blood, marriage, civil union or adoption to the applicant

who is an eligible elector of the Health District of Northern Larimer County, State of Colorado, eligible by virtue of:

Being a resident of the District, with an elector residence address of:

(Address) (City) (ZIP) (County), CO

Or

Ownership (or spouse or civil union partner) of the taxable real or personal property (described below) situated within the boundaries of the District, or a person who is obligated to pay taxes under a contract to purchase taxable property within the District

Physical address or description of property:

(Address) (City) (ZIP) (County), CO

- Check box if elector wishes to be on District's permanent absentee voter list. Applicant will receive an absentee ballot for every election conducted by the District if checked.

Mail elector's absentee ballot to this address:

(Address) (City) (State) (ZIP)

I am applying for an absentee ballot for use by me or the person noted above per §1-13.5-1002(1)(a)(II) in voting at the District's regular election to be held on the 3rd day of May, 2016.

Signature Name Printed

Date \*Witnessed By

\*In case of elector's inability to sign her/his name, the elector's mark shall be witnessed by another person.

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Members cheer each other on, hold one another accountable and, at times, commiserate together in a range of web-based platforms, including networking sites like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, blogs, and media-sharing sites such as Flickr and YouTube. Talk about instant gratification: with over 1 billion users logging onto Facebook daily from around the globe and millions of active users on Twitter and Instagram, if you need a boost you can connect with someone instantly, day or night.

“A primary motivator to being physically active is that basic human need for connection and socialization, so when you find a group of folks with like-minded goals you are more likely to thrive because of that social support,” says Chrissy Chard, a faculty member at the Colorado School of Public Health.

### Join up

Remember, the key is to surround yourself with positive people who want to see you maintain healthy habits for a lifetime. So if you are not a techy type or prefer to unplug when you exercise, experts suggest seeking out in-the-flesh supporters at work, at home or in the gym to stay on track.

Look for people starting at your pace whether you seek an online or offline group experience, Chard suggests. If you’re new to road biking or training for your first 5K, join a beginner’s group. It’s too easy to lose confidence and feel unmotivated reading about the routines of ultra-marathoners and technical rock climbers.

Here’s how to find a Facebook exercise group: If you don’t already have a Facebook account, go to facebook.com and create one. In the search bar, type in “Health and Fitness” and click on the “Groups” button, then click on one that looks interesting. You will land on the group page. Read the description and requirements (a few groups limit membership, but even “closed groups” usually let anyone in), then click the “Join” button. A group administrator reviews requests and within hours you should receive a welcome message. Voila, you can begin reading members’ comments, see their photos, post your own questions and introduce yourself.

Or, take your time and let others’ triumphs motivate you to move. “I like that online groups offer people the opportunity to participate at their most comfortable level,” Bowen says. “You can post irregularly, read posts and never post yourself or build up the courage to join the conversation. It really helps people who might be unsure about whether a real-world fitness group is what they need.”

There is consistent evidence that weight loss maintenance through social media works. Several studies, including one by the Arnold School of Public at the University of South Carolina, found that Facebook use can be associated with a significant drop in weight, especially during the “critical maintenance period” when users are trying to keep the weight off. However, researchers have called for further investigation into whether online exercise communities help people stay the course to good health.

### Fun and games

If games and friendly competition get your blood pumping, fitness-specific sites Fitocracy.com and Strava.com use special applications, called “apps”, that are downloaded onto an iPhone or Android phone and allow you to record times, distance, even map your favorite walking or riding routes using the phone’s GPS capability. You earn badges or prizes for logging your activities, and you can share and compare your results with fellow group members.

### Virtual bonding

A great way to forge bonds with virtual supporters is to show your personality—include pictures or a short video of favorite trails or a sweaty smile after a tough run. Over 20 million photos were added by users in the first year of Strava Photo, and the posts accompanied by images get 2-3 times more kudos and comments than activities without, according to a Feb. 10 article on Strava’s blog.

Like the old adage says, the more you put into something, the more you get out of it. Bowen now posts daily to her group (including selfies) and tries her best to follow conversation threads, remember what peers have shared about their lunchtime walks, and be authentic in her feedback. “I am inspired by people who are transparent about their struggles and challenges with fitness, nutrition and wellness,” she says. “Seeing someone who is overweight sign up for and complete a triathlon, or take their first swimming lessons at age 40—those are the things that motivate me and make me want to give my best to this community.”

Connecting in an honest way allows members to lean on each other and not just be cheerleaders. The relationships made through online training are unmatched, notes Ohio State’s Kelsey Miller in her article “How social media is changing the way we look at fitness.”

“You see many online communities help people get through difficult times to help shrink the world, but having fitness online communities are unique because they are reaching one common goal: to love themselves and get more confidence.”

### A change from within

Finding acceptance and accountability online can help you catch the fitness bug, but eventually it may take more than online kudos to maintain a consistent routine and make wellness a lifelong priority. “The danger is that always seeking the outward form of gratification will no longer do the job,” says Chard. “Ultimately, there is going to have to be an inward turning to want to change your habits, the motivation has to become intrinsic.” For Bowen’s part, the push from fellow college alums helped her release an inner athlete that was ready to shine. A life of movement has taken her far beyond her comfy chair, and she’s not about to slow down now. ✨

## Need fitness support?

Click here



#tempt  
(Twitter Exercise Motivation Team)  
global group making fitness a daily habit



MapMyFitness  
track gym workouts and map favorite walking and biking routes (all levels)



Strava.com  
share and compare photos and performances on similar courses (competitive)



Fitocracy  
step-by-step workout plans, log fitness for points, interactive chats (all levels)



(FB) Health and Fitness  
general fitness group

## Grants fund new services for youth with mental illness and substance use problems

The Health District is part of a community partnership that received a pair of grants totaling nearly \$1 million to expand the range of behavioral health services available to children, adolescents and young adults in Larimer County.

The grants will fund specialized staffing at the Health District, SummitStone Health Partners and Poudre School District—all members of the Community Mental Health and Substance Abuse Partnership—who will work together to support local families struggling to find help for what could be mental illness or a substance use disorder.

“Parents looking for answers have told us that they didn’t know where to start, and that they often got little support in a process that can be very lengthy as a child grows and changes,” says Lin Wilder, director of the Healthy Mind Matters program at the Health District.

Parents sometimes are unsure if the behavioral issues their children are experiencing are just a “normal phase,” or the result of a developmental issue, mental illness or substance use, Wilder says.

The new funding will increase families’ access to assessment services that can pinpoint potential problems and smooth a path toward appropriate treatment, and then help connect families with treatment providers.

“The earlier you can identify a mental health or substance use disorder, the earlier you can intervene and the better the outcome,” Wilder says.

The two grants will support a new coordinated effort called the Child, Adolescent and Young Adult Connections (CAYAC) Team, which will be headquartered at Connections, the mental health and substance use resource operated jointly in Fort Collins by the Health District and SummitStone Health Partners.

That team will include: a child/adolescent clinical psychologist; a child/adolescent psychiatrist; a school liaison from Poudre School District’s mental health team; two care coordinators; mental health specialists; and a family support partner, an individual who has “walked in the shoes” of families seeking help and can offer support and guidance based on experience.

Major funding for the CAYAC Team comes from The Denver Foundation, which is providing \$465,746; and Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Children Youth and Families Branch, which is providing \$510,950. The latter grant was awarded as part of the State Innovation Model (SIM), which uses federal dollars to encourage innovative changes to Colorado’s health-care system. Both grants are for three years. Funding is also being provided by the Health District and SummitStone Health Partners.

The CAYAC Team is expected to be fully staffed and able to offer complete services by early summer. Anyone interested in the CAYAC Team can call Connections at (970) 221-5551.

## Lab life: Chu gets up-close look at Zika virus research

When Katherine Chu’s plane touched down in Colorado last fall, she never expected to be on the front lines of research into a global health emergency. Chu joined the Health District in October as a Public Health Associate from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, a nationwide program that places college graduates with an interest in public health with local health agencies for hands-on training. The recent Ohio State graduate was just settling in to her two-year stint with the Health District’s Evaluation Team when the Zika virus outbreak hit and she was swiftly “deployed” to the CDC’s Division of Vector-Borne Diseases on Colorado State University’s Foothills Campus in Fort Collins.

Almost overnight, the Arboviral Diseases Laboratory went from processing around 50 samples a week to receiving 600 specimens a day that are tested for Zika, chikungunya virus, and dengue fever—all mosquito-borne diseases. “It was very sudden, but it’s been a great experience to meet the epidemiologists and laboratorians and learn how the lab operates,” says Chu, whose original two-month deployment was extended in March.

The Fort Collins branch of the CDC has conducted Zika research since 2007, and the currently incurable virus is now the branch’s No. 1 focus, according to officials. Each test result is entered into a database and Chu’s role is to send the information back to the appropriate state health department.

Zika virus has spread in 40 countries, mainly in Latin America and the Caribbean, and is linked to major birth defects, such as microcephaly, in which babies are born with abnormally small heads and incomplete brain development, according to the World Health Organization. The CDC has reported more than 300 travel-linked cases in the U.S., and while the disease isn’t currently spreading through local mosquitos, officials are investigating some cases of sexually transmitted Zika in this country.

Chu graduated from Ohio State in 2015 with a degree in Public Health Sociology. After her CDC deployment ends, she will resume working with the Evaluation Team on the 2016 Community Health Survey, examining qualitative data from community discussion groups, before spending a year with the Healthy Mind Matters program.

To learn more about the CDC Public Health Associate Program, visit [cdc.gov/phap](http://cdc.gov/phap).



Katherine Chu, CDC Public Health Associate

## Larimer Health Connect offers year-round insurance assistance

If your life takes a detour, make sure your health insurance goes along with you. Larimer Health Connect can help qualifying individuals and families who have major “life-change events” switch plans or enroll in new coverage through Connect for Health Colorado any time of the year. And it’s free.

Life-change events include such things as marriage, birth of a child, change in residence and loss of health insurance through job change or divorce.

The Connect for Health Colorado Marketplace is the only place qualifying Colorado residents can receive special financial assistance to help reduce the

cost of health insurance. This includes tax credits to reduce the cost of insurance premiums, as well as discounts that lower the amount some people have to pay out-of-pocket for expenses such as deductibles and copayments.

Larimer Health Connect offers free, in-person assistance to help you choose a plan and navigate the enrollment process. It can also help people with Medicaid and Child Health Plan Plus (CHP+), which have year-round enrollment and may be even lower cost options. Call (970) 472-0444 for an appointment, or schedule online at [larimerhealthconnect.org](http://larimerhealthconnect.org).

# classes, screenings and services

## cholesterol tests

Find out your total cholesterol, HDL, LDL, triglycerides and blood glucose numbers; learn what they mean and what to do about them.

Health District residents who have never received our test are eligible to receive their first test for free. Health District boundaries include Fort Collins, Laporte, Wellington, Red Feather Lakes, Livermore, Bellvue and Timnath.

Cost for all others is \$15. Sliding fees available.

Cholesterol tests are 8:15-10:30 a.m. unless otherwise indicated. Appointments **strongly** recommended; call (970) 224-5209. Walk-ins accepted only as space allows. An 8-hour fast is recommended; water and medications are permitted.

Visit [healthdistrict.org/heart](http://healthdistrict.org/heart) for more information.

### April

**Tues., April 5** – Senior Center, 1200 Raintree  
**Thurs., April 7** – Spirit of Joy Church, 4501 S. Lemay  
**Tues., April 12** – Health District, 120 Bristlecone  
**Thurs., April 21** – Senior Center, 1200 Raintree

### May

**Tues., May 3** – Senior Center, 1200 Raintree  
**Tues., May 10** – Health District, 120 Bristlecone  
**Tues., May 17** – Larimer County Courthouse offices, 200 W. Oak  
**Thurs., May 19** – Senior Center, 1200 Raintree  
**Tues., May 24** – Harmony Library, 4616 S. Shields

### June

**Thurs., June 2** – Spirit of Joy Church, 4501 S. Lemay  
**Tues., June 7** – Senior Center, 1200 Raintree  
**Tues., June 14** – Health District, 120 Bristlecone  
**Thurs., June 16** – Senior Center, 1200 Raintree

### July

**Thurs., July 7** – Senior Center, 1200 Raintree  
**Tues., July 12** – Larimer County Courthouse offices, 200 W. Oak  
**Tues., July 19** – Health District, 120 Bristlecone  
**Thurs., July 21** – Senior Center, 1200 Raintree  
**Tues., July 26** – Harmony Library, 4616 S. Shields



## blood pressure checks

### OFFERED MONTHLY!

Free, 5-10 minute walk-in blood pressure reading and consultation with a registered nurse.

The consultation includes discussion and materials on:

- What does blood pressure mean?
- How can I keep my blood pressure where it needs to be, lowering my risk of heart attack and stroke?
- What's the right way to monitor my blood pressure?
- Follow-up suggestions

Checks are the second Monday of each month, 10 a.m.-12 p.m. at the Fort Collins Senior Center, 1200 Raintree. No appointment necessary.

Visit [healthdistrict.org/heart](http://healthdistrict.org/heart) for more information.



## thinking of quitting tobacco?

We can help!  
*Hundreds of Fort Collins residents have quit by using our Step Free from Tobacco program and YOU CAN, TOO!*

Call today:  
**(970) 224-5209**

INDIVIDUAL  
 COUPLES/BUDDIES  
 GROUP SESSIONS

- Free nicotine patches / gum / lozenges
- Free first session
- Positive, supportive approach
- Sliding fees for those who qualify

**New Wednesday group session:**  
**May 25 – June 29, 2016 (6 p.m.)**

Call in advance to register—space is limited!  
 Please arrive 30 minutes early for the first session.

**WE CAN HELP!**

[healthdistrict.org/quitsmoking](http://healthdistrict.org/quitsmoking)

## additional services

### Dental Connections

Referrals to dentists and help finding affordable care  
 202 Bristlecone • (970) 416-5331

### Family Dental Clinic

Affordable dental care for children and adults  
 202 Bristlecone • (970) 416-5331

### HealthInfoSource.com

A comprehensive online guide to local health information

### Larimer Health Connect

Connect for Health Colorado and CHP+/Medicaid Outreach Project, Prescription Assistance  
 144 N. Mason, Unit 7 • (970) 472-0444 • [larimerhealthconnect.org](http://larimerhealthconnect.org)

### Mental Health Connections

A partnership with SummitStone Health Partners  
 Mental health and substance abuse resources  
 525 W. Oak • (970) 221-5551  
[mentalhealthconnections.org](http://mentalhealthconnections.org)



## Got Medicaid?



Colorado Medicaid now covers dental care for **adults\***

Current benefits  
 (as of Dec. 2015):

- \$1,000 annual benefit (no limit for dentures or emergency care)
- Includes routine cleanings, X-rays, fillings and extractions, as well as approved root canals, crowns and partials
- No copays

**Health District**  
 OF NORTHERN LARIMER COUNTY  
[healthdistrict.org/dental](http://healthdistrict.org/dental)

\* Medicaid also covers children's dental care. Benefits are different.

Call Health District Dental Services to find a Fort Collins Medicaid dentist

**(970) 416-5331**