

Director's Message

I want to commend the teamwork of staff from Public Health Services, Regulatory/Medical Health Services and Communications in responding to an outbreak of Legionella in the City of Anaheim – an effort that is ongoing.

Here's a little background:
 In October of last year, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) notified the OC Health Care Agency's (HCA) Epidemiology staff of several cases of Legionella in individuals who traveled to Orange County in September. Upon investigation of cases (conducting interviews, identifying cases through notifications with other jurisdictions), a cluster of cases emerged of people who traveled to, resided in, or worked in Anaheim. Many of those cases had visited the Disneyland Park.

In November, the Disney organization reported to us that records provided

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Peer-to-Peer

Chief Pharmacist, Mark Chew, Recognized as a Hurricane Superhero

When a hurricane wreaks havoc on a U.S. city, you can be sure that **Mark Chew**, Chief Pharmacist for Regulatory/Medical Health Services (R/MHS)' Emergency Medical Services Management team could soon be on the scene to provide the needed medications for those in need.

By day, Mark is a mild-mannered, highly educated pharmacist, who splits his time between R/MHS and the County's Public Health clinics. When called to respond for a disaster,

Mark changes into his superhero cape and leaps to aid with disaster relief, as part of the Federal Disaster Medical Assistance Team (DMAT). To date, Mark has been activated to help with several past Hurricanes: Charlie, Jean, Katrina, Rita, Irma, Harvey, and most recently, Maria.

During Hurricane Harvey relief, Mark and another County employee, **Joe Vargas**, were deployed to assist in Houston. The Sports Arena was converted to a temporary Federal Medical Station. The teams slept on the

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Director's Message

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by a contractor indicated that (as part of their quarterly, routine testing) elevated levels of Legionella had been identified in two of their cooling towers in October.

So what is Legionella? Legionella bacteria can cause respiratory illness and pneumonia, particularly in older people and people with health issues, and can result in death. Those most at risk of getting sick from Legionella infection include people who are smokers, have chronic lung disease or weak immune systems, and people over the age of 65 years. You can learn more at www.ochealthinfo.com/legionella.

Legionella bacteria is commonly found in human-made water systems at low levels that pose no threat to humans. It becomes problematic when it is in large quantities, typically due to stagnant or improperly sanitized spas and water systems. When Legionella bacterial levels are high, it can be transmitted through inhalation of contaminated water vapor.

And what is a cooling tower? A cooling tower is a specialized device that transfers heat from a separate system to the atmosphere and is commonly used for industrial processes and large air conditioning systems. The water in a cooling tower continually recirculates to cool the separate, heated system. Air drawn through the tower during this process evaporates a portion of the water, which is then carried into the atmosphere as it exits the tower.

Because of the existence of human illness and the inability to assure the cooling towers are clear of Legionella bacteria until test results are known, our County Health Officer Dr. Eric Handler issued an Order in November requiring that Disney meet specific criteria including taking the towers out of service until they are verified (via laboratory testing) to be free from disease causing levels of bacteria.

The Epidemiology and Environmental Health crews worked tirelessly with their colleagues at the CDC, California Department of Public Health, and Disney to conduct site reviews, review protocol, and make appropriate recommendations. Our Communications team partnered with executive management to ensure we were providing accurate information to reporters without inciting unnecessary panic (as there was no ongoing risk to the public at that point).

As you might imagine this story had intense media coverage and due to the diligence of all staff involved we were able to be responsive in a timely manner to all media requests. As is typical for many of the Agency's high profile issues, the bulk of media coverage occurred over a weekend and all staff, especially our Public Information Officer, stepped up to the plate as needed. It was a very well-coordinated and thoughtful response all around. Just another example of the tremendous work that happens here at HCA every day.

Best,



Richard Sanchez, Director

Environment Provides Assistance Santa Barbara

The OC Health Care Agency's Environmental Health Division (EH) provided disaster relief and emergency response support to Santa Barbara County in connection with the [Thomas Fire](#) and January storms.

Through a [Mutual Aid](#) request, Hazardous Materials Specialist III's **Dean Freed** and **Gerrit Kovach** deployed on January 25 to conduct hazardous materials assessment and debris removal in the neighborhoods of Montecito where homes were destroyed by the fire, garages buckled under the heavy weight of mud flow and swimming pools were buried in 20 feet of debris.

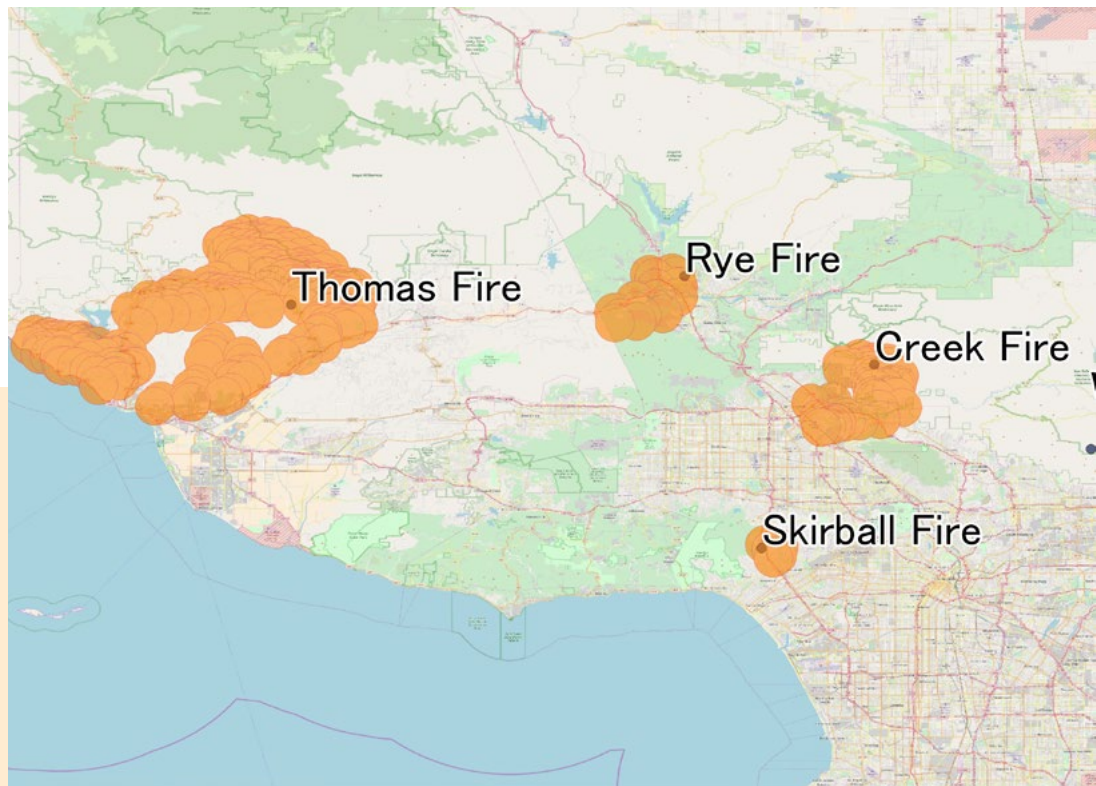
Our specialists were equipped with chemical detectors, respiratory



Environmental Health Assistance to Santa Barbara County

protection, personal protective suits, and a 4-wheel drive emergency response vehicle to help them navigate through muddy terrain. Working early morning hours well into the evening, Dean and Gerrit canvassed door-to-door to identify potential hazardous chemicals that were left behind, and safely contain and remove them to be properly disposed.

A series of storms impacted Santa Barbara County during early January including areas damaged by the Thomas Fire, the largest wildfire in California history that burned approximately 281,900 acres. Mud and debris flows from the rains resulted in 21 fatalities, destroyed 129 single family residences, dam-



aged 307 single family residences, and caused major issues with utilities service (water, sewer, electrical power, gas lines, public safety communications and telephone lines).

A State Emergency Proclamation declared by Governor Brown ordered the provision of local government assistance under the authority of the [California Disaster Assistance Act](#). To learn more about the 2017

wildfires or for resource information, visit the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services at www.caloes.ca.gov.

▼ **1.** An emergency 4-wheel drive Hazmat vehicle helped Hazmat Specialists navigate through muddy terrain. **2.** Pictured (left to right): Dean Freed and Gerrit Kovach. **3.** Hazardous materials are safely contained for proper disposal.



Hundreds Gather to Share Input About Orange County's Opioid Crisis

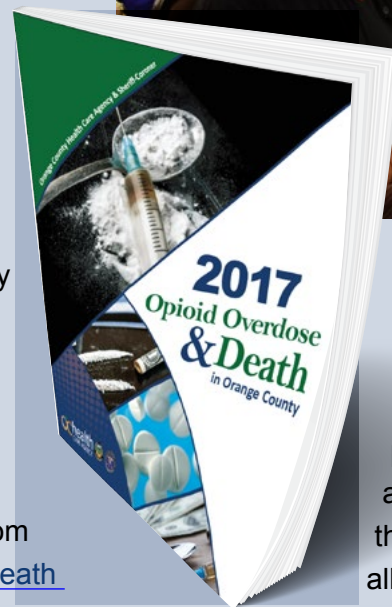
The Delhi Center in Santa Ana drew a packed crowd last week as many gathered to attend a public forum to share their input on how to address the opioid crisis in Orange County and identify prevention and treatment needs to reduce overdose and addiction.

The OC Health Care Agency hosted the event in partnership with the Alcohol and Drug Advisory Board to bring together people with lived experience, family members, and treatment and community providers together to discuss and learn about a disease that crosses all socioeconomic status.

The forum included a presentation from **Sandra Fair**, BHS Administrative Manager III who presented results received from surveys that targeted current

and previous opioid users, treatment providers, community stakeholders as well as family and friends of those who misuse/misused opioids, and **Curt Condon**, Planning and Research Manager who discussed data and findings from the [2017 Opioid Overdose & Death in Orange County](#) report.

Lines to check-in snaked down the Delhi Center's corridor, while copies of 2017 Opioid Report and speaker materials quickly depleted. More



than 300 people who were unable to attend in-person were able to view the forum virtually during a live broadcast on

HCA's [Facebook](#) (@ochealthinfo) page.

When attendees were encouraged to share their thoughts and input



1



2



“This was an opportunity for those impacted by the opioid crisis or who are eager to learn the latest information to come together.”

Mary Hale,
Behavioral Health Services (BHS)
Deputy Agency Director

about the opioid epidemic, the mom of a recovering heroin addict suggested more parent education about prevention, while a young adult asked about what’s being done to target transitional age youth (16-24). A representative from the Orange County Department of Education (OCDE) also shared information about OCDE’s parent workshops and how they currently partner with Public Health Services Alcohol & Drug Education & Prevention

(ADEPT) program to provide drug education and prevention curricula to students.

Results from the opioid survey and input received from forum attendees will be analyzed and compared to the services currently available to identify gaps and propose strategies to prevent addiction and opioid overdose.

For more information about opioid prevention and treatment resources,

visit www.ochealthinfo.com/opioids or email opioidinfo@ochca.com to share your input. If you have a loved one who’s in need of behavioral health services, call OC Links at 855-625-4657 or live chat online at www.ochealthinfo.com/oclinks.

▼ **1.** A long line of people stretched down the Delhi Center’s corridor to check-in. **2.** Mary Hale, BHS Deputy Agency Director addressed attendees. **3.** Sandra Fair, BHS Admin. Manager III discussed results from the opioid survey. **4.** A mom of a recovering heroin addict shared her input about the opioid epidemic.



Training Shows

How Racism Is Bad for Health

While many of us acknowledge that racism is a social concern that can negatively affect people's lives (even when it's unintentional), a training hosted by Public Health Services (PHS) delves further to show that it can also impact overall health.

The PHS Healthy Equity Committee sought to explore this through a series of staff trainings using the [California Newsreel](#) 'Race: The Power of an Illusion' video series and portions of the acclaimed video series '[Unnatural Causes](#)...is inequality making us sick?' All videos can be viewed by any HCA employee on the [PHS intranet](#).

"Our committee members see this as a step in starting a conversation about the health effects of racism and we hope that participants will walk away with some tools they can use



RACE

in their work," said **Dr. Helene Calvet**, Deputy County Health Officer.

Participants learned about the history of race and how race-based policies affected racial minorities in America. These policies have contributed to disparities in education, income, and wealth, all of which

impact health. The training also demonstrated that racism causes a stress effect on impacted groups and chronic stress over time can lead to chronic disease, pre-term births and other adverse health outcomes. Read more about how racism is literally bad for your health [here](#).

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5 Things You Need to Know

1 [Influenza](#) is a contagious respiratory illness that's caused by influenza A or B viruses and is mainly spread through droplets from coughs and sneezes. It can also cause serious illness and death, especially in young children, pregnant women, the elderly and persons with medical conditions that place them at risk. Influenza activity in the U.S. often starts in October and ends in May, [peaking from December to February](#).

2 Australia, which U.S. public health officials follow closely for their flu forecasting in part because their winter is our summer, reported the [worst flu outbreak](#) on record in 2017 and the flu vaccine used had low effectiveness. The U.S. has the same vaccine this year and a potentially similar flu strain as Australia, the influenza A virus ([known as H3N2](#)), which raises the possibility that Orange County's 2017-18 flu season may be an intense one.

New Year Brings New Recreational Marijuana Regulations

On New Year's Day the [Bureau of Cannabis Control](#) began issuing licenses to cannabis businesses allowing the sale of recreational marijuana to persons aged 21 and older with an ID, while a new set of regulations for retailers went into effect.

In Orange County, [Santa Ana](#) (so far) is the only city among 34 to allow retail cannabis shops to operate, while no marijuana businesses are allowed on unincorporated land. Licensed retailers must also abide by new regulations that prevent businesses from being within 600



feet of a school, and shops must close by 10 p.m. as well as have 24-hour video surveillance. More details about retail regulations can be found [here](#).

When voters passed [Proposition 64](#) (Marijuana Legalization) during the November 2016 ballot, California became the 6th and the nation's most populous state to allow the legalization of recreational

marijuana for persons aged 21 and older. Though it opened California's doors to the recreational cannabis industry, 73% of cities and counties in the state currently ban commercial cannabis businesses.

While marijuana is still illegal under the federal [Controlled Substance Act](#), California's current rules and regulations regarding possession, sale and other restrictions include: it's [illegal to drive after smoking or ingesting](#); marijuana cannot be taken across state lines; sale by someone who does not possess a license to sell is a misdemeanor and ingesting or smoking in public is illegal. More information about California's marijuana law can be found [here](#).



About This Year's Flu Season in Orange County

3 In Orange County so far, there's been a spike in flu reports countywide with more than double the number of flu cases seen the first week of January 2017 compared to the same time last year. Area emergency departments (ED) are reporting heavy flu activity causing them to reroute patients due to their increasingly limited capacity. In the [2017 EMS Diversion Report](#), OC Emergency Medical Services (EMS) notes that ED diversion hours have trended up during the winter/influenza season. Read the CBS 2 News story [here](#).

4 Though the effectiveness of the vaccine can vary from year to year, everyone over six months of age should get vaccinated to be protected against the severity of disease and duration of symptoms. A toddler who was not vaccinated became the first 2017-18 influenza-reported death in a person under 65 years old in Orange County. Read the OC Register article [here](#).

5 Free seasonal influenza vaccinations for people six months and older who don't have a medical provider or health insurance coverage are available at our Public Health Clinic Monday through Friday from 8 to 11:30 a.m. and 1 to 4 p.m. For details, call the Health Referral Line at (800) 564-8448 or click [here](#). Employees are encouraged to get a free flu shot at [Employee Health Services](#). There is no cost to **ALL** County of Orange employees with County ID. For more information, call EHS at (714) 565-3780 or email ehs@ochca.com.

COUNTY INTRANET



EVENTS CALENDAR NOW LIVE

The County of Orange's new online events calendar, "OC Events," is now live and accessible by all employees via the intranet site at <https://ocevents.ocgov.com/#/>. This internal calendar provides a one-stop shop where all County events can be found.

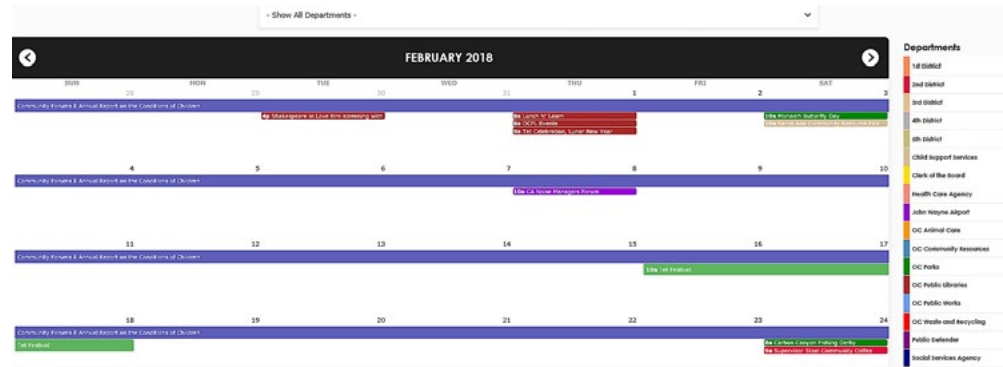
The OC Health Care Agency's (HCA) Communications team has been tasked with updating and populating the HCA event listings. The types of events we've been asked to submit include: any County events sponsored by a County Agency; any event included on the Quarterly Budget Adjustment Revise (QBAR) and Budget; and other public-facing events such as vaccination clinics, prescription medication collections, etc.

To submit an event, please send an email to HCAComm@ochca.com with the following information:

- Event name:**
- Supervisorial District where the event takes place:**
- HCA Division:**
- HCA Program (if applicable):**
- Event description:**
- Location name:**
- Address:**
- Start time:** a.m./p.m.
- End time:** a.m./p.m.
- Organizer:** contact name, phone and email
- Web address (if applicable):**
- Additional information:** any information that doesn't fall into the noted fields (i.e. parking details or other logistic instructions)

If you're unsure if an event meets criteria, submit the information for posting and we'll coordinate with the appropriate program manager for review.

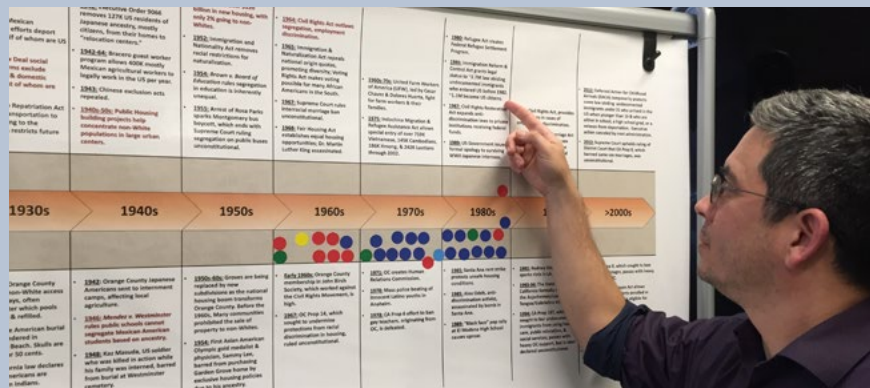
A fillable form to assist with submitting an event will be available soon! For any questions, please email the HCA Communications team at HCAComm@ochca.com or call (714) 834-2178.



Training Shows How Racism Is Bad for Health

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The training is a component of the [PHS Health Equity Platform](#) to educate staff about how the social determinants of health affect health equity. To watch the videos, find tools to help incorporate health equity into your work, or learn more about the PHS Platform, visit <http://intranet/phs/equity>. For data on health disparities in Orange County, visit the [OC Healthier Together](#) website.



▲ Travers Ichinose, Research Analyst IV (pictured), created a timeline of significant civil rights events in the U.S. (top portion of the timeline) and Orange County and California (bottom portion of timeline). During a training activity, participants placed color-coded dots on the timeline indicating when their families arrived in the U.S. and from which general region (Europe, Latin America, Asia, Africa, etc.), which leads to an interesting visual of the waves of immigration.

RETIREMENT NEWS

The OC Health Care Agency (HCA) bids farewell to Correctional Health Services (CHS) Deputy Agency Director Kim Pearson and Public Health Services (PHS) Deputy County Health Officer Dr. Helene Calvet and wishes them a happy retirement. Good luck and best wishes on your future endeavors!



“The highlight of my time at HCA has been working with the dedicated and extremely talented CHS/JHS staff and management team. These individuals provide services in a very challenging environment, and they do so with respect, compassion, and integrity each and every day. It has been an honor to be part of the CHS team. I will miss them all very much!”

Kim Pearson began her career at HCA in 2010 serving as CHS Director of Nursing and Chief of Operations before promoting to CHS Deputy Agency Director. Notable projects include:

- ★ Oversight for both Adult and Juvenile Health Services serving a population of more than 60,000 individuals annually with 350+ staff providing care 24/7.
- ★ Merger of medical and mental health services in the jail setting creating a unified division called Correctional Health Services.
- ★ Implementation of an electronic health record at five adult and five juvenile facilities.
- ★ Strong record for achieving outstanding results in regulatory inspections with the State of California, Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the Department of Justice.
- ★ Expansion of physician network services by bringing highest utilized specialists on site into the jail for clinic care and the addition of telemedicine/tele-psychiatry services.

Kim plans to start her own business as a Correctional Care Consultant providing services in jails by reviewing systems/processes and operations, as well as expert witness work in correctional healthcare litigation cases.



“PHS has a wonderful team of dedicated professionals, and it has been a pleasure working with them over these years. PHS is fortunate to also have many strong community partners, and I’ve enjoyed working with them on various issues. I hope to stay involved with some of these collaborative efforts as a ‘community member’ now.”

Dr. Helene Calvet joined HCA in 2011 as PHS Deputy County Health Officer. Notable projects include:

- ★ Co-Founder and Co-Chair of the Orange County Healthy Aging Initiative (OCHAI), which developed an [Annual Wellness Toolkit](#) for local providers.
- ★ Led the development of the [Older Adult Dashboard](#) on Orange County’s [Healthier Together](#) website and created the first [Orange County Older Adult Profile 2016](#) report in the County in more than 12 years.
- ★ Part of the team that worked on and achieved 5-year accreditation (capacity to meet the highest standards in providing services to residents) in 2016 from the Public Health Accreditation Board.
- ★ Developed the PHS Health Equity Committee, which has held a number of training events to educate and raise awareness among staff about the [social determinants of health](#).
- ★ Involved with large PHS responses including measles outbreaks, toxic bread, mercury skin cream, and a dental clinic outbreak, to name a few.

Dr. Calvet plans to take a “gap year” then work on completing a training program in Global Health to obtain certification in Tropical Medicine. She also plans to volunteer part-time with a few non-governmental organizations (voluntary citizen’s group) that do public health work in low resource countries.



For Health

DIY Healthy Valentine's Day treats!

Valentine's Day doesn't have to be fancy and unhealthy to be enjoyable! Do-it-yourself (DIY) this year by making these festive and nutritious treats that are simple and fun to make. Grab your heart-shaped cookie cutters and get ready to make magic with these recipe ideas:

MELON HEART POPS AND YOGURT DIP

What makes these melon heart pops so cool is that you can choose from cantaloupe, honeydew, or watermelon to create this dish. All you

need are: a few Popsicle sticks, the melon of your choice, and a heart shaped cookie cutter. If you have a little more time on your hands, scrap the cutter and carefully carve the melons into heart shapes with a kitchen knife. Spruce up this sweet treat, by adding Greek yogurt as a yummy dipping sauce. It's a wonderful complement to these melon heart pops.

HEART SHAPED EGGS IN A BASKET

Breakfast can be fun too! With inspiration from an old school



recipe like 'eggs in a basket,' you can turn this classic into a revamped Valentine's Day meal. Simply use your cookie cutter to pierce a hole through your whole wheat bread, brown on the stove for a minute, and crack an egg directly

Heart Healthy Tuna Apple Salad

Did you know that what you eat can affect your heart's health? During American Association Heart Month, enjoy foods that promote a healthy heart such as whole grains, fruits, vegetables, fish and nuts that are all high in fiber, phytonutrients and omega-3 fatty acids. This [Tuna Apple Salad](#) is simple, nutritious and good for your heart! Visit [myHealthOC](#) for more heart healthy foods and recipe ideas [here](#).



CHEF'S TIP:

Try adding almonds or walnuts to add even more healthy nutrients.

SERVES: 4

PREPARATION TIME:

15 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- ♥ 2 (6-ounce) cans water-packed tuna drained
- ♥ 2 tbs. red onion finely chopped
- ♥ 1 medium apple cored and chopped
- ♥ ¼ cup celery chopped
- ♥ ¼ cup golden raisins
- ♥ 3 tbs. fat-free Italian dressing
- ♥ 2 cups salad greens
- ♥ 2 whole wheat pitas

DIRECTIONS:

- ♥ In a small bowl, stir together tuna, onion, apple, celery, raisins and 2 tbs. of dressing.
- ♥ In another medium bowl, toss together salad greens with remaining dressing.
- ♥ Cut pitas in half to make 4 pita pockets.
- ♥ Carefully fill pita pockets with equal amounts of salad greens and tuna salad. Serve.

into the heart shape.

Prepare to your liking and voila' you have another masterpiece. By the way, adding a few strawberries doesn't hurt either.

YOGURT COVERED STRAWBERRIES

Strawberries are a favorite among many, and what else says

Valentine's Day more than covered strawberries. Instead of using chocolate to dip your berries, yogurt makes an equally tasty substitution, and it's much healthier!

For these healthy recipes and more, visit <http://myhealthoc.org/diy-healthy-valentines-day-treats/>.

Chief Pharmacist, Mark Chew, Recognized as a Hurricane Superhero

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floor for a few days until cots arrived. Only bottled water could be consumed and teams ate prepackaged “meals ready to eat” (MRE’s). The patients reported that Mark, Joe and the team demonstrated incredible compassion, patience and honor by assisting numerous acute and chronic care patients and helped them stay calm despite the tremendous chaos.

Mark came to HCA for the opportunity to work in Emergency and Disaster Management. His appetite was whetted for this field during his training at the Naval Regional Medical Center in Oakland, California, where he was trained to assist in the movement of an 8-story hospital and place it directly onto a Naval Ship within 24 hours after the order is given.

When he’s not wearing his cape, Mark manages emergency pharmaceuticals and medical supplies for R/MHS and the pharmaceutical inventories in the Public Health clinics. This would include travel immunizations, pulmonary health (TB), and special diseases (STD, HIV).

Regarding his role, Mark says, “One of the challenges I deal with is with dwindling government funding and grants, so it’s important to make every penny count. I need to diligently manage pharmaceutical inventory, and return expired medications for credits so we can continue to perpetuate procurement strategies to keep the County stocked with current and necessary medication.”

Mark feels a strong sense of pride in the work that he does to help address the opioid crisis by partnering with the Orange County Sheriff’s Department and surrounding law enforcement departments to distribute Naloxone to those in a position to help administer this life saving overdose medication. His team recently partnered with Behavioral Health Services and the Solace Foundation to distribute Naloxone to a vulnerable population through a California State grant.

Mark is exceptionally educated in his field, having received his B.S. in Zoology from UC Davis, B.S. in Pharmacy from Idaho State, Doctorate of Pharmacy from University of the Pacific, a Nuclear Pharmacy fellowship at the Medical University of South Carolina in

Charleston, South Carolina, and served his Residency at the V.A. Hospital in Seattle, Washington.

During his spare time, Mark studies martial arts, leads worship for his church, and is an avid hiker.

Mark’s peers say he is an excellent team player, who adds tremendous value to HCA, the local pharmacy community, and nationally for disaster responses.

Thank you Mark for your commitment to excellence, integrity and service! Job well done!



MISSION

In partnership with the community, protect and promote the health and safety of individuals and families in Orange County through:

- Assessment and planning
- Prevention and education
- Treatment and care



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