

# NEWSLETTER

## IN THIS ISSUE

Heat Illness - 1

COVID-19 Vaccine Update - 1

Back Pain - 2

The Importance of Annual Wellness Visit - 4

CDC 2024 COVID-19 Vaccination Schedule - 5

Centric Health - 6

Nutrition Nuggets - 7

## Heat Illness - William Baker, MD



As we are in the midst of what may be developing into an historic HEAT EMERGENCY, it is important to be reminded of the signs and symptoms of heat illness. Heat illness can be life threatening and fatal and prevention is the key element to avoiding illness. Remember to complete outdoor activities in the morning when temperatures are

the lowest, stay in the shade and wear sun protection, drink plenty of water and take plenty of breaks. If you develop any of the symptoms discussed below, get out of the heat, get cool, drink water and if symptoms of Heat Exhaustion or Heat Stroke develop get medical assistance immediately.

## COVID-19 Vaccine Update - William Baker, MD

### Current CDC Guidelines from June 27, 2024

CDC recommends the 2023-2024 updated COVID-19 vaccines – Pfizer-BioNtech, Moderna or Novavax to protect against serious illness from COVID-19.

Everyone aged 5 years and older should get 1 dose of the updated vaccine.

Children age 6 months to 4 years may need multiple doses to be up to date and this must include at least 1 dose of updated vaccine. People who are over 65 or moderately to severely immunocom-

promised who received 1 dose of any updated 2023-2024 COVID-19 vaccine should receive 1 additional dose at least 4 months after the previous updated dose.

People who are up to date have lower risk of severe illness, hospitalization and death from COVID-19 than people who are unvaccinated or who have not completed the doses recommended for them by the CDC.

NOTE: Kern County COVID-19 cases for June 2024 peaked June 18 at 1,000 active cases and are listed on the Dashboard as 200 on June 25th.

## Back Pain - William Baker, MD



According to the CDC data collected in 2019, 39% of Americans experienced back pain. That is certainly a large number! Back pain was most common in adults over 65 years of age, women, non-Hispanic white adults and those individuals 100% below the federal poverty line. Back problems are the leading cause of disability in people younger than 45.

Back anatomy and function are complex. For this reason, pain can originate from numerous sources. If something is abnormal or somehow becomes abnormal in the way the spinal joints, muscles, discs and nerves fit together and move.

### Symptoms of back pain can include:

- 1) Persistent aching an/or stiffness anywhere along the spine from the neck to the tailbone
- 2) Sharp localized pain anywhere in the neck, upper or lower back, especially after lifting heavy objects, or strenuous activity
- 3) Pain in the upper back can also

be a sign of a heart attack or aneurysm and if unrelated to a specific activity should always be evaluated immediately

- 4) Chronic pain in the mid or lower back especially after sitting or standing for extended periods
- 5) Back pain radiating from the low back to the buttocks, back of the thigh and into the calf and toes
- 6) Inability to stand straight without experiencing pain or muscle spasm in the lower back

### RED FLAG BACK PAIN SYMPTOMS

(Require urgent medical evaluation)

- 1) Pain extending along the back of the leg to the foot
- 2) Increased pain with coughing or bending
- 3) Pain accompanied by fever, burning with urination or urinary urgency or abdominal pain (infection)
- 4) Difficulty controlled bowels and/or bladder
- 5) History of cancer
- 6) Unintentional weight loss
- 7) Currently taking medication

such as steroids which weaken the immune systems

- 8) History of injury
- 9) Pain worsening in spite of rest and home therapy
- 10) Pain lasting over a month
- 11) Nighttime pain
- 12) Unresponsive the treatment for back
- 13) A personal history of IV drug use

### Accidents and Injuries causing back muscle and ligament injuries (the most common cause of back pain)

- 1) Accidents, falls – sprains, strains and fractures
- 2) Improper lifting – strains and sprains
- 3) Spine fractures due to injury or osteoporosis
- 4) Lumabr spasm from injuries playing sports or weightlifting
- 5) Poor posture
- 6) Lack of exercise

### Spine related problems can include:

- 1) Herniated or slipped discs – from acute injury or chronic wear,

the pad between the vertebra protrudes enough to press on the spinal nerves causing back pain of leg pain (sciatica)

2) Bulging discs – Less severe disc problem which may or may not cause pain and/or sciatica

3) Degenerative disc disease – the disc “shock absorbers” wear down or tear and may cause bones to of the spine to rub together and cause pain and back feels stiff and mobility is lost

4) Sacroiliac inflammation – the joints between the lower back and pelvis wear down and inflammation develops causing pain

5) Radiculopathy – a degenerative bone spur or herniated disc may pinch a nerve as it exist the spine and cause pain, numbness, tingling and/or weakness in an area depending on the nerve affected. This can cause “cervical radiculopathy”, “thoracic radiculopathy” or “lumbar radiculopathy” depending upon where in the spine the problem exists

6) Spondylolisthesis – One or more of the lower back (lumbar) vertebra slip forward relate to the vertebra below causing pain, the feeling of instability and possibly sciatica

### Medical conditions causing back pain

1) Arthritis – inflammation of the joints with stiffness, swelling and inflammation can originate from systemic diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis or psoriatic arthritis

2) Osteoarthritis – the most common arthritis occurring primarily occurring from middle age forward is the result of wearing away of cartilage causing bone pain and stiffness

3) Scoliosis – an abnormal curvature of the spine may be congenital or develop during life and if the curvature is severe enough the spinal nerves may be impinged

upon causing sciatica or radiculopathy

4) Pregnancy – causes painful back strain

5) Tumors – can originate in the spine or pain can be referred from internal malignancies or medical conditions including pancreatic cancer and pancreatitis, gallbladder disease and cancers originating elsewhere which spread to the spine

6) Kidney stones and infections

7) Endometriosis

8) Osteomyelitis or discitis – infection of spinal bones or discs

9) Fibromyalgia – a condition causing widespread pain

### Lifestyle triggers

1) Slouching at your desk

2) Lifting heavy objects

3) Being overweight

4) Not exercising

5) Smoking

6) Wearing high heels

### Diagnosis

1) NEW ONSET OF SEVERE BACK PAIN WITHOUT AN APPARENT INJURY SHOULD ALWAYS BE EVALUATED BY A MEDICAL PROFESSIONAL IMMEDIATELY

2) Goal of treatment is resolution of symptoms and correction of the underlying cause

3) Medical evaluation must always be based on the findings from the history you provide to a medical professional and a thorough in person physical examination

4) Tests may include:

a) Laboratory studies

b) X-rays to examine bones

c) CT scans to examine soft tissue and bones

d) MRI to examine the discs, spinal cord and nerves

e) Electromyogram and nerve conduction velocity to assess the function of the nerves

### Management

1) Home therapy

a. Rest, ice and over the counter pain meds for an acute minor strain

b. Sleep on the side with pillow between the legs

c. Keep good posture

d. Stretch

e. Home exercise routine

2) Physical Therapy

3) Chiropractic

4) Acupuncture

5) Medications

a. Over-the-counter pain relievers such as ibuprofen, naproxen, acetaminophen

b. Muscle relaxants

c. Topical pain relievers

d. Narcotics (not recommended for over 5 days for acute pain)

e. Antidepressants (duloxetine and amitriptyline) possess pain relieving properties

6) Nerve treatment such as radiofrequency ablation, TSN (Transcutaneous Nerve Stimulator)

7) Radiofrequency discal nucleoplasty

8) Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

9) Implantable spinal cord stimulator

10) Surgery

a. Discectomy

b. Rhizotomy

c. Microdiscectomy

d. Spinal fusion

Back pain can develop in virtually anyone. Understanding the signs and symptoms of a serious problem is important to avoid allowing it to become more severe or to miss an important underlying medical diagnosis. Prevention, addressing underlying risk factors and early diagnosis and management are essential to prevent an acute problem from becoming a life changing and possibly disabling chronic condition.

## The Importance of Annual Wellness Visit - Jyoti Anand, FNP

Your health and well-being are the top priorities. The Annual Wellness Visit (AWV) is a crucial part of maintaining your health. Unlike a standard physical exam, the AWV focuses on preventive care, health screenings, and wellness planning.

### Benefits of the Annual Wellness Visit:

**1. Personalized Prevention Plan:** During your AWV, your healthcare provider will develop or update a personalized prevention plan based on your current health and risk factors. This plan helps you stay on track with your health goals and manage any chronic conditions.

**2. Health Risk Assessment:** The visit includes a comprehensive health risk assessment, which evaluates your medical history, current health conditions, and lifestyle. This assessment helps identify potential health risks early on.

**3. Early Detection:** Preventive screenings and assessments during the AWV can detect health issues before they become serious. Early detection often leads to more effective treatment and better outcomes.

**4. No Extra Cost:** The AWV is covered by Medicare at no additional cost to you, provided your healthcare provider accepts Medicare assignment.

### Preventive Screenings Covered by Medicare

Medicare covers a wide range of preventive screenings to help you stay healthy. As part of your Annual Wellness Visit, based on your

age, gender & health status, your provider may recommend several preventive screenings, including but not limited to:

- **Blood Pressure Screening:** Monitors blood pressure to detect hypertension.
- **Cardiovascular Disease Screening:** Includes cholesterol and other blood tests to assess heart health.
- **Colorectal Cancer Screening:** Includes colonoscopy and/or other tests to detect early signs of colorectal cancer.
- **Breast Cancer Screening:** Mammograms to detect breast cancer early.
- **Depression Screenings:** Identifies signs of depression and for early intervention.
- **Diabetes Screenings:** Identifies early signs of diabetes for timely management.
- **Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Screening:** Detects aneurysms in the abdominal aorta.
- **Bone Density Test:** Checks for osteoporosis to prevent fractures.
- **Lung Cancer Screening:** Uses low-dose CT scans to detect lung cancer in high-risk individuals.
- **Obesity Screenings & Counseling:** Assesses weight and provides counseling for weight management.
- **Vaccinations:** Includes flu shots, COVID-19 vaccines, and other immunizations.

### How to Schedule Your Visit:

Scheduling your Annual Wellness Visit is easy. Simply call your primary care provider and request an appointment. Taking this step is crucial for maintaining your health and well-being. Early detection and preventive care can make a significant difference in

your overall health and quality of life.

**For more info, visit CMS website. Helpful web links below:**

<https://www.medicare.gov/coverage/preventive-screening-services>

<https://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNProducts/preventive-services/medicare-wellness-visits.html>

## CDC 2024 COVID-19 Vaccination Schedule - William Baker, MD



COVID-19 cases are dramatically increasing in number. Flu season is upon us.

It is time to review your vaccination status and GET VACCINATED.

See below and check to see if you are up to date to protect yourself, your family, friends and co-workers from illness as we approach the high-risk seasons of Fall and Winter.

### Age 19 years or older

#### Unvaccinated:

1 dose of updated (2023–2024 Formula) Moderna or Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine

2-dose series of updated (2023–2024 Formula) Novavax at 0, 3–8 weeks

Previously vaccinated\* with 1 or more doses of any COVID-19 vaccine: 1 dose of any updated (2023–2024 Formula) COVID-19 vaccine administered at least 8 weeks after the most recent

COVID-19 vaccine dose.

#### Persons who are moderately or severely immunocompromised\*\*

##### Unvaccinated:

3-dose series of updated (2023–2024 Formula) Moderna at 0, 4, 8 weeks

3-dose series of updated (2023–2024 Formula) Pfizer- BioNTech at 0, 3, 7 weeks

2-dose series of updated (2023–2024 Formula) Novavax at 0, 3 weeks

Previously vaccinated\* with 1 dose of any Moderna: 2-dose series of updated (2023–2024 Formula) Moderna at 0, 4 weeks (minimum interval between previous Moderna dose and dose 1: 4 weeks)

Previously vaccinated\* with 2 doses of any Moderna: 1 dose of updated (2023–2024 Formula) Moderna at least 4 weeks after most recent dose.

Previously vaccinated\* with 1 dose of any Pfizer- BioNTech: 2-dose series of updated (2023–2024 Formula) Pfizer-BioNTech at 0, 4 weeks (minimum interval between previous Pfizer-BioNTech dose and dose 1: 3 weeks).

Previously vaccinated\* with 2 doses of any Pfizer- BioNTech: 1 dose of updated (2023–2024 Formula) Pfizer-BioNTech at least 4 weeks after most recent dose.

Previously vaccinated\* with 3 or more doses of any Moderna or Pfizer-BioNTech: 1 dose of any updated (2023–2024 Formula) COVID-19 vaccine at least 8 weeks after the most recent dose.

Previously vaccinated\* with 1 or more doses of Janssen or Novavax with or without dose(s) of any Original monovalent or bivalent COVID-19 vaccine: 1 dose of any updated (2023–2024 Formula) of COVID-19 vaccine at least 8 weeks after the most recent dose.

## Centric Health

Centric Health is a multispecialty medical group comprised of many of the most outstanding medical professionals and medical groups in Bakersfield dedicated to providing the highest quality of medical care in a rapidly changing health care landscape. Centric Health was developed to enable physicians to do their best work and to assure access to high quality care for residents of our community. Centric Health includes a broad spectrum of medical specialties and services designed to meet the many needs of patients.

The Physicians and healthcare professionals at Centric Health Medical Offices offer an array of services ranging from Cardiology, Vascular, Primary Care, Endocrinology, Pulmonology and Diagnostic Imaging.

- **Central Cardiology Medical Center**
- **Preferred Family Care**
- **Sillect Medical Centers**
- **Kern Endocrine Center**
- **WF Baker MD and Associates**
- **Centric Primary Care**
- **Golden Valley Medical Associates**
- **Harjeet Singh, MD**
- **Susan Hall, MD**
- **Dr. Ashraf - Pulmonology**
- **Clinica Del Valle**
- **Golden State Hospitalists**
- **Centric Health Imaging**

# Nutrition Nuggets



## Zucchini Noodles with Avocado Pesto & Shrimp

**Prep Time:** 35 mins

**Total Time:** 35 mins

**Servings:** 4

**Yield:** 4 servings

### Ingredients:

- 5-6 medium zucchini (2 1/4-2 1/2 pounds total), trimmed
- 3/4 teaspoon salt, divided
- 1 ripe avocado
- 1 cup packed fresh basil leaves
- 1/4 cup unsalted shelled pistachios
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1/4 teaspoon ground pepper
- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil plus 2 tablespoons, divided
- 3 cloves garlic, minced

- 1 pound raw shrimp (21-25 count), peeled and deveined, tails left on if desired

- 1-2 teaspoons Old Bay seasoning

### Directions:

#### Step 1:

Using a spiral vegetable slicer or a vegetable peeler, cut zucchini lengthwise into long, thin strands or strips. Stop when you reach the seeds in the middle (seeds make the noodles fall apart). Place the zucchini "noodles" in a colander and toss with 1/2 teaspoon salt. Let drain for 15 to 30 minutes, then gently squeeze to remove any excess water.

#### Step 2:

Meanwhile, combine avocado, basil, pistachios, lemon juice, pepper and the remaining 1/4 teaspoon salt in a food processor. Pulse un-

til finely chopped. Add 1/4 cup oil and process until smooth.

#### Step 3:

Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add garlic and cook, stirring, for 30 seconds. Add shrimp and sprinkle with Old Bay; cook, stirring occasionally, until the shrimp is almost cooked through, 3 to 4 minutes. Transfer to a large bowl.

#### Step 4:

Add the remaining 1 tablespoon oil to the pan. Add the drained zucchini noodles and gently toss until hot, about 3 minutes. Transfer to the bowl, add the pesto and gently toss to combine.

### Nutrition Facts (per serving)

<b>Calories:</b>	<b>446</b>
<b>Fat:</b>	<b>33g</b>
<b>Carbs:</b>	<b>16g</b>
<b>Protein:</b>	<b>26g</b>

Source : <https://www.eatingwell.com>



“YOU SHOULD NEVER LET YOUR FEARS PREVENT YOU FROM DOING WHAT YOU KNOW IS RIGHT.”



The ultimate measure of a  
**MAN**  
is not where he stands in moments of  
comfort and convenience, but where  
he stands at times of

*challenge* & *controversy.*

- Martin Luther King Jr.

You must not rely on the information in these materials as an alternative to medical advice from an appropriately qualified professional. If you have any specific questions about any medical matter you should consult an appropriately qualified professional. If you think you may be suffering from any medical condition you should seek immediate medical attention. You should never delay seeking medical advice, disregard medical advice, or discontinue medical treatment because of information in these materials.