

SPRING 2023

HealthSmarts

Be Well

Poison Center offers a helping hand to avoid drug interactions

Good Eats

Balanced diet enhances quality of life

THE GIFT OF MUSIC

Pianist volunteers time, brings joy to Banner Baywood patients, staff

 Banner Health Network

Welcome



Thank you for reading *Health Smarts* – this is the first issue for 2023. We welcome our new readers and thank our current readers for your continued support as we look forward to providing you with valuable

health information in the coming months.

As we look at how COVID-19 changed our world, we can see that some things are beginning to look a little more like they did before the pandemic, which is a good thing. We're visiting friends and family, celebrating together and getting back to previous routines – like visiting the doctor in person.

Remember one thing: it's never too late to take charge of your health. *Health Smarts* focuses on you and your overall health. You'll find information about living a healthier lifestyle and practical tips to manage the issues we all face as we age. We invite you to explore our crossword puzzle that is not only fun, but can help keep your brain sharp!

Another routine that's being revisited is volunteering – and remember, it's good for your health! You'll meet Art, a Banner volunteer who has had his share of health challenges, but he remains dedicated to bringing beautiful music to others at Banner Baywood Medical Center.

Also, in this latest issue:

- Learn why it's important to take advantage of your Medicare annual wellness visit.
- Find out how you can save money through prescription drug programs.
- We'll explain why it's important to stay in-network the next time you are referred to a specialist.

- We'll explore options for online scheduling to help save time.
- Read which foods pack the most punch when it comes to helping to prevent falls. We've added a delicious recipe to tempt your taste buds, too.
- We'll tell you why it's important to talk to your doctor before adding supplements to your daily routine.

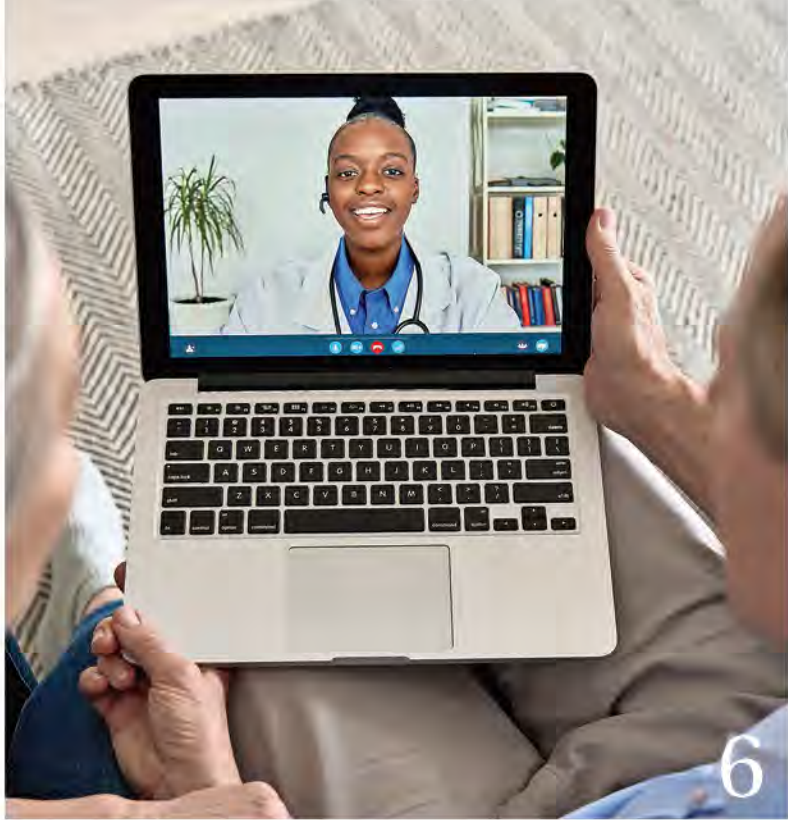
We're proud that we can offer this publication to our Medicare beneficiaries whose doctor participates in the Medicare Shared Savings Program Accountable Care Organization through Banner Health Network. The Medicare Shared Savings Program does not require a sign up and does not change your Medicare benefits. This *Health Smarts* magazine is an added bonus, providing you with valuable information on the latest health care news, trends, and how to achieve your best personal health.

Of course, we are also here to provide you support so you can achieve your health goals! If you have any health-related questions, you have access to our 24-hour Banner Health Nurse On-Call hotline. Our nurses can answer questions about medications or make recommendations about where to get care. You can call us at 602-747-7990 or toll free at 888-747-7990.

To your health,



Ed Clarke, MD
Chief Medical Officer
Banner Plans & Networks



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- Written information in other formats (large print, audio, accessible electronic formats, other formats)

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Visiting your primary care provider at least once a year carries benefits

An Annual Advantage

By Debra Gelbart

Doctors recommend that you should not ignore your Medicare-covered Annual Wellness Visit (AWV). The bottom line – you don't have to pay anything if you see a qualified provider who accepts Medicare.

"This is a time when we can see patients when they're not sick," said Cheryl Villamor-Nierva, MD, a family practice physician who specializes in caring for Medicare patients at Banner Health Center plus – New River Trails in Glendale. "The Annual Wellness Visit gives



both the patient and the doctor the opportunity to help preserve mobility, promote autonomy and ensure that advance directives are in place," she said. "This is the time when we can focus on helping a patient stay well."

What happens during the visit

The AWV typically lasts 40 minutes and you'll be asked general

health questions, including when you got your flu shot, most recent mammogram and most recent colonoscopy. You may also be asked if you've fallen recently.

A brief physical exam may be part of the visit, depending on the doctor's office and a blood draw may occur at the end of the visit. But a health risk assessment is a key part of every AWV.



- Can you complete household tasks?
- Can you bathe and dress yourself?
- Can you manage your money?

Patients are typically asked whether they have an advance directive, an official documented set of instructions for their loved ones in the event they become incapacitated and cannot make their own medical decisions.

Dr. Nierva asks her patients to bring with them to the appointment a list of their prescribed and over-the-counter medications and a list of the medical specialists they see in a given year. This ensures that medications are appropriate for the patient and that care is being coordinated among various doctors.

Making the most of your visit

Dr. Nierva suggests patients plan to only ask a couple of questions about how to stay healthy. She recommends saving questions about illness for a future visit. "This visit isn't intended for getting a prescription refill or a new prescription for a medical complaint. It's meant as a focus on staying well."

If the health risk assessment or physical exam reveals a problem, that problem will be addressed at a future visit as well, Dr. Nierva said.

Research has shown that seeing a doctor at least once a year can save the patient money, Dr. Nierva said. "If we can identify a problem early, it can be treated before it becomes severe enough to require hospitalization," she said. "So every Medicare patient should take advantage of the Annual Wellness Visit."

As part of the health risk assessment, the doctor, nurse or medical assistant asks questions that may center on whether you have experienced feelings of depression or anxiety in the previous four weeks and whether you've had pain in the previous four weeks. There may be additional questions about your support system at home and whether there may be hazards in the home

that put you at risk for falls or other accidents. You may be asked about your comfort level with driving or taking public transportation if necessary. Other questions may focus on activities of daily living such as:

- Can you grocery shop for yourself?
- Can you prepare meals for yourself?



**Telehealth, online scheduling
can save time, money and hassle**

By Brian Sodoma

The COVID – 19 pandemic forced the health care industry to implement telehealth rather quickly. Health care providers and patients alike had to adapt and embrace this technology in order to provide and receive care.

Now, that hard work and flexibility have paid off. Telehealth, along with online scheduling tools, can save you time and money while providing convenience.

Let's take a closer look at its benefits.

Telehealth's many benefits

Today, insurers reimburse health care providers for telehealth visits. That translates into travel cost savings and convenience for you, the patient. All you need is an internet connection, a computer, tablet or smartphone, and within a few clicks or swipes on the Banner Health website or app, you're connected with a health care provider. Do you need your annual Medicare wellness exam? Use telehealth. Do you have the flu or cold symptoms, or need help managing a chronic condition? All can be done via telehealth.

"We can do just about anything that does not involve a procedure or intervention," said David

Valenzuela, MD, Banner's Physician Executive for Primary Care. "We have excellent video technology for a seamless connection between doctor and patient where you can feel very comfortable with the experience."

If you need a caregiver or loved one at the appointment, Banner Health has you covered. "Our system has three-way connectivity," explained Darin Anderson, executive director of Banner Telehealth. "Caregivers can participate, even if they're at a different location."

Self-scheduling on BannerHealth.com

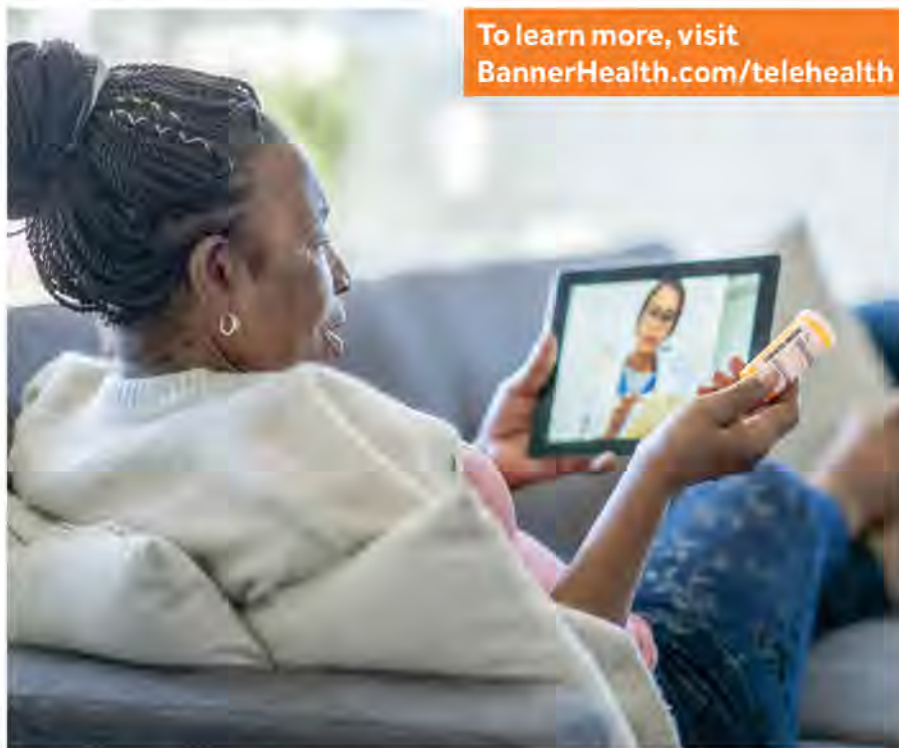
You can also avoid long phone waits with self-scheduling features on BannerHealth.com. On the main page, press the **Book An Appointment With Your Doctor** button, then fill in your doctor's name on the next page. If you're searching for a new doctor, type in your zip code. A list of providers near you pops up. Once you choose a physician, press the **Book Appointment** button to pull up a calendar of available dates and times. A short biography of the provider will also indicate if he or she offers telehealth.

"At this time, you can only schedule in-person visits on the website, but we will have the capabilities to self-schedule telehealth visits soon," Anderson added.

If you have an urgent health need that is not an emergency, press the **Access Video Urgent Care** button prominently shown on the BannerHealth.com home page. Click it to see a list of available time slots for a telehealth urgent care visit. Afterward, medications may be prescribed, if the provider feels they're needed and all next care steps are outlined.

"We want everyone to take advantage of these services as much as possible," Dr. Valenzuela added. "They help to keep you safe by avoiding the hassle of driving and all the logistical difficulties that come with getting to the office. They may even reduce unnecessary emergency room visits and improve care."

To learn more, visit
BannerHealth.com/telehealth



The Gift of Music

Pianist volunteers time,
brings joy to Baywood
patients, staff





By Brian Sodoma

Jenna Davis deliberately leaves her office door open on Tuesday and Thursday mornings to listen to the beautiful melodies being played on the grand piano located in the main lobby of Banner Baywood Medical Center.

On those days, the associate director of volunteer services may be treated to music from Phantom of the Opera, Leonard Cohen, Elvis Presley, classical pieces - a deep catalog that spans generations, even centuries.

These notes arrive compliments of 83-year-old Art Bunch who has volunteered his skills for more than seven years and amassed an impressive 2,000 hours of service.

"You'll find a lot of people like to kind of hover around the piano; you'll see some people even singing or dancing," Davis said. "Art just

brings so much joy. He lights up that lobby."

Bringing joy

Bunch is one of more than 300 volunteers at the Baywood campus.

Like many, he is giving back to partly stay active but also to say thank you to those who saved his life in 2003 when he underwent a quadruple bypass heart surgery.

"They gave me great service and did a beautiful job," Bunch added. "At this point in my life, I'm doing quite well. I'm playing piano and doing things I truly enjoy. This (volunteering) is something I really enjoy, and I hate to miss it."

The allure of music

If you learn a little about Bunch, you'll soon realize how big of a gift you receive when you hear him. He started playing piano not long after he learned to walk and was able to play concert music by the age of



four. He played professionally for more than 30 years as a community concert pianist, traveling the U.S. and Europe. He also sang for the San Diego Opera Company and overseas before he wound down his career and moved to Arizona in the early 2000s.

In addition to earning his living



KNOWLEDGE IS POWER



If you're interested in volunteering at a Banner facility near you, call (480) 321-4122 or visit BannerHealth.com/ways-to-give.

by playing music, he also had his own carpentry business and was a homebuilder. A great sprinter, he played football in college and even eyed an opportunity to play professionally, but never could resist the pull of music.

"I went to school for music. It's really what I wanted to do. I also get bored easily and I like to do new things, but thank goodness I was able to make a living doing what I did," he said.

His wife of 55 years, Valna-Rue, accompanies him at his Tuesday and Thursday concerts. An artistic mind herself, she was a professional ballet dancer and taught dance for 40 years. She likes to put in a few requests when Art plays. "He

always has to end with 'Hallelujah.' He does that for me," she said with a smile.

Giving is good for the soul

You don't need to be a remarkable musician to volunteer, Davis said. In fact, about 65% of those who give their time at the Baywood campus are retirees, many of whom were former patients who simply appreciate the opportunity to make a person's day a little brighter. There are about 20 different positions available. You can volunteer at gift shops, serve as a greeter, help on nursing floors by bringing coffee or snacks to patients, and more.

"Anyone in the community is welcome to share their kind heart with

those who need it most. We know hospitals are not always enjoyable places for some," Davis added. "Our volunteers are so inspiring and truly are the good in the world."

Making friends

For many, giving their time opens the door to new friendships and social opportunities.

"It renews a sense of purpose and prevents social isolation," Davis said. "Volunteers offer something the clinical staff can't always focus on due to their heavy workload. They provide compassion and understanding, a shoulder to lean on and a listening ear. It's an incredible experience for many of them to give from their heart."

Drug Interactions:

Poison Control Center offers a helping hand

By Julie Maurer

Are you looking to start a new health routine? Good for you! If it involves adding a vitamin or other health supplements, it's probably a good idea to consult the experts.

With so many differing opinions on the internet and in the gossip mill, navigating the truth about drug interactions can seem complicated. Luckily, there are several resources that patients can turn to for the most accurate answers.

Besides your physician or local pharmacist, there is another place to turn for the most current information – the Banner Poison and Drug Information Center, a free, 24-hour service for residents and medical professionals.

"We can help them put into context what interactions can occur," said Dr. Bryan Kuhn, pharmacist and poison education specialist with the poison center.

While going online to check out interactions is common, sometimes it is important to get advice tailored to an individual.

"We ask other questions, such as – what other medications they are on, if they are experiencing any side effects, and other things that have to do with their unique scenario that they can't always find online," Kuhn said. "We can do a deeper



dive and it costs them nothing, other than three or four minutes of their time."

He noted that another problem with searching on the internet for interaction information is that sometimes web pages can be outdated. The poison center can provide the latest details from medical professionals.

And anecdotes from friends may not be the best place to garner information about whether or not a certain type of medication can have interactions either, because many prescriptions have changed over time.

"A lot of the newer drugs now don't necessarily have those kinds of issues," added Kaitlin Ryan, a pharmacy resident at the Banner Poison and Drug Information Center.

Some drugs with commonly known interactions such as Warfarin have been replaced with other medications that don't cause the same effects, Ryan said.

It's also a good idea to check

with a physician, pharmacist or the Poison and Drug Information Center before starting any herbal supplements as well.

"Calling us will provide some sort of framework – supplements have no standardization – there is no requirement that they are actually providing what is on the label," Kuhn said. "That's the first problem."

He added there isn't a lot of documentation or research about interactions between herbal supplements, but they can help callers get in the right direction.

"We might not always be able to give the complete answer, or we might refer that person to speak to a naturopath or their doctor," Kuhn said.

Ryan noted that when in doubt, it's better to just ask for help before taking a supplement. "We've had situations where people take something with the best intentions and get scared after the fact when they go on Google," she said. "Before spending the money, and some can be expensive, and before taking it, call a health care provider."



To reach the Banner Poison Drug and Information Center, call 1-800-222-1222 or online at BannerHealth.com/PoisonCenter

Balanced diet enhances quality of life

By Michelle Jacoby



According to 2019 reports by the Centers for Disease Control, about 34,000 Americans died because of fall-related injuries, three million emergency department visits were recorded, and more than \$50 billion in injury-related medical costs have been charged annually.

There's no question that falling is a serious health concern, especially those 65 and older. Suffering from a fall may lead to serious injuries, like a head injury and fractures. It can also result in loss of mobility and independence, chronic pain and reduced quality of life.

Proper nutrition

When you think about preventing falls, the first thing that may come to mind is maintaining strength and balance. While those factors are certainly important in fall prevention, there is another important thing to consider: proper nutrition.

"Malnutrition is one of the leading causes of weakness, dizziness and fainting, which eventually increases the risk of falls," said Mst Sultana, a registered dietitian nutritionist in Banner Health's Wellness Department. "The meaning of malnutrition is an imbalance in someone's nutritional intake and/or their body's ability to use nutrients. Balanced eating and proper

nutrition particularly for bone, muscle and eye health are important to prevent falls in older adults."

Fortunately, there are ways falls can be prevented by adequate nutrition. First is the essential intake of protein - for cell and tissue growth. It plays many functions in the body, including muscle contraction and movement.

"As age increases, muscle mass starts to decline," said Sultana. "Studies show adequate protein intake and physical activity can help maintain muscle mass in older adults."

Finding protein

Protein can be found in a variety of food sources, both animal and

plant based. Examples include:

- Meat, poultry and eggs: Lean cuts of beef, lamb, goat, pork loin, skinless chicken, turkey, duck
- Fish and seafood: salmon, tuna, cod, shrimp, mackerel, lobster, catfish, crab
- Low-fat or fat-free dairy foods: yogurt, milk, cheese, cottage cheese
- Legumes: beans, lentils, soy, peas
- Nuts and seeds: walnuts, almonds, chia seeds, pumpkin seeds, pistachios, cashews, pecans, peanuts
- Whole grains: wheat, quinoa, oats, rice

Vitamin D deficiency

In addition to protein, certain vitamins and minerals can aid in proper nutrition for fall prevention.

"Vitamin D, also known as the 'sunshine vitamin,' helps make bones and muscles strong," says Sultana. "However, between 25 and 50% of the adult population in the U.S. has vitamin D deficiency. Research shows low levels of vitamin D in the blood are associated with an increased risk of fractures in older adults. Certain individuals may benefit from taking vitamin D supplements daily."

Vitamin D also helps the absorption of calcium, which plays an important role in muscle and nerve function. "Individuals with low levels of calcium intake from food will have an increased risk of bone loss because the body always works to maintain the blood levels of calcium by releasing calcium from bones," Sultana said.

Managing risk

In addition, vitamin A is important for eye health. Age-related macular degeneration is one of the leading causes of vision loss in older adults and can lead to an increased risk of falls., Vitamin C supports neurological functions and helps decrease confusion, imbalance and vision problems, all of which can contribute to the risk of falls.

Sultana says that preventing risks for many chronic diseases and age-related health conditions starts with maintaining a healthy weight.

"Having excess weight or being underweight can increase your fall risk," she explained. "Nutrition and a healthy lifestyle, including physical activity and proper hydration, may lower the risk and improve your quality of life."



MAKE THIS RECIPE?

Send us a photo! Send it to BHNMSupport@bannerhealth.com along with your name and email address.



Garlic, Sausage & Kale Naan Pizzas

- 3 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 3 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- 1/4 tsp. crushed red pepper, or to taste
- 12 oz. ground turkey, 93% lean
- 1 tsp. fennel seeds
- 1 tsp. paprika
- 1/4 tsp. kosher salt, divided
- 8 cups lightly packed prechopped kale or baby kale
- 1 tbsp. red-wine vinegar
- 2 8-inch whole-grain naan breads or whole-wheat pitas
- 3/4 cup mini mozzarella balls, such as mozzarella "pearls"

Position rack in upper third of oven; preheat broiler to high. Heat 2 tablespoons oil, garlic and crushed red pepper

in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. As soon as the garlic starts to sizzle, add turkey, fennel seeds, paprika and 1/8 teaspoon salt. Cook, breaking up the turkey with a wooden spoon, until it is almost cooked, 2 to 3 minutes. Add kale, vinegar and the remaining 1/8 teaspoon salt; cook, stirring, until the kale is wilted and the turkey is no longer pink, 2 to 3 minutes more. Remove from heat.

Place naan (or pitas) on a large baking sheet and brush with the remaining 1 tablespoon oil. Top with equal portions of the turkey mixture and mozzarella. Broil until the cheese is melted and the edges are starting to brown, 2 to 4 minutes. Cut in half.

Source: <https://www.eatingwell.com/recipe/251359/garlic-sausage-kale-naan-pizzas/>

Check your coverage before using a pharmacy discount program

By Julie Maurer

Medication costs can put a dent in your pocketbook—but sometimes programs that promise to save patients money on prescriptions may not be the best option. While pharmacies and manufacturers, and even companies like Amazon have started to offer discount plans for meds, checking your insurance coverage first is always the best option, according to Vi Pham, PharmD, MBA, Banner Health Population Health Clinical Pharmacist.

“These programs are wonderful for some patients, but not for all,” she said.

Pham noted that those without any coverage can find pharmacy discount programs and manufacturer coupons helpful. However, there are some people who are using them and actually losing money in the process.

“They are filling their prescriptions through discount programs and paying for them when their maintenance medications may be covered through their Medicare prescription drug plan with a \$0 copay (some for 90 and 100 days),” she said. “A lot of patients don’t realize that.”

According to Pham, this trend has become apparent when they reach out to patients or pharmacies because claims data show that their prescriptions have not been

filled on-time.

“When a doctor prescribes a medication for chronic conditions such as blood pressure, diabetes or high cholesterol, and the medication is processed through their Medicare prescription drug plan at some point, the plan’s system recognizes the medication as a necessary maintenance medication and tracks the fills,” Pham said.

She noted that when claims data shows that a prescription isn’t filled in a timely manner, her team researches why there was a break with the medication refill.

They have often found that the patient might not be aware that their insurance actually covers it. The end goal is just to make sure the patient is getting the best cost savings and taking their medication as prescribed.

“The key point is that they should review their benefit plan on an annual basis and take a look at their medications to see what is covered,” Pham said.

She noted that even for medications you have filled through discount programs in the past, patients should check. Pham gave an example of one patient who was paying for a medication per month for six months on their discount



plan, when it would have been free through their Medicare. The patient had changed prescription drug plans and didn’t realize that particular medication is covered on the current plan.

Patients can bring the annual benefits booklet (usually provided by their plan) that includes information on covered medications to the doctor so they can be prescribed the best covered therapy option. If manual booklets are not provided, the patient can contact their plan to request an electronic version or a weblink that contains that information.

Patients can also do their own research to see if their Medicare prescription drug plan or the discount program offers the bigger savings.

“Medicare prescription drug plans usually have a concierge number that a patient can call for further assistance, and there are online resources as well,” Pham said. “When in doubt, they can ask their pharmacist to compare rather than just going straight to the discount program.”

ACROSS

- 1. Influential American political family
- 5. ___ Chantilly, ___ de Menthe
- 11. Within
- 12. Pleasure seekers
- 16. Computer manufacturer
- 17. Home to college sports' Flyers
- 18. Fungal disease
- 19. Sleepwalk
- 24. Spielberg sci-fi film
- 25. Seasonable
- 26. Taxis
- 27. Radio direction finder (abbr.)
- 28. Thin, narrow piece of wood
- 29. "Mystic River" actor Sean
- 30. Ingenuous
- 31. Musical composition
- 33. Turkish surname
- 34. High or hilly area
- 38. Wilco frontman
- 39. Pour it on pasta
- 40. Electric car company
- 43. Sea eagle
- 44. Walk with difficulty
- 45. Sign of healing
- 49. Boy
- 50. Protein-rich liquid
- 51. Washington city
- 53. Individual portion of TV series (abbr.)
- 54. Thought over
- 56. Scads
- 58. News agency
- 59. Standard
- 60. Deadlock
- 63. Pre-Columbian empire
- 64. Removed
- 65. French commune

DOWN

- 1. Large, dangerous animals
- 2. Straighten out
- 3. Family tree
- 4. Large stinging paper wasp
- 5. European river fish

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60						61	62						63		
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- 6. Cut down in size
- 7. Denotes past
- 8. Larry and Curly's partner
- 9. Samoyedic ethnic group
- 10. Male parent
- 13. Specific gravity
- 14. Demeaned oneself to
- 15. Rigidly
- 20. Yankovic is a "weird" one
- 21. Belonging to me
- 22. Path
- 23. Airborne (abbr.)
- 27. Level
- 29. Atomic #94
- 30. Born of
- 31. Midway between northeast and east
- 32. Northeastern bank
- 33. Defunct airline
- 34. Having no purpose
- 35. A low wall
- 36. Swedish city
- 37. Earn a perfect score
- 38. Atomic #81
- 40. Beginner
- 41. Give off
- 42. Incorrect letters
- 44. Telecommunication service provider (abbr.)
- 45. Idyllic
- 46. Popular beer
- 47. A way to fine
- 48. Evildoer
- 50. More withered
- 51. Seventh note of a major scale
- 52. Commercial
- 54. Abnormal breathing
- 55. Moved more quickly
- 57. City of Angels
- 61. Partner to Pa
- 62. Equally

HEALTHY LIVING **CALENDAR**

Banner Alzheimer's Institute Classes

Classes and support groups are offered in-person and virtually. To register for a class, visit banner-health.com/Calendar; use keyword "BannerAlz" in the search field.

Back to Baseball - A Reminiscence Series- Virtual

Banner Health is proud to offer a new program focused on the game that has brought generations together. "Back to Baseball" is in partnership with the Society for American Baseball Research (SABR) and will celebrate decades of baseball memories for people with dementia and their care partner.

Those living with Alzheimer's

Date & time:
Wednesday, Apr. 12
Wednesday, May 10
11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
(MST) on Zoom



disease or related dementias more commonly experience short-term memory loss, though older memories can remain intact. Participants will be guided through reminiscent activities to help find the earlier memories and once again experience the joy of those moments.

Join us as we relive the best of America's pastime sport with your person with dementia, and together leave with new memories with others in your community.

Registration is FREE but required to obtain the ZOOM Login Information and phone number.

Beyond Memory Changes: Emotional Impact of Parkinson's - Virtual

While changes in movement are a prominent feature in the progression of Parkinson's disease, there are common emotional changes that may occur as well. Learning to better understand emotional can help you increase your awareness and limit frustration.

In order to participate in this event, you must have an internet connection, a

computer and/or a phone.

Date & time:
Wednesday, Apr. 26
10:30 - 11:30 a.m.
(MST) on Zoom

For life's potential emergencies

Have you ever wondered, is this an emergency? If you aren't sure, or you need a nurse's advice about where to get care, call us. We are here to help. 24 hours a day.

Banner Health Nurse On-Call: (602) 747-7990 or (888) 747-7990

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