

Exploring the World of Tacos: A Culinary Journey



October 4th is National Taco Day! Celebrate your love for tacos! Do you know there are other types of tacos that aren't made with ground beef? Try some of these different styles of tacos! Tacos are a beloved staple in Mexican cuisine, known for their versatility and deliciousness. From traditional recipes to modern twists, there's a taco for every palate. Let's dive into the different types of tacos that you can savor.



Tacos al Pastor

Originating from central Mexico, Tacos al Pastor are made with marinated pork, cooked on a vertical spit (similar to shawarma). The meat is typically seasoned with a blend of spices, pineapple, and achiote paste, giving it a unique flavor. These tacos are often garnished with onions, cilantro, and a slice of pineapple.

Tacos de Carnitas



Carnitas, meaning "little meats," are made from pork that is braised or simmered for several hours until tender. The meat is then shredded and often crisped up in a hot pan before being served in a taco. Common toppings include onions, cilantro, and a squeeze of lime.



Tacos de Barbacoa

Barbacoa refers to meat (usually beef, goat, or lamb) that is slow-cooked until it is incredibly tender. Traditionally, the meat is cooked in an underground pit, but modern methods often use a slow cooker or oven. These tacos are typically topped with onions, cilantro, and a variety of salsas.

Tacos de Pescado (Fish Tacos)



Fish tacos are a coastal favorite, especially in Baja California. They feature battered and fried fish, often topped with a creamy slaw, pico de gallo, and a drizzle of lime juice. Grilled fish can also be used for a lighter version.



Tacos de Camarones (Shrimp Tacos)

Shrimp tacos are another seafood delight, usually made with grilled or sautéed shrimp. They are often paired with fresh ingredients like avocado, cabbage, and a tangy sauce, making them a refreshing option.

Tacos de Asada



Carne Asada tacos are made with grilled beef, typically marinated in a mixture of citrus juices, garlic, and spices. The meat is sliced thin and served with simple toppings like onions, cilantro, and a squeeze of lime.

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Tacos de Lengua



For the adventurous eater, Tacos de Lengua (beef tongue) offer a unique texture and flavor. The tongue is braised until tender, then sliced and served with traditional toppings like onions and cilantro.



Vegetarian Tacos

Vegetarian tacos have gained popularity, offering a variety of fillings such as grilled vegetables, beans, and cheese. Popular options include roasted cauliflower, mushrooms, and even jackfruit, which mimics the texture of pulled pork.



Breakfast Tacos

A Tex-Mex favorite, breakfast tacos are filled with ingredients like scrambled eggs, bacon, sausage, and potatoes. They are often topped with cheese and salsa, making them a hearty way to start the day.

Tacos are a versatile and delicious way to enjoy a meal, whether you prefer traditional flavors or modern twists. Tacos can be a part of a renal friendly diet by limiting sources of phosphorus and potassium, such as using small amounts of cheese if any, limiting tomatoes and red salsa, limiting toppings such as refried beans, and making fresh tortillas, if able. Store bought tortillas can have added phosphorus. Please talk with your Registered Dietitian on how to best celebrate National Taco Day this October.

Kidney-Friendly Taco Seasoning

Ingredients:

- 1/4 cup chili powder
- 1 tablespoon ground cumin
- 1 tablespoon onion powder
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon crushed red pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon

Preparation:

1. Mix together all ingredients and store in an air-tight container.
2. Ground spices are good for one year and whole spices are good for two years.

About This Recipe:

Ditch the high sodium taco seasonings. Those packets can't compare with our equally flavorful no salt version. Use it to season taco meat, Mexican dishes or stirred into sour cream to make a low sodium dip.

Adapted from: <https://www.nwkidney.org/recipe/taco-seasoning/>





Fall Vaccines



As the weather begins to change and we move into autumn, we are reminded that it is time to revisit the topic of vaccines. Various vaccines provide protection against seasonal or ongoing risks to developing respiratory and blood-borne infections. Patients can look to their healthcare providers as trusted individuals who will recommend the right vaccines needed for them. This article will focus on vaccines used to protect against or reduce the effects of respiratory infections.

Qsource ESRD networks has created a new resource to help patients receiving dialysis stay up to date with vaccines that can help keep them healthy and stay out of the hospital as two goals to try to achieve. (See figure 1 to review the Qsource My Vaccine Plan.) Patients at DCL can talk with their dialysis healthcare team to learn more about vaccines. The DCL healthcare team will help you to achieve the goal of being as healthy as possible this fall and hopefully avoiding hospitalization if you become sick.

In October, DCL will begin offering the seasonal influenza (flu) vaccine. According to the CDC, all flu vaccines for this year (2024-2025) are planning to be the trivalent flu vaccine. This means the flu vaccine will be made to protect against three viruses (two A-influenza type viruses known as the H1N1 and H3N3, and a B-influenza type known as the Victoria virus). October is a good month to receive the flu vaccine. This timeframe is intended to provide coverage for as long as possible during more highly infectious months as seen in the fall, winter, and even into the spring.

There are updated COVID-19 vaccines available for 2024-2025 that continue to help protect against severe disease, hospitalization, and death. Staying up to date is especially important for those who are 65 years and older, are at higher risk for getting a severe COVID-19 infection (this includes people who have weakened immune systems (or are immunocompromised) and have complex medical conditions like people receiving dialysis), live in long-term care facilities, and/or want to lower the risk of getting long COVID.

The RSV vaccine is also recommended for those 65 years and older who are at risk of getting severe RSV, who have weakened immune systems, and have complex medical conditions like people receiving dialysis. The RSV vaccine is currently a single dose only. It is not given annually. If you have already received the RSV vaccine, then you do not need another dose. The RSV vaccine is not considered a seasonal vaccine like the flu vaccine.

The pneumococcal vaccine is given to reduce the risk of developing infections caused by the pneumococcal bacteria. In addition to pneumonia, other infections caused by the pneumococcal bacteria include ear and sinus infections, meningitis (infection in the tissues covering the brain and/or spinal cord), and bacteremia (an infection in the blood).

Talk with your healthcare provider to help you decide which vaccines you should receive and when you should receive them. Talk with your DCL healthcare team to decide on a date to receive the flu vaccine at DCL. Keep track of your vaccines you have received on the accompanying resources provided by Qsource (see Figure 1).



Resources:

CDC (2024, September 6): COVID-19: <https://www.cdc.gov/covid/vaccines/stay-up-to-date.html>

CDC (2024, March 14): Influenza (Flu): <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/season/faq-flu-season-2024-2025.htm>

CDC (2023, May 12): Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine: What You Need to Know: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/vis/vis-statements/pcv.pdf>

CDC (2024, July 3): Respiratory Syncytial Virus Infection (RSV): <https://www.cdc.gov/rsv/vaccines/older-adults.html>

Qsource (2024): Immunization Resource Guide: <https://qio.qsource.org/immunization-resource-guide/>