



North York Harvest Food Bank

Nutrition and Health Community Kitchen Program

Week #3- Pasta and more!

Participant Package

Key Messages

Key Message #1: Pasta is healthy!

Key Message #2: Try to choose whole-wheat or whole grain pasta, when possible



Frequently Asked Questions

What is the difference between enriched and whole wheat or whole grain pasta?

Enriched pasta is pasta made from enriched white flour. This means that vitamins and minerals that were lost during storage, transport or processing of the flour are added back in. In Canada, all white flour must be enriched with vitamins and iron. However, even though white flour has added vitamins and iron, it is still missing many of the nutrients and fibre that is found in whole grains. **Whole wheat pasta** is made from whole wheat flour, which is not considered a whole grain because it has had some parts of the wheat kernel taken out. **Whole grain pasta** is pasta made from whole grain flour - it contains all parts of the wheat kernel. Whole grains are considered the healthier choice because they are more nutritious - they have more fibre in them compared to enriched or whole wheat products.

What about the “Plus” pastas?

There are many pasta products on the market today, which can make choosing pasta confusing and time-consuming! However, this also means that there are so many great choices!

You might see “**high-protein**” or “**plus**” pasta made with added protein from legume flours. There are also other products that have added fibre. You might also see “white pasta with **added fibre**” on the package.

These types of pasta are great choices, but don’t be fooled by the “**vegetable**” pastas or the “tri-coloured” pastas - they often just add dried vegetable powder in very small amounts to add a natural colour to the pasta. These “vegetable” pastas are still healthy choices, but choosing pasta with added fibre or whole grain pasta most of the time is a better choice.

Is gluten-free pasta better for me?

Gluten is a protein found in wheat, barley and rye. Only people that have Celiac disease, a wheat allergy or gluten sensitivity need to avoid gluten. Some people that do not have gluten sensitivity find that gluten-free foods make them feel better, but most people do not need to avoid gluten. That means that pasta made from whole grain wheat flour is nutritious and good for you if you do not have a gluten allergy!

Does all pasta contain gluten?

No. Pastas are made from a variety of different flours for all taste buds and dietary needs. Most pasta is made from wheat, but there are also pastas made from rice, corn, quinoa flours that are all gluten free!

Recipes



Mac and “Squeese”

Adapted from EatRight Ontario

Yield: 2 servings

Using squash for its deep orange colour and sweet flavour makes this dish looks just like the traditional macaroni and cheese! Try it with sweet potatoes too for another nutritious option.



Equipment Needed:

- 2 large saucepans
- Strainer
- Cutting board
- Knife
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Hand mixer or potato masher
- Mixing spoon
- Serving spoon
- Forks and bowls for serving

Ingredients:

3/4 cup	Whole wheat macaroni
1 tablespoon	Butter or margarine
1 cup	Cubed and peeled butternut squash
1/4 cup	Milk
1/4 cup	Shredded Swiss cheese
1 tablespoon	Freshly grated Parmesan cheese

Directions:

1. In a saucepan of boiling water cook macaroni for about 8 minutes or until tender but firm. Drain and return to pot. Add butter and stir to coat.
2. Meanwhile, in another saucepan of water, bring squash to a boil for about 15 minutes or until very tender. Drain and return to pot. Add milk and garlic and using hand mixer or potato masher blend until smooth.
3. Add pasta to squash mixture.
4. Add Swiss and Parmesan cheeses and stir to coat.



One Pot Tuna & Broccoli Pasta

Adapted by the Dairy Farmers of Canada

Yield: 2 servings

This is truly a one-pot dish – you don't even need to drain the pasta. The pasta cooks in the milk and creates the sauce. With all four foods groups in one simple dish, you're set for dinner.



Equipment Needed:

- Large saucepot
- Cutting board
- Knife
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Can opener
- Mixing spoon
- Serving spoon
- Forks and bowls for serving

Ingredients:

1 ½ cups	1% or 2% milk
1 cup	water
1 ½ cups	uncooked whole wheat rotini or fusilli pasta
2 cups	chopped broccoli florets (1 large bunch)
1 cup	ricotta or cottage cheese
½ teaspoon	grated lemon zest
1 tablespoon	freshly squeezed lemon juice
1 can	water-packed flaked tuna, drained
	black pepper to taste

Directions:

1. In a large pot, heat 1 cup of the milk (save ½ cup for later) and water over medium heat until steaming. Stir in pasta. Cover, reduce heat to medium-low and simmer for 10 minutes, stirring once.
2. Add broccoli on top of pasta, cover and simmer for 5 minutes or until pasta is tender and broccoli is tender-crisp.
3. Stir cheese, lemon zest, lemon juice and pepper into pot until blended. Stir in enough of the remaining ½ cup of milk to moisten pasta to desired consistency. Gently stir in tuna, just until heated through.



Vietnamese Noodle Bowl

Yield: 2 servings

This noodle bowl is fun to make and delicious! It is versatile and very colourful and can be eaten all year round!



Equipment Needed:

- Small pot
- Baking sheet
- Knife
- Measuring cups and spoons

- Cutting board
- Mixing spoon
- Serving spoon
- Forks and bowls for serving

Ingredients:

Marinade for meat:

2 tablespoons	soy sauce
3	garlic cloves, chopped finely
1 tablespoon	ginger, grated
½ cup	peanut butter, crunchy
½ cup	hot water
	Sriracha or other hot sauce, to taste

Marinade for carrots:

1 teaspoon	sugar
1 tablespoon	vinegar (eg. white, apple cider)
½ cup	boiling water

For the bowl:

5 oz	beef or pork tenderloin, sliced in strips (or tofu for a vegetarian option)
1 cup	cucumber, julienned
1 cup	carrots, grated
1 cup	lettuce, shredded
2 tablespoons	mint, chopped
2 cups	rice noodles

Directions:

1. Make meat marinade by mixing all the ingredients of the marinade in a large bowl.
2. Add meat or tofu to marinade and let marinate while cutting up the vegetables.
3. Heat oven to 400°F.
4. Make marinade for carrots by adding all marinade ingredients together.
5. Add shredded carrots and marinate while preparing the rest.
6. While the oven is heating and the meat/tofu and carrots are marinating, julienne cucumber, shred the lettuce and chop the mint.
7. Put meat or tofu on baking sheet and bake for 10 minutes; flip and then bake again for 10 minutes, being careful that it doesn't burn.
8. Cook rice noodles as per package instructions.
9. Put it all together, starting with a bed of noodles, then all the other ingredients on top.

