

THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX

SEMI HOMEMADE SPAGHETTI SAUCE



Some of the easiest dishes to make can also hold the potential to be rich in nutrients. Recipes don't have to be just the sum of the ingredients. There are places to add or improve according to your tastes. Whether it be adding a teaspoon of cinnamon to cookies or two summer squashes to a stir fry.

Pasta, is a great example at the flexibility of, what many would consider a standard dish due to the ease and availability in the modern American diet. Pasta is used in baking, salads, and as its own meal. Red sauce, white sauce, or perhaps a lemon garlic. The combinations seem endless. So, in this pantry staple, you might find a familiar way to increase the number of servings of fruits and vegetables. Make your standard pasta dish while simultaneously cooking up whatever produce is in your refrigerator and the combination likely will not be at odds. To assist in achieving a half place of fruits and vegetables, add vegetables to the sauce, the bigger the variety the better the chances on meeting your optimal nutrition needs.

In looking to reduce the amount of sodium, people often turn toward fresh ingredients rather than packaged, center store items. This dish uses a combination of center store items and fresh ingredients, while giving you greater control and adding your favorite herbs and spices to compliment your palette. Processed food doesn't mean high sodium, oftentimes frozen vegetables, which are also processed foods, are lower in sodium and are frozen at the peak of freshness and nutrient rich. But, be sure to check the ingredients list our use our Dietitian Approved tag to guide you. Canned vegetable can have a good amount of sodium in them due to how they are processed, but there are many now on the shelves that do not. Just be sure to check.

Challenge yourself on recreating your favorite pasta dish but with twice the number of vegetables. Reflect on whether those additions added to the dish or increased the amount of time it took to make the meal in a meaningful way. What else could you add to improve the meal experience?

MACROS / SERVING SIZE:

Protein 28 g | Fat 13 g | Carbs 43 g

% CALORIES OF MACROS / SERVING SIZE:

Calories 381 | Protein 28 % | Fat 29 % | Carbs 43 %

NUTRIENT / SERVING SIZE:

Fiber 7 g | Sodium 571 mg | Sat. Fat 4 g

DIETITIAN TIP

Canned and frozen produce can be just as nutritious and, in some cases, more so than fresh produce. Just be sure you choose items that are low in sodium and have no added sugar or fat. Use our Dietitian Approved tag to guide you. Using a variety of canned, frozen, and fresh produce is a great strategy in help you consume adequate fruits and vegetables.

INGREDIENTS (Serves 4)

- ¾ lb. lean ground meat (beef, chicken or turkey)
- 12 oz. whole wheat or whole grain pasta
- 14.5 oz. can stewed tomatoes (no added salt, Italian-basil, garlic, oregano)
- 2 8 oz. cans of plain tomato sauce
- 1 small can of tomato paste
- ½ tsp. garlic powder
- 1 tsp. of dried Italian seasoning blend
- Grated Parmesan cheese
- Chopped fresh basil

DIRECTIONS:

1. Over medium heat, begin cooking the lean ground meat, stirring occasionally.
2. Begin cooking the whole wheat or whole grain pasta according to package directions.
3. While the pasta and ground meat are cooking, in another large sauce pan, pour the stewed tomatoes, tomato sauce, tomato paste, garlic powder, and dried Italian seasoning blend.
4. Over medium-high heat, mix the sauce well, while mashing the large pieces of tomatoes against the side of the pan. Let the sauce simmer for about 5 minutes, while stirring occasionally.
5. Drain the grease from the ground meat, and discard the grease. Carefully pour the ground meat into the sauce and mix well. Turn the heat to medium and cook for an additional 5 minutes until the flavor blends.
6. For each plate, serve ¼ of the drained pasta, topped with ¼ of the sauce, a sprinkle of grated parmesan cheese and chopped fresh basil (optional).
7. To make the meal complete, serve 4 - 6 oz. of vanilla Greek yogurt topped with a handful of your favorite berries or fresh sliced peaches.



"A LIST OF RECIPES ON [COMMISSARIES.COM/HEALTHY LIVING](https://www.commissaries.com/healthy-living) ALSO HAS NUTRITION EDUCATION"