

Food & Fitness



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Enjoy this “super low-fat” pasta soup recipe from the National Pasta Association. For more pasta recipes, check their Web site at: www.ilovepasta.org.

Source: National Pasta Association
www.ilovepasta.org



Pasta Fagiole

- 1 pound Ditalini or other small pasta shape (1)
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2 large green peppers, chopped
- 1 cup chopped onions
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 1 16-ounce can tomato puree
- 1 can water
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
- Dash of dried parsley
- 2 12-ounce cans white cannellini beans (2)

Prepare pasta according to package directions, drain. While pasta is cooking, heat oil in large saucepan. Add garlic, green pepper, onions and celery. Sauté until tender. Add tomato puree with 1 can of water, then add seasonings. Cook on low heat for 30 minutes. Add beans and stir. Add bean mixture to pasta. Mix well and serve.

COOK'S TIPS:

- 1) A small elbow macaroni might be one substitute for Ditalini.
- 2) If you can't locate cannellini beans, you might substitute Great Northern beans OR navy beans

Each Serving Provides: 380 Calories, 14 g Protein, 64 g Carbohydrates, 8 g Fat, 0 mg Cholesterol, 271 mg Sodium, 83 mcg Folate, Calories from Fat - 19%

How America Cooks Pasta

Results of a New Consumer Survey

October is National Pasta Month. Enjoy these tips from the National Pasta Association (www.ilovepasta.org) to help you cook the perfect pasta. Many people are worried about calories in pasta. However, one cup cooked spaghetti (about the size of a baseball) only provides around 200 calories, has less than one gram of total fat, no cholesterol and only one gram of sodium when cooked without salt.

When it comes to cooking pasta, Americans are rinsers, salters and tasters, according to a new consumer survey conducted for National Pasta Month (October) on behalf of the National Pasta Association (NPA). “We regularly receive questions from consumers about how to correctly cook pasta so we thought it would be fun to find out how America really cooks one of its favorite foods,” commented NPA Chairman Dale Schulz.

Over 600 adults in the United States were interviewed by telephone by Express, TNS Intersearch's Omnibus.

Getting Ready to Cook

When it comes to cooking pasta, slightly more than one-half (58%) of those surveyed reported following the package directions. “This is important,” observed culinary expert Leslie Beal Bloom, author of the new cookbook, *Seafood Cooking for Dummies*, because the same pasta shapes can vary in thickness and size between manufacturers. Furthermore, each manufacturer tests his own products, so you've got accurate times and information right there.”

“Pasta is one of the easiest foods to cook,” she added. “By

following some simple guidelines, you can ensure perfect pasta every time whether you're cooking a romantic dinner for two, or a welcoming casserole large enough for a group of friends.”

“Cooking pasta in plenty of water is one key to ensuring perfect results,” Bloom said. The vast majority of survey respondents — 74% — did report using a 4–6 quart capacity cooking pot or larger. “If you're using a big enough pot, there's a good chance that you're also using enough water,” she commented. “Pasta really has to be able to swim so be sure you use 4–6 quarts of water for every pound of dry pasta.”

Turn Up the Heat

“Another secret to perfect pasta is the cooking temperature—keep the pot at full boil the entire time the pasta is cooking,” noted Bloom. In the survey, seven out of 10 respondents (68%) reported setting the stove temperature control or burner at medium high or high when cooking the pasta, and 70.6 % said they left the pot uncovered. “This is great,” said Bloom. “What is key,” she stressed, “is that the pasta **should not** be simmered; it needs to be kept at a full boil throughout the cook-

ing process.”

To avoid a sticky finished product, Bloom advises bringing the water to a full, rolling boil and then adding the pasta gradually to maintain the boil as much as possible. Begin timing once all the pasta has been added and the water has returned to a rapid, full boil. Keep the pot uncovered, she added, to prevent your pasta from boiling over.

To Salt or Not to Salt

When cooking pasta, three out of five respondents (61%) said they added salt to the water. “Adding salt to the cooking water definitely adds flavor to the finished product,” observed Bloom. She recommends using one tablespoon for each pound of pasta. However, adding salt is optional since sodium intake may be a health consideration for some people.

If It Sticks to the Wall It's Done, Right?

While survey respondents reported several different ways to tell when the pasta is done, more than one-half (53%) said they taste or bite the pasta. Other popular methods were timing it according to package directions (14%), knowing by instinct or habit (12%), and pinching it (9%). “The old story of throwing pasta on the wall to see if it's done is fun but it's just that — an old story,” said Bloom. “I recommend using a long-handled fork or spoon to pull out a few strands or pieces

see PASTA on page 11

10 Steps for Parents

Make Physical Activity Easy

Basic Trick-or-Treat Safety Rules

Want your little spooks to have a good Halloween experience? If you're not throwing a Halloween party for your kids at home, here's some advice from food safety and child development experts on basic trick-or-treat safety rules:



Young children should always go trick-or-treating with an adult.



Children of any age should never trick-or-treat alone; they should have at least two buddies with them.



Stay in familiar neighborhoods. Trick-or-treaters should plan their route before leaving home and tell an adult what the route is. Adults should set a curfew. Send a cell phone along with older ghouls and goblins who go out by themselves. Make sure the battery is charged and make sure an adult is available if trick-or-treaters need to call home.



Trick-or-treaters should wait until they get home and their parents can check their candy before they indulge.

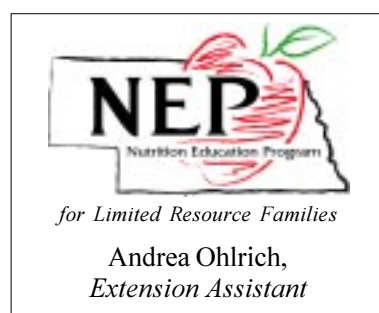


Adults going with trick-or-treaters should clearly point out a meeting place in case they get separated. Tell the child where you'll be — will you walk with them to each door or wait on the sidewalk in front of each home?



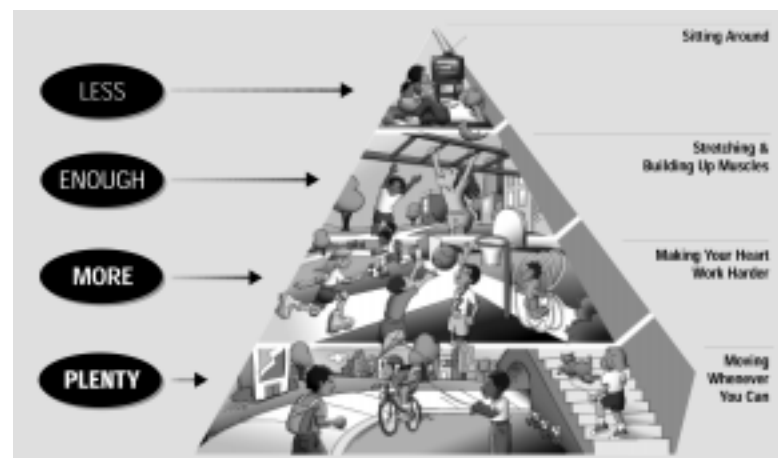
Discard homemade treats.

Source: Adapted from information provided by Colorado State University Cooperative Extension. (AH)



Children can have fun and improve their health by being physically active every day. Children should aim to get at least 60 minutes of moderate physical activity on most days. Parents can help:

1. **Create safe places.** Watch over children's activities.
2. **Set a good example.** Be active with your children.
3. **Promote physical activity.** Encourage children to be physically active at home, at school and with friends.
4. **Limit sitting-around time.** Alternate time spent sitting with time spent moving.



5. **Establish a routine.** Set aside time each day as activity time.

6. **Coach a team.** Encourage children to participate in neighborhood sports.

7. **Set up a home gym.** Get children involved in creating a gym using household items. Canned foods make good weights.

8. **Try aerobic activities.** Check children's heart rates before, during and after activities to see how hard they are working.

9. **Throw an activity party.** Make your child's birthday party activity-centered.

10. **Work with your school.** Be sure your school offers physical activity time for all students.

What is the right level of activity? If you can talk without being breathless, you're okay. If you can sing, you're not moving enough.

Source: Team Nutrition, Food and Nutrition Service, United States Department of Agriculture