



Pasta, Macaroni, Whole Grain

MyPlate Food Group: **Grains**



Nutrition Information

- ½ cup cooked whole grain macaroni pasta counts as 1 ounce of grain in the ChooseMyPlate.gov Grains group. Whole grain macaroni pasta is a whole grain.
- Grains are divided into 2 subgroups: Whole Grains and Refined Grains.
- Refined grains have been milled, a process that removes the bran and germ. This process also removes dietary fiber, iron, and many B vitamins.
- Most refined grains are enriched. This means certain B vitamins (thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, folic acid) and iron are added back after processing. Fiber is not added back to enriched grains.
- Whole grains contain the entire grain kernel — the bran, germ, and endosperm. Examples of whole grains include whole-wheat flour, bulgur (cracked wheat), oatmeal, whole cornmeal, and brown rice.
- For specific information about whole grain macaroni pasta, please refer to the product’s Nutrition Facts Panel or ingredient list.

Uses and Tips

- Whole grain pasta tastes great in hearty, flavorful pasta dishes, soups, casseroles, and salads.
- Try using whole grain macaroni when making macaroni and cheese.
- When cooking pasta, use 2 quarts of water for every ½ pound of pasta.

Storing Foods at Home

- Store unopened packages of pasta in a cool, clean, dry place.
- After opening pasta, keep package tightly closed.
- Once prepared, store any leftover pasta in the refrigerator in a sealed container not made from metal.

MyPlate Facts

- Try to make at least ½ of the grains you eat each day whole grains.
- Grains are important sources of many nutrients, including dietary fiber, B vitamins (thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, and folate), and minerals (iron, magnesium, and selenium).
- Dietary fiber from whole grains or other foods, may help reduce blood cholesterol levels and may lower risk of heart disease, obesity, and type 2 diabetes.
- Fiber is important for proper bowel function. It helps reduce constipation and promotes regularity. Fiber-containing foods such as whole grains help provide a feeling of fullness with fewer calories.



USDA Foods

Pasta Salad with Greens and Beans

Makes 8 servings

Ingredients:

8 ounces whole grain macaroni pasta
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
3 cloves minced garlic or $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon garlic powder
10 ounces frozen spinach
1 can (15 ounces) diced tomatoes with juice
1 can (15 ounces) white beans, drained and rinsed
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon pepper
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Parmesan cheese, grated

Directions: Wash hands with soap and water.

1. Cook pasta according to package directions. Set aside.
2. Meanwhile, heat oil in large skillet. Add garlic and cook on low until soft.
3. Add spinach, tomatoes with juice, drained beans, salt, and pepper. Once the mixture bubbles, cook uncovered on low heat for 5 minutes.
4. Add drained pasta and parmesan to spinach mixture. Toss well and serve.

Recipe adapted from Oregon State University Extension

Spinach Pasta Bake

Makes 9 servings

Ingredients:

2 cups whole grain macaroni pasta
1 pound lean ground beef
1 large onion, chopped
1 large carrot, shredded
1 teaspoon black pepper
 $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons dried basil
1 teaspoon garlic powder
1 teaspoon dried oregano
1 can (14 ounces) Italian diced tomatoes, drained
10 ounces fresh spinach, chopped
1 cup mozzarella cheese, low-fat, shredded

Directions: Wash hands with soap and water.

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
2. Cook pasta according to package directions. Drain and cover to keep warm.
3. In a large skillet over medium heat, cook the beef and onions until beef is no longer pink. Drain.
4. Return beef to skillet. Add carrots and spices and cook an additional two minutes.
5. Stir in tomatoes. Reduce heat to low. Cover and simmer 10 minutes.
6. Add pasta and spinach and mix well. Cover and cook an additional 3 minutes or until spinach is wilted.
7. Pour into greased 3-quart baking dish. Sprinkle with mozzarella cheese. Bake, uncovered for 10 minutes.

Recipe adapted from University of Kentucky, Family & Consumer Sciences Extension