



## News You Can Use

Nutrition Education  
with Seniors

December 2019

# National Stress-Free Family Holidays Month!

December can be a month of joy and fun with family and friends, but it can be stressful too. Some stress can be expected but, over a long period stress can increase our risk of health disease, diabetes, depression and other health problems.

Everyone responds to stress differently. For example, some people may overeat while others may stop eating. Doing so can increase nutritional risk which can lead to poorer health and possibly the loss of independence.

### Tips for emotional eating/restriction:

- Plan meals or snacks to ensure you are eating enough.
- Choose healthier options and/or portion out food to reduce chances of overeating.
- Practice mindful eating. Mindful eating means paying attention to your emotions and hunger cues throughout your eating experience.
- Reduce stress/negative emotions through other ways like, exercising!

Adapted from: <http://extension.msstate.edu/publications/information-sheets/stress-and-emotional-eating> and <https://www.njseniorcare.com/resource-library/december-stress-free-holidays/>



## Simple, Savory Spaghetti

### Selection:

- Choose boxes without cuts, or tears which could mean the spaghetti are unsafe to eat.
- Check the “Best by” or “Best if used by” date on the box.

### Storage:

- Store unopened boxes in a cool, clean, dry place.
- After opening, keep the packages of **spaghetti** tightly closed and refer to “Best if used by” or “Best by” date.

### Nutrition:

- 1/2 cup of **spaghetti**:
- Provides 110 calories and 4 grams of protein.
- Counts as one ounce equivalent from the MyPlate grains group.

### Uses:

- Top **spaghetti** with various sauces or use in casseroles, soups, or salads.
- Combine spaghetti with marinara and meat sauce, a glass of milk and a side of grapes for a complete MyPlate meal.

# Overcoming Date labeling Confusion

Knowing what the date on your food means can help reduce food waste and save money!

## Date labeling phrases:

<b>Best if used by or before</b>	When product will have the best flavor or quality for consumption, NOT safety.
<b>Sell-by</b>	How long to display product for inventory management, NOT safety
<b>Use-by</b>	Last date for peak quality, NOT safety, except infant formula.
<b>Freeze-by</b>	When product should be frozen to maintain peak quality, NOT safety.

## Tips for food safety/storage:

- Write date food was opened/storage
- Keep chart of spoil times on fridge

### USEFUL TOOLS FOR STORAGE DATES:

**USDA Food Keeper** App for storage dates for various food products

Stilltasty website: <https://www.stilltasty.com/>

Adapted from USDA Food Safety & Inspection Service: Food Product Labeling.

## Quick Pad Thai

Serves: 6 (great for leftovers-keeps for 4 days)| Serving Size: 1 ¼ cup

### INGREDIENTS

6 oz whole wheat thin spaghetti  
2 tbsp oil, divided  
24 oz frozen vegetable mix  
3 tbsp light soy sauce  
¼ c water  
¼ c peanut butter  
2 tbsp sugar  
½ lb (8 oz) boneless, skinless chicken breast (cut to bite size)  
3 eggs  
1/3 c peanuts, chopped

### INSTRUCTIONS AND TIPS

1. Cook spaghetti, drain and toss in 1 tbsp of oil, while defrosting veggies in microwave for 5 minutes.
2. Combine soy sauce, water, peanut butter, and sugar in a small bowl. Stir until smooth. Set aside.
3. Heat 1 tbsp of oil in large skillet over medium heat. Add chicken pieces. Cook until no longer pink (can use canned chicken instead of fresh).
4. Crack eggs into a bowl and beat. Add to skillet with chicken. Scramble. Add veggies and spaghetti. Stir to heat through.
5. Add the soy mixture to skillet. Stir to coat.
6. Place in serving bowl and sprinkle peanuts on top.

Nutritional analysis (1 ¼ cup): 430 calories, 17g fat, 3g saturated, 0g trans, 440mg sodium, 47g carbohydrates, 8g fiber, 10g sugar, 24g protein. This recipe is adapted from *Spend Smart. Eat Smart.*

<https://spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu/recipe/quick-pad-thai/>

## Reducing Food Waste

Did you know that **40%** of the food supply is wasted annually? The National Food Waste Reduction Goal is to decrease food waste by 50% by 2030. You can reduce food waste with these tips.

- Plan ahead for grocery store with set meal ideas.
- Use the oldest food first (First in, First out!).
- Share leftovers
- Know date labels!!

Adapted from:

<https://www.fda.gov/food/consurers/food-waste-and-loss>

## Helpful Resources

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## Nutrition, Food Preparation and Food Safety

ISU AnswerLine  
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