



News You Can Use

Nutrition Education
with Seniors

August 2021

What is Gluten?

Gluten is found in foods that contain wheat, rye, or barley. It is the protein that helps give bread products their structure.

Common gluten-containing food items include: breads, baked goods, soups, pastas, cereals, sauces, salad dressings, gravy, food coloring, beer, and oats.



Gluten is a hot nutrition topic. Gluten is often blamed for a wide arrange of health problems; however, this false. Gluten-free diets are only recommended for those diagnosed with celiac disease, which is a serious gluten allergy. Celiac disease affects 1% of the Western population. With so many gluten myths floating around, we talk about a couple below.

Gluten-Free Diet: Myth versus Fact

MYTH: A gluten-free diet is healthier.

FACT: The presence or absence of gluten isn't related to diet quality. Overall food choices (whether they include gluten or not) within the diet is more important.

MYTH: A gluten-free diet is good for weight loss.

FACT: Whether or not a diet helps you lose weight is not related to the presence or absence of gluten. For example, a gluten-free diet could be filled with fruits and vegetables (which are generally less calorie dense) or could have many processed gluten-free foods that are high in fat and sugar.

Bottom line if you want to stay healthy, choose a MyPlate friendly meal plan (<https://www.myplate.gov/>) and aim for 150 minutes of physical activity weekly.

Adapted from: <https://celiac.org/gluten-free-living/what-is-gluten/> and <https://gluten.org/2019/12/16/the-gluten-free-diet-facts-and-myths/>



Spaghetti

Selection:

- Choose boxes without obvious damage; this could mean the **spaghetti** is unsafe to eat.
- Check the "Best by" or "Best if used by" date on the container.

Storage:

- Store **dry spaghetti** in a cool, clean, and dry place before opening.
- Once opened, place **dry spaghetti** in an airtight container and store in refrigerator for up to 3 to 4 days.
- Cooked **spaghetti** should be kept in an airtight container in the refrigerator for 3-4 days.

Nutrition:

- Counts as 1 1/2 ounces grains

Uses:

- Top with meat sauce for added vegetables and protein
- Make a tasty pasta salad with vegetables and legumes
- Look for "whole wheat" pasta to add additional fiber to your diet.

Food Keeper App to Reduce Food Waste

The USDA has a website and app to help you lower food waste, the FoodKeeper.

It provides helpful information about when a particular food item should be used to help reduce the risk of food borne illness and help you limit food waste!

- Look up the grocery item on the website and see how long that item can be stored unopened. This comes in handy when the “best by” or “best if used by” date on the package is hard to read.
- Date the item on the day you bought it and keep a list of when you should throw it away. Use the FoodKeeper App to help! Remember, when in doubt, throw it out. Not all food bacteria will cause an odor.

Adapted from: <https://www.foodsafety.gov/keep-food-safe/foodkeeper-app>

The FoodKeeper tells you how long food should be kept in the pantry, fridge, and/or freezer. And it even tells you how long things can be kept after they're opened!

<https://www.foodsafety.gov/keep-food-safe/foodkeeper-app>

Free recipe website

Do you feel like you have plenty of groceries, but not sure what you can make with them?

MyFridgeFood.com is a free website that provides recipes that use the groceries you have at home!

Just click the food items you have, scroll to the bottom and select “Find Recipes”

Helpful Resources

PREPARED BY

Chandler Kendall
Diet & Exercise Graduate Student;
Iowa State University (ISU), Dept.
Food Science & Human Nutrition
ckendal@iastate.edu

ASSISTED BY

Sarah L. Francis, PhD, MHS, RD
ISU Associate Professor & Human
Sciences Extension and Outreach
State Specialist, Nutrition and
Wellness; slfranci@iastate.edu

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach does not discriminate on the basis of age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, genetic information, marital status, national origin, pregnancy, race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or status as a U.S. veteran, or other protected classes. Direct inquiries to the Diversity Advisor, 515-294-1482, extdiversity@iastate.edu.

Pasta Salad

Serves: 6 | Serving Size: 1 cup

INGREDIENTS

4 cups pasta, cooked
1 cucumber, chopped
1 tomato, chopped
1/2 bell pepper, chopped
1/2 red onion, chopped
1/3 cup reduced fat Italian dressing

INSTRUCTIONS AND TIPS

1. Combine all ingredients in a large bowl. Mix well.
2. Cover and refrigerate.
3. Toss before serving

Tips

- Wash hands before chopping vegetables
- Use any shape of pasta you would like. Start with 2 cups uncooked to get 4 cups cooked.

Storage

Refrigerate for up to 4 days.

Nutritional analysis (1 cup): 170 calories, 2g fat, 0g saturated, 125mg sodium, 31g carbohydrates, 2g fiber, 4g sugar, 5g protein.

This recipe is adapted from <https://spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu/recipe/pasta-salad>