



# News You Can Use

Nutrition Education  
with Seniors

May 2022

## Get the Most Bang for Your Nutritional Buck

Getting the proper nutrients in our diet is important for health. The key is to pick foods that are packed with vitamins and minerals but not a lot of extra fats, sugar, or sodium.

Aim to eat more fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins.



It can be stressful to think about how to make changes to your diet. Remember, small changes add up to big health benefits. Here are some ideas to help you get moving in the right direction.

### Make the Switch

INSTEAD OF...	TRY...
Butter	Olive oil
Fried chicken	Oven fried chicken
Milk shake	Fruit smoothie
Potato chips	Air popped popcorn
Refined grain foods	Whole wheat or whole grain foods
Soda pop	Sugar free/diet pop or sparkling water

Adapted from: <https://health.gov/our-work/food-nutrition/2015-2020-dietary-guidelines/guidelines/chapter-1/a-closer-look-inside-healthy-eating-patterns/#food-groups>



### Whole Wheat Pasta

#### Selection:

- Choose boxes or packages without obvious damage. This could mean the **pasta** is unsafe to eat.
- Check the “Best by” or “Best if used by” date on the package.
- Look for “whole wheat” on the package.

#### Storage:

- Store unopened boxes of **whole wheat pasta** in a cool, clean, and dry place.
- Once cooked, place **pasta** in an airtight container and store in refrigerator for up to 4 days.

#### Nutrition:

1/2 cup cooked **whole wheat pasta**

- Counts as 1 ounce equivalent of grains in MyPlate
- Provides 3g of fiber

#### Uses:

- Make a MyPlate friendly pasta salad with **whole wheat pasta**, chopped vegetables, diced tomatoes, your favorite lean protein, and light salad dressing.

# Food Safety in 4 Simple Steps

Spoiled food is not always obvious. Food that looks, smells, or tastes normal may contain bacteria or viruses that can make you sick. Follow these four simple steps to make sure your food is safe to eat!

## Step 1: Clean

- Wash your hands and prep surfaces often.
- Wash and sanitize cutting boards and countertops.
- Wash produce.

## Step 2: Separate

- Prevent cross contamination by separating raw meat, poultry, fish, etc. from other foods in shopping carts, grocery bags, and refrigerator.
- Place raw meats at the bottom of the refrigerator so their juices don't drip on other foods.
- Never place cooked food on the same plate or cutting board that held raw meat, poultry, fish, etc.

## Step 3: Cook to safe temperatures

- Use a food thermometer to measure internal temperature of cooked foods
- Bring sauces, soups, and gravy to a boil when reheating. Reheat other leftovers to 165°F.

## Step 4: Chill

- Refrigerate or freeze meat, poultry, and other perishables within two hours of cooking or purchasing.

Adapted from: <https://www.fda.gov/media/83744/download>

## Pasta Salad

Serves: 6 | Serving Size: 1 cup

### INGREDIENTS

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

### INSTRUCTIONS AND TIPS

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

**Tips:** Try adding seasonal vegetable (e.g., asparagus, zucchini). Start with 2 cups of uncooked pasta to get 4 cups cooked.

**Storage:** Keep in an airtight container for up to 4 days.

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

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

## Cook to Perfection

It is important to cook meats to the proper cooking temperature. This lowers the risk for foodborne illness.

Make sure your food is cooked to the internal temperatures listed below.

**Ground Beef:** 160°F

**Ground Poultry:** 165°F

**Poultry:** 165°F

**Seafood:** Cook until opaque. ~145°F

**Leftovers:** 165°F

## Helpful Resources

ISU Extension and Outreach AnswerLine  
1-800-262-3804

### PREPARED BY

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

### ASSISTED BY

Sarah L. Francis, PhD, MHS, RD  
ISU Associate Professor & Human  
Sciences Extension and Outreach  
State Specialist, Nutrition and  
Wellness; [sfranci@iastate.edu](mailto:sfranci@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](mailto:extdiversity@iastate.edu).