



SOUTH CAROLINA FAMILY AND COMMUNITY LEADERS

Affiliated with National Volunteer Outreach Network, Country Women's Council, U.S.A., Associated Country Women of the World and in partnership with Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service
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Leader Training Guide

Revising Your Recipes for Health And How to Make Your Spaghetti Extra Nutritious!

Objectives:

- 1) Recognize the importance fruit and vegetable consumption plays in health status - attaining and maintaining a healthy weight, chronic disease prevention, disease management, and quality of life.
- 2) Suggest ways to increase fruit and vegetables in their favorite recipes, dishes, meals and menus.

Lesson Overview/Introduction:

Fruit and vegetables eaten in place of other, higher calorie foods, has been shown to reduce the risk for stroke, developing heart disease, and some cancers, and plays a role in body weight (1). Adults who engage in less than 30 minutes of moderate physical activity daily should consume 1.5–2.0 cup equivalents of fruit and 2–3 cups of vegetables daily. During 2007–2010, half of the total U.S. population consumed <1 cup of fruit and less than 1.5 cups of vegetables daily; 76% did not meet fruit intake recommendations, and 87% did not meet vegetable intake recommendations (2). Although national estimates indicate low fruit and vegetable consumption, substantial variation by state has been observed (3).

After many years practicing as a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (R.D.N.) working with people of all ages and from all walks of life, I teach sticking to basics. I recommend making simple adjustments to your favorite dishes, recipes and meals you already eat. The popular cooking shows are fun to watch. Cooking magazines and blogs are fun to read, and have introduced us to foods and spices from around the world. (It's almost infinite the different ways they flavor chicken!) So many cooking styles and ideas! Feel free to try different foods and styles of preparation if you dare!

For many of us, however, while we love watching chefs on TV, how often do we prepare these recipes for our families? Most of us fall back to our old favorites – macaroni and cheese, potato salad, beef stew, soup, fried chicken, broccoli casserole, spaghetti, etc. These are just a few, but you know what I mean.... we southerners have our favorite dishes and we tend to stick with what we know and what we like! So, consider your old favorites - apply a little creativity to make some simple adjustments. As the cliché goes, "think out of the box".

Lesson:

Let's take spaghetti – everybody (almost) makes and/or eats it. Yes, we'll start with the tiring but often needed recommendations for lowering the fat, sodium and calorie content. It's so EASY to decrease these! Start with the meat and use these suggestion:

- Choose from ground turkey breast or chicken breast, use extra-lean ground beef, try venison, simply decrease the amount of meat in your recipe – let the sauce be the heart of your meal. Consider chopped chicken breast or fish.
- Try meatless – tofu and legumes (black beans, chick peas, navy beans, even pintos, etc.) for protein.
- If you prefer beef and the extra-lean is too expensive, decrease the fat by simply browning the meat, drain the fat, and rinse it with hot water. Return it to the pot for seasoning.
- As for sodium, you can skip **added** salt all together or add less than you typically would.
- If you use canned foods, buy the low- or no sodium paste, sauce, canned tomatoes, etc. And rinse those canned vegetables where applicable; obviously you can't rinse the sauce or paste, but you can rinse the diced tomatoes, mushrooms, etc.

Now, let's talk business about recipe 'modification'. If you're really trying to eat a healthy diet, you might enjoy hearing that there are many foods that you may need to increase! "What?" you may say! So many folks in the U.S. are consuming far less than the recommendations for fruits, vegetables, and fiber. Interestingly, many report 'liking' fruits and vegetables, but are they really consuming enough on a daily basis?

I believe many of our tried and true recipes and dishes can be 'modified' to increase the vegetables, fiber, and fruits. Back to spaghetti – increase fiber by using whole grain pasta and increase the amount of veggies in your sauce.

How can you increase the vegetables in your spaghetti? You could always add more tomatoes, mushrooms, bell peppers, sautéed onions and garlic... the typical 'spaghetti-ingredients', and you could have a spinach salad on the side. This is fine.

I recommend 'thinking out of the box' – get creative. Consider adding: beans (black, white, navy, Great Northern), spaghetti squash, chopped fresh cauliflower or broccoli, shredded or pureed carrots, spinach (fresh, frozen, or canned), eggplant, zucchini, etc. A few more ideas shared with me by folks: add apple slices or mandarin oranges, add nuts (great protein source), cinnamon for 'sweetening'.

Finally, for flavor, salt is just one way to flavor food. For some folks, a small amount can be consumed in a healthy diet, and may enhance the flavor of your spaghetti sauce and your other recipes. However, there are multitudes of ways to

flavor food. Sauté your fresh onions and garlic in olive oil before adding to your sauce. Use any of the following to add flavor: freshly ground black pepper, white pepper, red pepper, a dash of pepper sauce (i.e. Tabasco ®), onion powder and garlic powder (not salt), cumin, sage, poultry seasoning, Italian seasoning, fresh or dried bay leaf, oregano, mint. Try using fresh herbs in place of dried; the flavor of fresh herbs are described as being more 'delicate' (make sure to double or triple the amount of fresh herbs to the amount of dried).

Very important to understand - no matter how lean your spaghetti is or how many veggies you include in it (or any other recipe) **portion size** is a key factor in how your diet effects your health status. Today's portions and those of the past are very different. See the picture below from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) (4). Too many calories contribute to weight gain. 'Over-weight' and obesity are risk factors – or important contributors – toward the development and the subsequent management of several chronic diseases - heart disease, hypertension, stroke, diabetes, and some cancers. Additionally, being over-weight or obese has other effects on your body that can make daily life (more) difficult – getting adequate sleep, arthritis, managing pain, simply aging, etc.



Lesson Summary:

In conclusion, I understand you may not want to change your spaghetti recipe. Maybe you have it down to a science and your family thinks it's just too good to be true. My objectives are:

- 1) To teach folks the important role that fruits, vegetables, and whole grains play in lifestyle and chronic disease prevention, disease maintenance, and attaining and maintaining a healthy weight. Each vegetable, fruit and whole grain is unique and is made up of different vitamins, minerals, anti-oxidants, and amounts of

fiber. Consuming a variety of fruits, vegetables and whole grains as a part of your overall diet is the best way to do it.

- 2) To give examples of how folks can increase fruits and vegetables in their recipes and meals. Consider your kitchen – how can you ‘modify’ your favorite dishes, recipes, meals and menus to increase your servings of fruits and vegetables?

It’s really not difficult at all – a little thought and planning will help. But, you gotta take action – thinking about it won’t improve your health. Just try; one recipe at a time!

*** Please always consider your individual health status - your doctor’s orders, special or therapeutic diets and/or restrictions, etc. as you make dietary and lifestyle changes.*

Suggested Activities:

* Prepare the Spaghetti All In-One Dish recipe –

- 1) Add 2 vegetables or fruits (or 1 of each)
- 2) Use low-sodium seasoning alternatives you would not typically add to your spaghetti recipe and have members taste.

Please be willing to try something different! Remember, what goes on in your club meetings, stays in your club meetings! (some ideas: cauliflower, turnips, rutabagas, carrots, spinach, beans, etc., are just some examples).

* Use an easel pad or piece of poster paper, placed where members can see it. Have each member share a favorite recipe they prepare and discuss ways they can ‘modify’ their recipes to not only decrease sodium, fat, sugar, calories, but to increase nutrients. Have a member use a marker to record each recipe with the suggestions offered.

Suggested Materials:

Large piece of paper or poster board and a marker, and utensils / ingredients for Spaghetti All In-One Dish recipe.

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Sources/References:

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https://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015/resources/2015-2020_Dietary_Guidelines.pdf
- 2) National Cancer Institute. Usual dietary intakes: food intakes, US population, 2007–10. Available at
<http://appliedresearch.cancer.gov/diet/usualintakes/pop/2007-10>.
- 3) Grimm KA, Blanck HM, Scanlon KS, Moore L, Grummer-Strawn LM, Foltz JL. State-specific trends in fruit and vegetable consumption among adults—United States, 2000–2009. MMWR Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report 2010;59:1125–30.
- 4) National Institutes of Health
<http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/educational/wecan/portion/menuview.htm>
- 5) Produce for Better Health Foundation - www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org.

Spaghetti All-In-One Dish

Ingredients:

- 1 # lean ground meat (i.e. turkey breast, chicken breast, extra lean ground beef)
- 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ C hot water
- 1 can (6 ounces) tomato paste (low-sodium if available)
- 5 ounces of whole wheat spaghetti (break into 3 in. to 4 in. pieces)
- 1 tablespoon of dried onion
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon Italian seasoning
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon garlic powder
- Optional ingredient – $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon Parmesan cheese (low-fat, low-sodium)

Directions:

Brown ground meat in a skillet. Add hot water, tomato paste and spaghetti to the meat in the skillet. Stir together and add spices. Cover and bring to a boil 10-12 minutes. Stir frequently. Cook 12-14 minutes more or until spaghetti is tender. Serve while hot. (grated lean cheese optional).

Makes 4-6 Servings