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NUTRITION NEWS

A FRESH PERSPECTIVE ON HEALTH AND WELLNESS

K-12
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BeWell



**Slow-Cooker
Minestrone Soup**
Servings: 10

Ingredients

6 cups vegetable broth
28-ounce can diced tomatoes
15-ounce can cannellini beans,
drained and rinsed
15-ounce can kidney beans, drained
and rinsed
2 cups frozen green beans
4 medium carrots, chopped
1 medium zucchini, chopped
1 stalk celery, chopped
1 medium onion, chopped
2 tablespoons dried Italian seasoning
1 bay leaf
4 garlic cloves, minced
1 teaspoon salt
¾ teaspoon pepper
1 cup cooked (or 2 ounces of dry)
whole-grain elbow pasta
2 cups fresh baby spinach
Garnish: 1½ cups freshly grated
Parmesan cheese (optional)

Directions

Combine ingredients, except pasta and baby spinach, in a 6- or 7-quart slow cooker. Cover and cook on low for 7 to 8 hours. Increase heat to high. Stir in pasta and spinach. Cover and cook 15 minutes or until pasta is done. Remove bay leaf before serving. Sprinkle each serving with 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese, if desired.

Nutrition Facts: Serving Size: 1 ½ cups | Calories: 134 | Calories from Fat: 0 | Total Fat: 0g | Saturated Fat: 0g | Trans Fat: 0g | Cholesterol: 0mg | Sodium: 860mg | Total Carb: 26g | Fiber: 7g | Sugars: n/a | Protein: 6g | Eatright.org

Macronutrient Focus

Nutrition is all about how the food we consume affects the health of our body. Food is essential as it provides us with the nutrients we need for our bodies to function properly, stay healthy, and ultimately survive. Food is made up of macronutrients and micronutrients, all which help to fuel our bodies. Furthermore, each nutrient also has important specific roles in maintaining our overall health. Let's take the time to review the 3 main macronutrients below that make up the food that we eat every day.

Carbohydrates

Carbohydrate's main role is to provide energy and fuel to our bodies. It is comparable to the same way gasoline fuels a car; you wouldn't be able to run properly without it. Carbs are our bodies preferred source of energy and are needed each day to be successful in the classroom, play on a sports team or complete any other daily activities. Carbs are needed to fuel our brain and for growth. Foods that are considered carbohydrate-rich foods include: breads, pasta, oats, quinoa, vegetables, beans, milk, yogurt, and fruits. Of these sources, the best are those that are "complex" carbohydrates such as whole grain bread, oats, beans, and non-starchy vegetables. These foods are high in fiber, are digested more slowly and have healthful nutrients such as vitamin B. A good goal is to make sure at least half of your daily grains are whole grains, for extra fiber and to keep you fuller for longer.

Tip to Remember:

Carbohydrate-Rich Foods = Fuel & Energy

Protein

Protein is found throughout our body in our muscles, hair, skin and bones and has many important functions. It is mostly known and used to help build and repair our muscles and tissues. Protein provides our bodies with building blocks known as amino acids, that are needed for functions such as growth and development, to make hormones and enzymes and to fight infection. Consume protein-rich foods throughout the day. Focus on lean protein and plant-based protein options most often: chicken, fish and seafood, eggs, legumes, nuts and seeds, tofu and tempeh, quinoa and low-fat dairy foods.

Tip to Remember:

Protein-Rich Foods = Build & Repair

Fats

Dietary fats can get a bad rap, but the truth is there are some very important healthy fats that you should include in your diet. Healthy fats provide your body with energy, absorb vitamins, supports heart health, brain and nervous system, and serves as a cushion for your organs. Replace the unhealthy saturated and trans fats with the monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats. Foods packed with healthy fat to include in your diet: salmon, walnuts, nuts and seeds, eggs, olive or canola oils and avocados.

Tip to Remember:

Healthy Fat-Rich Foods = Heart Healthy