

Aglio e Olio: Pasta with Olive Oil, Garlic, Red Pepper, and Herbs

Serves: 8

INGREDIENTS

1 pound (450 grams) dry spaghetti noodles (can substitute another type of dry pasta noodle or use double the weight of fresh pasta)

Salt, for boiling pasta and to season dish to taste

¼ cup (60 milliliters) extra-virgin olive oil, divided

4 cloves garlic, sliced thinly

½ teaspoon (2.5 milliliters) crushed red pepper flakes, or to taste

1 to 2 handfuls minced flat-leaf parsley to garnish, optional



Aglio e Olio is a traditional pasta dish from Naples, Italy—it is also perhaps the simplest pasta dish to make from scratch. This recipe gives options to make the dish the traditional way—with dry spaghetti—or with fresh pasta. To improve the healthfulness of this dish, you can use whole grain or high-protein pasta in place of the regular, semolina pasta. However, even with regular pasta, this doesn't affect blood sugar as much as most pasta with lower-fat sauces, like tomato sauce, because the olive oil helps to reduce the glycemic load by slowing the digestion of the starches in the pasta. Other great additions would be sliced pepperoncini peppers and sautéed or steamed vegetables.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Boil pasta according to package directions in 4 quarts (4 liters) of water salted with 1 tablespoon (15 milliliters) of salt. For fresh pasta, make sure not to overcook. For dry pasta, aim for a bit less done than al dente. Drain pasta, reserving 1 cup (240 milliliters) of the liquid to use in the sauce. Do NOT rinse pasta or coat in oil.
2. In a large skillet set over medium-high heat, add 3 tablespoons (45 milliliters) of oil and the sliced garlic; stir until there are small specks of brown on the garlic. Add crushed red pepper flakes and then immediately add the drained pasta; stir to coat pasta.

3. Stir in a ½ cup (220 milliliters) of pasta cooking liquid and stir vigorously to try to emulsify the oil and pasta water. Cook for 1 minute for fresh pasta or until dried pasta is al dente, adding a bit more cooking liquid if needed to achieve a thin, creamy looking coating on the noodles. If you cook for too long, the water will be absorbed and fresh pasta will become mushy while dried pasta will become oily. With dried pasta, you can fix this by adding a bit more pasta water. There is no fix if you overcook fresh pasta.
4. Drizzle the remaining 1 tablespoon (15 milliliters) of olive oil to add some of the flavor of uncooked olive oil to the dish. If you have a higher quality oil, now is the time to use it. Season to taste with salt and crushed red pepper, serve immediately. Garnish with chopped fresh parsley, if desired.

N O T E S

- You can substitute whole grain pasta for spaghetti.
- Feel free to add sautéed or lightly steamed vegetables—this will give you a pasta primavera. This is delicious served with wedges of lemon.
- Add veggies and a protein-rich food to make it a meal.

Nutritional Info (per ⅓ recipe): Calories 274, Total Fat 7.9 g, Saturated Fat 1.2 g, Cholesterol 0 mg, Sodium 150 mg, Total Carbohydrate 43 g, Dietary Fiber 2 g, Sugars 1.6 g, Protein 7.6 g, Iron 11%, Magnesium 8%, Zinc 8%

► To view the video for this recipe, and all electronic resources associated with the Culinary Medicine Curriculum, please see <https://bit.ly/culinarymededucation>.
