

Pesto with High-protein (Legume) Pasta



Serves: 8

INGREDIENTS

1 pound (450 grams) dry bean- or lentil-based pasta

½ to ¾ cup (120 to 180 milliliters) Pesto, any type (see recipes), to taste

Salt, for boiling pasta and to season dish, to taste, optional

Nutritional Info (per ½ recipe, Plant-based Pesto): Calories 235, Total Fat 4.6 g, Saturated Fat 0.6 g, Cholesterol 0 mg, Sodium 200 mg, Total Carbohydrate 41.3 g, Dietary Fiber 5 g, Sugars 2 g, Protein 11.7 g, Vitamin A 1%, Vitamin C 7%, Calcium 4%, Iron 13%

Nutritional Info (per ½ serving, Classic Basil Pesto): Calories 276, Total Fat 9.5 g, Saturated Fat 1.7 g, Cholesterol 2.7 mg, Sodium 150 mg, Total Carbohydrate 40.3 g, Dietary Fiber 4.5 g, Sugars 2 g, Protein 12.1 g, Vitamin A 2%, Vitamin C 6%, Calcium 8%, Iron 12%

There are a variety of pastas on the market that include beans and legumes to increase the overall protein content. Some include a mixture of grain and legume flours, while others are completely grain-free. Higher protein and less starch reduce the glycemic load, and therefore the effect of the meal on blood glucose levels. These high-protein, legume-based pastas don't absorb sauces as well as traditional pasta, so while this reduces the amount of sauce needed, it also means that opting for more flavorful sauces is important so that you don't end up with a bland dish. Pesto is a great choice.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Boil pasta according to package directions in 4 quarts (4 liters) of water salted with 1 tablespoon (15 milliliters) of salt (optional) until al dente. Drain pasta reserving ½ cup (120 milliliters) of the liquid. Do NOT rinse pasta. Return pasta to the cooking pot.
2. In the pot, toss the cooked pasta with ½ cup (120 milliliters) of pesto and mix thoroughly. If the pasta is not completely coated in pesto, add another ¼ cup (60 milliliters) of pesto, or to taste. Add a bit of pasta cooking liquid and mix vigorously to emulsify with the pesto.
3. Season to taste with salt (optional), transfer to a serving dish (leaving in the warm pot will speed browning) and serve immediately to preserve the bright green color. After sitting, the pesto may look brown, but it is still tasty.

NOTES

- You can substitute any type of pasta—gluten-free, whole grain, or regular—for the bean- or lentil-based pasta.
- Feel free to add sautéed or lightly steamed vegetables. This is delicious served with wedges of lemon.

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