

Flu Fighting Foods:

The best way to avoid the cold and flu is to eat healthy foods, get plenty of rest and keep your hands clean and away from your face.

Five servings a day of fruits and vegetables is a great step toward fighting colds, flu and other diseases.

Take a look at the “flu fighting” nutrients listed below.

Vitamin A plays a role in healthy skin and membranes, eyesight, growth, as well as improving our immunity to disease. Betacarotene and other caratenoids (forms of vitamin A) may act as antioxidants to help protect cells and prevent disease.

Good Sources include dark green, orange and red fruits and vegetables, fortified milk, liver and fish.

Vitamin E can improve immunity by serving as an antioxidant to help protect cells and prevent disease (just like vitamin A!).

Good Sources include vegetable oil, margarine, nuts, wheat germ, sunflower seeds and green leafy vegetables.

Vitamin C functions as an antioxidant to help keep our immune system healthy and help fight infection. Vitamin C rich foods may help prevent cancer and heart disease. The darker the color of the fruit or vegetable the more vitamin C.

Good Sources include oranges, grapefruits and other citrus fruits, green and red peppers, broccoli, papaya, strawberries, cantaloupe, brussels sprouts, cabbage, tomatoes.

Zinc helps us grow and develop and aids our healing response. It also helps maintain healthy skin.

Good Sources include meat, liver, poultry, nuts, seeds, seafood, eggs and some cheeses and whole grains.

Garlic may benefit our cardiovascular system by lowering cholesterol, LDL and triglycerides as well as elevating HDL levels; it also decreases platelet aggregation and may lower blood pressure. Garlic may help reduce cancer risk and reduce yeast infections. Antioxidant, antibacterial and antiviral aspects are associated with garlic.

Good Sources include foods prepared with garlic.

Vegetable Lasagna

Makes 8 servings

- 16 lasagna noodles
- 1 cup ricotta cheese
- 1 cup cottage cheese, drained
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 cup Parmesan cheese
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1 cup chopped red pepper
- 1 cup chopped green pepper
- 1 chopped onion
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 carrot, grated
- 1 zucchini, grated
- 1 16 oz. can whole tomatoes
- 1 6 oz. can tomato paste
- 1/3 cup red wine
- 2 teaspoons parsley flakes
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- 1 teaspoon basil
- 1 teaspoon oregano
- 2 bay leaves
- 3 cups grated mozzarella cheese

Directions

Cook the lasagna noodles according to the package directions. Then put the noodles in cold water and set them aside.

In a bowl that doesn't have to be microwave-safe, combine the ricotta cheese, cottage cheese, eggs, Parmesan cheese, salt, and pepper. Stir until the ingredients are mixed and set the bowl aside.

Then in a microwave-safe bowl combine the peppers, onion, garlic, and oil. Microwave the vegetables for 5 to 6 minutes, until the vegetables are tender. Stir the carrot and zucchini into the cooled vegetables. Set the bowl aside for a bit.

Smash the tomatoes a little with a fork. Then stir in the tomato paste and the wine, until the mixture is pretty smooth. You can substitute water or grape juice for the wine or any other liquid. Mix in the parsley, salt, sugar, basil, oregano, and bay leaves. Microwave the mixture on high for 10 minutes. Fish out the bay leaves and discard them.

Grease a 9x13 pan and fill it with 1 cup of tomato sauce. Now you are ready to start assembling the lasagna rolls.

Drain the noodles and pat them dry as you need them. Lay 2 noodles end to end and overlap them about an inch. Spread the noodles with the ricotta mixture, then cover the ricotta with vegetables, sprinkle with cheese, and spoon some tomato sauce over the cheese. Now you're ready to roll it up. You will have more luck if you don't overload the noodles with filling.

To form the rolls, start at one end and roll the noodle like a sleeping bag. When you get to the end, secure it with a wooden toothpick. Place the rolls in a ring around the outer edge of the dish. Do not place any rolls in the center of the dish.

Microwave the rolls for 5 minutes, then let them stand for 10 minutes to set before eating. If you think making the lasagna rolls seems like too much trouble, you can make a pan of lasagna with this same recipe. Cover the bottom of the dish with noodles and make layers of ricotta, vegetables, mozzarella, and sauce. End with a layer of mozzarella cheese on top.

Pasta Chicken and Sun-Dried Tomatoes

Makes 8 servings.

- 1 (8 ounce) package tri-colored bow tie pasta
- 4 skinless, boneless chicken breast halves
- 1/4-cup olive oil
- 1/2 cup sun-dried tomatoes
- 1 zucchini, steamed and cut into chunks
- 1 summer squash, steamed and chopped

Directions

Add pasta to a large pot of salted boiling water. Let cook for 8 to 10 minutes or until al dente. Drain.

Meanwhile, sauté chicken breasts in a medium skillet over medium high heat. Saute for 8 to 10 minutes each side or until chicken is cooked through and juices run clear.

Remove chicken from skillet and cut into bite size pieces.

In a large mixing bowl, toss cooked pasta with oil to coat. Add chicken pieces, sun-dried tomatoes, zucchini and squash and toss again. Finally, add cheese and serve.

Grilled vegetables with nuts

Colorful Fruit-and-Green Salad

Makes 4 Serves

Vinaigrette:

- 3/4 cup fresh orange juice
- 2 Tbsp white wine vinegar or champagne vinegar
- 1 tsp olive oil
- 1/4 tsp black pepper
- 1 pinch salt

- 4 cups mixed dark green salad greens
- 1/2 cup strawberries, sliced
- 1 orange, peeled and sliced
- 1 Golden Delicious apple or Bartlett pear, cored and chopped
- 1/2 cup fresh fennel, diced

Directions

In a large salad bowl, whisk together vinaigrette ingredients. Add salad greens and toss. Arrange fruit and fennel on top of greens and serve.

Nutritional Analysis Per Serving

- **95 calories, 17 grams carbohydrate, 1 grams protein, 1 grams fat, 0 grams saturated fat, 0 milligrams cholesterol, 74 milligrams sodium, 4 grams fiber**
- **15% calories from fat**
- **2 1/4 "5 A Day" servings**