

## PASTA SAUCE TIPS

- When creating an impromptu pasta dish, remember that “less is more” and limit the number of ingredients that you use. Oil, garlic, crushed tomatoes, fresh basil and hot pepper flakes is one delicious combination.
- Be creative! Toss pasta with a little olive oil, tomato or broth for a simple sauce. By marinating tomatoes, chopped fresh mozzarella and fresh basil leaves in a little oil and tossing them with hot pasta you can have a quick, healthy meal in no time!
- For a nutrient-packed meal, pasta can be a great delivery system for veggies – top it with chopped or mixed vegetables and a favorite jarred sauce. Cruciferous vegetables like broccoli, cauliflower and cabbage go particularly well with pasta.
- Pureed roasted red peppers make a fast, great-tasting sauce too!
- Keep fresh herbs on hand as a quick and easy way to add a lot of flavor. Basil, which has a very fresh, delicate flavor, is best added to sauces at the last minute to maximize its flavor. Rosemary is woody, so it’s especially suited to cream sauces and earthy ingredients, like mushrooms. Because sage is so pungent, it stands up well in heartier pasta dishes with veal and pork.
- Instead of creating sauce out of cream and butter, start with a base of broth, vegetables, or vegetable purees and add fresh herbs for flavor. You can experiment with ingredients that simulate the texture of fat. For example, to slim down your favorite lasagna recipe cut the quantity of ricotta cheese in half and puree it with two large eggplants that have been roasted and peeled.
- Use a blender or a juicer to create your own combinations of vegetable purees. Experiment with combinations of vegetables like butternut squash and carrots or cauliflower and parsnips. Then just bring to a simmer with your favorite herbs and spices and toss with pasta.
- Pairing pasta with legumes, such as beans and lentils, or low-fat dairy products makes for protein-rich, but inexpensive and delicious meatless meals.
- Make pasta even more budget friendly by topping with leftovers, such as cooked vegetables, ground meat, chicken, or even a small amount of vegetable soup.
- Think texture as well as flavor. Add a toss of toasted pine nuts or chopped walnuts to a creamy pasta sauce for added interest.
- Don’t be afraid to substitute ingredients. If you plan to use zucchini in a pasta sauce, but the green beans looks particularly good, substitute the green beans.



# *PASTA STORAGE TIPS*



## **How to Store Uncooked Pasta:**

- Store uncooked, dry pasta in your cupboard for up to one year. Keep in a cool, dry place. Follow the “first-in, first-out” rule: Use up packages you’ve had the longest before opening new packages.

## **How to Store Cooked Pasta:**

- Refrigerate cooked pasta in an airtight container for 3 to 5 days. You may add a little oil (1-2 tsp. for each pound of cooked pasta) to help keep it from sticking. Because cooked pasta will continue to absorb flavors and oils from sauces, store cooked pasta separately from sauce.

## **How to Freeze Pasta:**

- The best pasta shapes for freezing are those that are used in baked recipes, such as lasagne, jumbo shells, ziti and manicotti. You’ll have better results if you prepare the recipe and freeze it before baking. To bake, thaw the dish to room temperature and bake as the recipe directs.

