

Fast/Healthy/Low-cost recipes for your meatless meals!

Eating healthfully on a budget is sometimes a challenge—many people think of healthy foods as more expensive. Actually, eating healthfully generally costs less money! Fruits, vegetables, and grains are high in fiber and nutrients and low in fat, and are less costly than chips, pop, and packaged foods that are high in fat or sugar and low in nutrients.

Easy-as-Hamburger-Helper-Beans

1/3 pound pasta or macaroni
1 onion, chopped
½ green pepper, chopped
1/8 teaspoon garlic powder
1 small (8 ounce) can tomato sauce
1 pound can kidney beans, drained (or substitute dried beans, cooked)
½ teaspoon chili powder
¼ teaspoon black pepper

Cook macaroni according to package directions; drain. Spray large pan with nonstick spray and sauté onion and green pepper 4-5 minutes or until soft, stirring constantly. Stir in garlic powder, tomato sauce, kidney beans, chili powder, and pepper. Simmer several minutes. Add macaroni. Serves 4

All-Bran Muffins

1 ¼ cups white flour
½ cup sugar
1 tablespoon baking powder
¼ teaspoon salt
2 cups All-bran cereal (this is fairly expensive, but 1 box makes 4 batches of muffins)
1 ¼ cups milk
1 egg
¼ cup canola oil

In small bowl, stir together flour, sugar, baking powder and salt.

In a large or medium-size mixing bowl, combine All-bran and milk. Let sit about 2 minutes, then stir in egg and oil. Beat well. Add flour mixture, stirring only until combined—don't mix too long or muffins won't have nice rounded tops. Spray 12 muffin cups with nonstick spray, then spoon batter into muffin cups. Bake at 400° about 20 minutes or until lightly browned. Serve warm.

A few shopping tips

Check prices and buy on sale when possible—especially fruits and vegetables. Remember that processed foods are usually more expensive, and don't always save time.

Black Bean Burger

1/2 cup onion, diced
1 can black beans, drained
1/4 cup (or less) flour
2 slices bread, crumbled
2 cloves garlic
1 teaspoon onion powder
1/2 teaspoon season salt
Salt and pepper to taste
Oil for frying

Sauté onions until soft, 3-5 minutes.

In a large bowl mash beans until almost smooth. I used a pastry blender and it worked well. Add onions and remaining ingredients. Add flour a few tablespoons at a time, combining well after each addition. You may not need the entire 1/4 cup.

Form mixture into patties, about 1/2-inch thick. I used olive oil in a saute pan for the burgers. Cook about 5 minutes per side, until heated through. Garnish as you would like. Serve on whole wheat hamburger buns.

Mexican Salad

1(15 ounce) can black beans, rinsed and drained
1(15 ounce) can kidney beans, drained
1 (15 ounce) can garbanzo or cannellini beans
1 green bell pepper, chopped
1 red bell pepper, chopped
1 (10 ounce) package frozen corn kernels
1 red onion, chopped
1/2 cup olive oil
1/2 cup red wine vinegar
2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
1 tablespoon lemon juice
2 tablespoons white sugar
1 tablespoon salt
1 clove crushed garlic
1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro
1/2 tablespoon ground cumin
1/2 tablespoon ground black pepper
1 dash hot pepper sauce
1/2 teaspoon chili powder

In a large bowl, combine beans, bell peppers, frozen corn, and red onion..In a small bowl, whisk

together olive oil, red wine vinegar, lime juice, lemon juice, sugar, salt, garlic, cilantro, cumin, and black pepper. Season to taste with hot sauce and chili powder. Pour olive oil dressing over vegetables; mix well. Chill thoroughly.

Lentil Vegetable Soup

1 large onion, chopped
2 small cloves garlic, minced or pressed
1 tablespoon olive oil
4 small carrots, sliced
2 stalks celery, sliced
1/2 teaspoon chili powder
4 heaping teaspoons chicken bouillon powder or vegetable bouillon powder in 5 cups hot water
1 cup dry lentils
1 15 oz. can chopped tomatoes (or use 2 cups chopped fresh)

Cook onion and garlic in hot oil, stirring over medium-high heat until limp. Add carrots, celery, and chili powder and cook 1 – 2 minutes longer, stirring often. You can use a bit more oil if necessary to prevent sticking. Add broth and lentils. Cover the pan and simmer gently until lentils are tender, about 35 minutes. Add tomatoes to hot soup.

Garlicky Swiss Chard and Chickpeas

1 tablespoon olive oil, divided
2 bunches Swiss chard, center stems cut out and discarded and leaves coarsely chopped
2 cups low-sodium chicken broth (or vegetable broth)
2 medium shallots, finely chopped (about 1/2 cup)
6 medium garlic cloves, minced
15.5 ounce can garbanzo beans (chickpeas), rinsed and drained
2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
1/2 cup crumbled feta cheese, optional

In a large skillet, heat 1 tablespoon of the olive oil over medium-high heat. Add half of the chard and cook, 1 to 2 minutes. When the first half has wilted, add the remaining chard. When all of the chard is wilted, add the chicken broth. Cover the skillet and cook the chard until tender, about 10 minutes. Drain the chard in a strainer and set it aside.

Wipe out the skillet and heat the remaining 1 tablespoon olive oil over medium-high heat. Add the shallots and garlic and cook, stirring, until they are softened, about 2 minutes. Add the chard and chickpeas and cook until heated through, 3 to 4 minutes. Drizzle the lemon juice over the mixture and season with salt and pepper, to taste. Sprinkle cheese on top just before serving, if desired.

Butternut Squash Macaroni and Cheese

1 medium butternut squash or 2 small acorn squash
1 lb. elbow macaroni or penne rigate
½ tsp. dry mustard
3 cloves garlic, minced
¼ tsp cayenne pepper
¼ tsp dry nutmeg
¼ tsp. black pepper
2 Tb. flour
2 cups grated sharp Cheddar cheese
1 cup grated Gruyere cheese
1 ½ cups milk
2 Tb. butter
1 cup bread crumbs
Parmesan cheese

Cut squash in half and roast on a baking sheet at 400° until soft, 45 minutes – 1 hour. Remove from oven and set aside until cool enough to handle. (I will be pre-cooking the squash so you won't have to do this step).

Bring large pot of water to boil.

Cook pasta until al dente, about 8 – 10 minutes. Drain and return to the cooking pot; toss with a little olive oil to keep pasta from clumping together.

Meanwhile, remove seeds and stringy pulp from centers of squash halves and compost. Scoop out the squash and mash in a large bowl until pureed. Add seasonings and flour to the squash and mix well. Add cheeses and milk and mix well.

Add the pasta and toss until the pasta is evenly coated with the squash mixture.

Spray 13" x 9" pan with cooking spray. Spread pasta mixture evenly in the pan.

Melt butter and toss with the breadcrumbs. Sprinkle the breadcrumbs evenly on top of pasta; then grate a thin layer of fresh Parmesan on top.

Bake at 375° until bubbly and browned on top, about 30 minutes. Let cool slightly before serving.

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