

HEALTHY LIVING

Wellness Newsletter from **AAOA**



January 2014
Happy New Year



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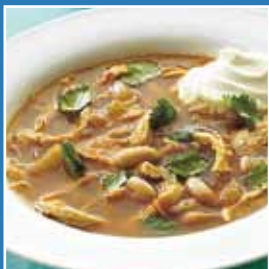
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Southwestern Chicken and Bean Soup

Tasty and Nutritious

This delicious soup can serve as a main meal with a nice green salad. Though hearty (with beans, chicken and veggies), it is surprisingly low in calories and very low in fat. High in protein and rich in fiber, it delivers on taste and nutrition.

Ingredients

- ½ pound (8 oz) uncooked chicken breast, diced
- 1 tablespoon 40%-less-sodium taco seasoning
- 1 T olive or canola oil
- 1 cup chopped portabella mushrooms
- 2 cups chopped fresh spinach
- 2 (14-ounce) cans fat-free, less sodium chicken broth
- 3 (16-ounce) can cannellini beans or other white beans, rinsed and drained
- 1/2 cup green salsa
- Light sour cream (optional)
- Chopped fresh cilantro (optional)

Preparation

Combine chicken and taco seasoning in a bowl; toss well to coat. Heat olive oil in a large saucepan over medium-high heat. Add chicken; sauté 3-5 minutes over low-medium heat or until chicken is lightly browned but not cooked all the way through. Add portabella mushrooms and continue to sauté another 2-3 minutes. Add broth, scraping pan to loosen browned bits.

Place one can of beans in a small bowl and mash. Leave remaining two cans whole. Add mashed and whole beans to pan along with the salsa, stirring well. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat. Add spinach and simmer 10 minutes or until slightly thick. Serve with sour cream and cilantro if desired (add another 15 calories per Tbs of light sour cream).

Note: If you want to use leftover cooked chicken, dice it up, mix it with the taco seasoning and add to sauté pan after mushrooms have been cooked (use the olive oil to cook the mushrooms).

Nutrition Facts

Yields 8 Servings

Amount Per Serving

Calories 195g	Fiber 9g
Fat 2g	Protein 17g
Sodium 383mg	Carbs 28g

Slow and Steady:

How to Lose Weight and Keep it Off



Back to Basics

If you are really serious about long-term weight loss, look to change habits, not slash calories and deprive yourself. Start with these tips:

- Maintain a sensible calorie intake. If you cut back too much, you will risk failure and lose muscle tissue - not fat. A one-to two-pound per week weight loss is optimal.
- Spread your calories evenly throughout the day. Do you eat as little as possible during the day so you can "save" calories for later? This approach almost always backfires. On an 1,800-calorie meal plan, for instance, aim to have 300 to 500 calories at your meals. This leaves room for two snacks of 100 to 200 calories in between. Eat every three hours to keep hunger at bay.
- Combine food groups for best blood sugar control. This also helps keep you feeling satisfied and away from the cookie jar.
- Eat high-fiber foods that are wholesome and satisfying. These will keep you full without breaking your calorie budget. Eat bean soups, lots of cooked vegetables, salads and whole grains (brown rice, barley, whole-grain breads and cereals).
- Keep a food journal. Write down everything that you eat and drink for at least three days, along with the time. Little things can add up.
- Be positive. Don't approach this with a diet mentality. You are changing your eating habits for health, weight control and quality of life. Feeding your body nutritious food is truly a gift you can give yourself.
- Exercise! If you want to trim down, you will need to include regular exercise in your life on most days of the week. To lose weight, aim to work in 60 to 90 minutes, five days a week. Working with light weights at least twice a week can help keep your muscles from wasting and your bones from shrinking. Always check first with your doctor before you increase your activity level.

Stocking a Healthy Go-To Pantry

It can be a busy cook's best friend:

First, Shop Smart

When choosing packaged, canned and dried foods, keep good nutrition in mind. For example, choose whole grains and choose products that are lowest in sodium, fat and sugar.

From Shelf to Table

Here are some ideas for your pantry — and a few tips on how to use them in your everyday meals.

Whole Grains

Example: Brown rice, wild rice, whole-grain pastas, bulgur and quinoa.

Tips: Serve hot or cold, as a main dish or a side salad. Use in stir-fries, soups, tacos, burritos and casseroles.

Fruits and Veggies

Examples: Fruit packed in water or 100 percent juice, such as pineapple chunks, mandarin oranges, pears and peaches. No-salt-added veggies, such as green beans, corn and asparagus. Dried items, such as sundried tomatoes and dried apricots.

Tips: Serve cold in green salads or warm in rice dishes and stir-fries. Add fruit to cottage cheese. Mix veggies into pasta.

Tomato-Based and Broth-Based Products

Examples: Marinara sauce, no-salt-added tomatoes, salsa, and low-sodium beef and chicken broth.

Tips: Add tomatoes to soups, chilies and grain dishes. Use marinara to top pasta or oven-baked chicken. Add broth to leftovers to make a quick soup.

Canned and Dried Beans

Examples: White beans, black beans, kidney beans and chickpeas

Tips: Add to tacos, soups, chilies, salads, rice, pastas and stir-fries. Make a three-bean salad.

Healthy Oils, Flavor Makers and Tasty Extras

Examples: Olive and canola oil, vinegars, hot sauce, spices, low-sodium soy sauce, mustards, walnuts and slivered almonds.

Tips: These gems can give a boost to almost any dish, from stir-fries and soups to homemade salad dressings. For high-fat items - such as oils and nuts - make sure to use a light hand.

And finally, a budget-pleasing tip: Keep an eye out for sales. This can help you stock your shelves while saving money.

Challenge Yourself

Make it a goal to see how many times you can avoid the candy jar this month.

Approach Change with Enthusiasm

View your resolutions in a positive light, not as a means to punish yourself for past behavior.

Tip of the Week: Stay Motivated

- Write down the reasons why you want to achieve your goal and post it where you can see it on a daily basis.
- Stay aware of the benefits you have achieved so far.
- Recognize and celebrate your successes, no matter how small.
- Come up with a saying that helps you stay motivated and repeat it to yourself regularly.
- Set short term goals to keep you motivated. Keep them realistic and obtainable, but challenging.
- Add variety to your routine. Take a healthy cooking class or sign up for a race.
- Tell people about your goals so they can help you stay motivated.

“Thank You for Your Support”

Who doesn't do better - much better - with a little encouragement?

'I need you in my corner'

Steady support - both practical and emotional - can help tip the scales your way. So, how do you rally some backing?

First, ask yourself, What would make it easier for me to slim down? Maybe it's periodic pep talks or a promise from your partner not to eat calorie-packed treats in front of you.

Whatever you believe would help, speak up - and explain why it matters.

Beating the bushes:

Think about who you could enlist to help your cause. You may have more sources of support than you realize. For instance, you might turn to:

A weight-loss buddy. How about teaming up with somebody else who wants to get in better shape? You might work out as a duo - or get together for weekly weigh-ins. Choose someone who is a good match for you. You can cheer each other on, have fun and inspire yourselves to stick with it.

Your family. Even if you are the only one trying to lose weight, it can be good for everyone to eat better and exercise more.* This team approach may help keep you motivated too. For instance, you might plan family time around backyard games or outings to the park. Or, recruit your kids or partner to help you plan and cook healthy meals and snacks.

Your co-workers. Pair up with a colleague for mini-exercise breaks walking the hallways or climbing stairs. Or, post a sign-up sheet for a healthy-recipe potluck - and see if others are interested.

Your doctor. Do not overlook this important ally. For starters, your doctor can recommend a healthy target weight for you - and suggest effective ways to reach it.

Support yourself, too!

Reward yourself when you reach goals, big and small. You might even treat yourself to something that can help you keep your momentum going — such as a low-calorie cookbook or new music for your workouts.

**Talk with your doctor before significantly increasing your activity level.*

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JANUARY WELLNESS TIP



Sheridah Bennett
(AAOA Wellness Champion)

Wellness Tip

Portion Control

Divide bulk snack items into baggies or containers so that when it is time to snack or your stomach starts grumbling, you can grab your craving in a portion size you are sure about!

We want your feed-back about the Wellness Newsletter. Please e-mail us at wellness@aoamerica.org with any wellness tips or healthy recipe ideas.