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Lose weight while you eat pasta

I love pasta, but I know that it has a ton of calories. Is there a way for me to change my diet and lose weight without having to give it up?

You don’t have to stop eating pasta to lose weight. You just have to eat the right kind and the right amount. Choose whole-wheat pasta: You’ll forgo about 50 calories per serving and take in extra fiber and healthful phytochemicals that may help prevent heart disease and certain types of cancer. One cup of cooked whole-wheat spaghetti has about 180 calories, which can easily fit into a 1,500-calorie-a-day weight-loss plan. For a perfectly portioned pasta dinner, try one of these 500-calorie meals:

- One cup of cooked whole-wheat pasta, two tablespoons of prepared pesto, a half cup of canned white beans (rinsed and drained) and two cups of chopped, stir-fried vegetables such as zucchini and yellow squash.
- One cup of cooked whole-wheat pasta, 3 ounces of baked chicken (half of a breast), two cups of steamed vegetables—try broccoli, bell peppers and mushrooms—and a half cup of marinara sauce.
- One cup of cooked whole-wheat pasta, one tablespoon of sesame oil, one tablespoon of low-sodium soy sauce, 3 ounces of shrimp and two cups of chopped, steamed broccoli.
- One cup of cooked whole-wheat pasta stir-fried with one tablespoon of olive oil, one minced garlic clove, two cups of fresh baby spinach and one chopped link of cooked Italian chicken sausage or spicy Italian-style vegetarian sausage.

* Dawn Jackson Blatner is a registered dietitian and a spokeswoman for the American Dietetic Association.

Ask All You... Do you have a diet or fitness question? Write to us at health@allyou.com.