

Easy Stuffed Pasta Shells



Ingredients

- 1 package frozen chopped spinach, thawed (10 ounces)
- 12 ounces cottage cheese, low-fat
- 1 ½ cups mozzarella, part skim shredded (save ½ cup for topping)
- 1 ½ teaspoons dried oregano
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- 1 jar light tomato basil pasta sauce, low sodium (26 ounces)
- 1 cup water
- 6 ounces pasta shells, uncooked (large)

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 375°. Lightly coat a 13x9x2-inch baking dish with cooking spray. Set aside.
2. Drain spinach by placing in a sieve or colander over the sink, or in a bowl and pressing with a spoon to remove as much liquid as possible or squeeze out liquid with clean hands. Place spinach in medium bowl.
3. Add the cottage cheese, 1 cup of the mozzarella cheese, oregano, and pepper to the spinach. Stir to mix thoroughly.
4. Pour half of the spaghetti sauce into prepared baking dish. Add water and stir into the mix.
5. Spoon about 3 tablespoons cheese mixture into each uncooked pasta shell and arrange in a single layer over top.
6. Sprinkle with remaining ½ cup mozzarella cheese evenly over sauce.
7. Cover tightly with foil. Bake for 1 hour or until shells are tender. Let stand 10 minutes before serving.

Nutrition Information

Yields: 8 servings

Serving size: 1 cup, 1/8 of recipe (235g)

Calories	250
Total fat	.7g
Saturated fat	.3g
Cholesterol	.18mg
Sodium	.334mg
Carbohydrates	.29g
Dietary fiber	.4g
Total sugars	.7g
Protein	.16g

Loneliness and Social Isolation

Meaningful and supportive social connections are important to your overall health and well-being. Being alone may leave you more vulnerable to loneliness and social isolation, which increases the risk for health problems such as heart disease, depression, and cognitive decline.

Many adults ages 65 and older are at high risk of loneliness and social isolation due to changes in health and social connections that come with aging, loss of hearing, vision, or memory, disabilities, and the loss of family and friends.

Loneliness is the distressing feeling of being alone or separated. Social isolation is the lack of social contacts and having few people to interact with regularly. You can live alone and not feel lonely or socially isolated, and you can feel lonely while being with other people.

How Can it Affect Your Health

Social isolation and loneliness are associated with risks of high blood pressure, heart disease, obesity, weakened immune function, and mental health conditions.

Reduce Loneliness and Social Isolation by Seeking Help and Staying Connected

First and foremost, talk to your doctor if you're feeling lonely and socially isolated and describe how you feel physically, emotionally, and mentally.

- Schedule time with family, friends, and neighbors
- Stay physically active
- Cover your health bases
- Find an activity
- Consider adopting a pet
- Join a community cause or faith-based organization

Fitness Tip



Physical Activity For Heart Health

Review three types of physical activity that can promote heart healthy living.

- **Aerobic exercise** improves circulation, which results in lowered blood pressure and heart rate.
- **Resistance or strength training** has a more specific effect on body composition. For people who are carrying a lot of body fat, it can help reduce fat and create leaner muscle mass.
- **Stretching, flexibility, and balance exercises** promote musculoskeletal health, which enables you to stay flexible and free from joint pain, cramping, and other muscular issues.