



## Healthy, Hot and Hearty – Soup

Soup is the perfect food for the cold days of January. Soup can be made out of almost anything you have on hand.

Soups are generally prepared using a stock that is made by slow simmering beef, chicken, or fish, and vegetables in water with seasonings added. After simmering it is strained and this is the base of your soup. A variety of different ingredients may be added to make a delicious winter meal.

Homemade stocks are time-consuming to make. Cubes and envelopes of beef, chicken and vegetable flavored bouillon, cans of condensed broth and dried soup mixes are time saving substitutes. Be sure to read the label carefully. Sometimes these products are high in salt (sodium). If you are on a sodium-restricted diet look for sodium reduced products.

### Ingredients

Soups are a good way to use small amounts of leftover meat and vegetables. MyPyramid recommends 2 to 2-1/2 cups of vegetables a day. Adding more vegetables to soup can help meet this recommendation. Fresh, frozen, dried and canned vegetables may be used in soup.

If you start with a canned soup you can make it tastier and more nutritious by adding extra vegetables or cooked beans.

Many soups have ingredients added to help it thicken. Barley, rice, pasta, beans and potatoes are often used.



Go easy on seasonings. During cooking, the soup reduces in volume and the flavors may intensify. Season lightly at first; just before serving, taste the soup and add additional seasonings if needed. To reduce the amount of salt, season with herbs and herb blends – oregano, thyme, Italian blend or poultry blend.

### Storage

When you make soup, make extra. Most soups can be stored in the refrigerator up to three days. Some also freeze well for about three months.

To freeze soup, refrigerate until well chilled. Put soup into freezer containers, leaving at least 1/2-inch headspace. When ready to use, thaw soup in the refrigerator and reheat. To reheat frozen soup without thawing add 1/4 cup of water and cook over low heat stirring occasionally. Soup may be reheated in the microwave or on top of the range. Always reheat to at least 165°F.

## Soup for Two

Some recipes for soup are a little complicated or call for several ingredients. Some recipes can be easy and made from ingredients you have on hand. Here is a basic recipe for soup that can be made to suit your taste and even take advantage of leftovers.

Ingredient	Amount for 2 servings	Suggestions
Liquid	2 cups	May be broth, milk, tomato juice, or in combination with water
Vegetables and beans	1 -1/2 cups	Any vegetable or combination that you have on hand (canned, frozen, fresh or leftover)
Meat (optional)	1/2 cup	Cooked chicken, turkey, beef, pork, or ground meat
Starch or thickener	1/4 to 1/2 cup	Rice, barley, noodles, pasta (uncooked)
Seasoning	1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon or to taste	Salt, pepper, herbs or spices

Place liquid in saucepan, bring to simmer. Add canned or leftover vegetables, cooked meat and starch or thickener. Cook until everything is hot and starch ingredient is cooked. Season and taste, cook five minutes to combine flavors. If using fresh or frozen vegetables add to liquid and simmer until almost tender, then add other ingredients and continue to finish cooking. Enjoy the soup hot with a small salad and piece of whole grain bread.

### Easy Chicken Soup

1 cup chicken broth  
 1 cup water  
 1/2 cup cooked chicken,  
 cubed  
 2 carrots, peeled and diced  
 1 cup frozen peas  
 1/4 cup quick cooking barley  
 1/2 teaspoon Italian seasoning



Bring broth and water to simmer, add the carrots, cook for 5 minutes. Add the peas, chicken and barley, simmer until vegetables are tender and barley is cooked (15 - 20 minutes). Add seasoning and cook 5 minutes more. Serves 2.

Nutrition information per serving: 280 calories, 2 g fat, 50 mg cholesterol, 370 mg sodium, 39 g carbohydrate, 10 g fiber, 26 g protein.

Prepared by: Barbara Farner, Extension Educator  
 Nutrition and Wellness  
 Matteson Center



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