Carbo Diem

Mix protein and pasta for the energy you need to seize the day-and first place

March 1, 1997 By David France and Sandy Langley

In which our authors treated their friend Kim, about to run her fifth New York City Marathon, to pasta plates especially designated for positive athletes. Later, the two held an online chat about HIV, exercise and life after the death knell.

I keep getting mail from a funeral home addressed to me. Isn't that terrible? I think they bought my name from a viatical company.

Man. Yesterday I got a letter for my late husband-a juror-qualification questionnaire! Without luck, I searched for a "still living" box, which you'd think would be a key qualification. He also gets burial-plot mail all the time. I've been saving them, for some ghoulish reason.

I would do the same thing. You know, I keep part of Timothy Leary's obit in my wallet-the part where he talks about making a spectacle of his death, like it was something to be enjoyed, celebrated, learned from. It just made death seem entirely OK. He couldn't wait for those mysterious minutes between the last heartbeat and the fade-out of the brain. Called it "designer dying."

Remember his last words: "Why not?"

Exactly. I remember someone in my group talking about what she thought were her last hours. People came to the bed to say goodbye and she felt such overwhelming sadness at leaving her family-that was the worst part. So it was a relief to read about Leary's joyous sprint toward eternity.

You told me you swore off the cult of croaking, girlfriend. And bought running shoes with Kim, if I recall.

Well, I don't keep up with her-but I did go for a long walk the morning after our pasta dinner, really pleasant, just trying to relax and take in the scenery. I felt strong and energized. Not bad for a girl with AIDS.

Me, I noticed a new verve to my typing. But I also wished I hadn't eaten so much. Too much pasta

can really bind, you'll forgive me for mentioning.

Thank God for that. One thing some positive aerobic athletes have to endure is, well, running. The lining of the small intestine can get screwed up even before symptoms appear, and that affects the way nutrients are absorbed. Add to that the jostling of athletics, and things can get ugly.

Have you ever tried PowerBars? When my husband and I did the Boston-New York AIDS Ride, we pigged out on those things, and girl, they're cement.

They haven't helped me. But they're a good source of protein, which we all need tons of. Carbohydrates are your most efficient source of fuel, but proteins are important for immune function. In the days before an event, an HIV negative marathoner will typically aim to get about 70 percent of calories from carb sources such as bread, rice or pasta. Positive marathoners should probably shoot for 55 percent to 60 percent so they can still get in a lot of protein-lasagna with meat or beans, beans in pasta sauce, cheeses-and low fat, so as not to confound the intestines.

Before training for a big event, it's good to call a nutritionist. God's Love We Deliver (212.294.8100) will answer anyone's questions.

When I called, a nutritionist there said multivitamin and mineral supplements are also important for PWAs-in-training-in fact, it's important for all PWAs. And you should remember to replace all the calories you're burning in order to avoid weight loss, because maintaining weight is such a challenge for so many.

Is that the reason some people have advised against rigorous aerobic exercise?

Actually, some researchers have gone so far as to classify strenuous exercise as immunosuppressive, but their data are narrow. I believe the only real study on this found *all* marathoners, regardless of serostatus, were more likely to come down with flues and colds after the big event.

Isn't moderate aerobic exercise-30 minutes of huffing, three times a week-supposed to boost immune markers?

Well, I read one abstract from Vancouver that found a momentary drop in T-cells following moderate workouts, but most researchers endorse physical activity anyway. What we don't know about is the effect of endurance exercise. Researchers have simply not studied it.

For Kim, catharsis seems to be a major benefit for her maniacal marathon training.

I believe running is a major part of her being a long-term survivor; it's the ultimate reminder that she's alive and strong and thriving. This year she ran her sixth New York City Marathon, but she did one about a month after her lover died. I was amazed she was even able to run. It takes so much *emotional* energy. But she said she really felt his presence with her on the course. It gave

me goosebumps.

You know, I kind of feel that about cooking. My late husband wore the apron in our household, and I never cooked at all until it became an homage. I guess that does sometimes make me feel like he's here at the stove with me. Not "here" enough to be filling out any jury questionnaire, of course. But a little closer to present than to past.

Penne with White Beans and Olive Paste

This delicious recipe is derived from a mimeographed cookbook David's husband dragged back from darkest Italy. Substitute any flavorful green vegetable for the asparagus if it is out of season.

Serves: 6
Preparation Time: 15 minutes
Difficulty: On a scale of four, two drops of sweat
Nutrition per person: Calories: 464; total fat: 11 g; saturated fat: 1 g; carbohydrates: 75 g; protein: 16 g; cholesterol: 0 mg

1 pound spinach penne rigate
2 tablespoons olive oil
3 large cloves garlic, minced
3 ounces green-olive paste
15 ounces white beans, canned
1 pount asparagus

Brown garlic in olive oil. Add olive paste and saute for several minutes. Drain white beans and add to skillet. Add salt and pepper to taste. Wash asparagus and chop two one-inch sections from the top of each (David used the rest of the stalks for a cream of asparagus soup the next day. What will you do with yours?)

Boil pasta according to directions on box. When you add the pasta to the boiling water, add the asparagus tops to the skillet and cover. They'll cook by the time the pasta is drained. Combina pasta and skillet mixture and serve hot.

Lasagna (with respect to Fannie Farmer)

Sandy's husband recalls that this was the only dish in Sandy's repertoire when they met. She has since come up with this short-cut versiona and has, thankfully, learned a few other things.

Serves: 8
Preparation time: 1 hour
Difficulty: 2 1/2 drops of sweat
Nutrition per person: Calories: 537; total fat: 21 g; saturated fat: 9 g; carbohydrates: 43 g; protein: 44 g; cholesterol: 99 mg

1 1/2 pounds ground turkey
16 ounces tomato puree
8 ounces tomato paste
1 cup water
1 1/2 teaspoons oregano
1 teaspoon sugar
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon fresh ground pepper
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 large onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
1/2 pound lasagna noodles, no-boil kind
3/4 pound preshredded part-skim mozzarella
1 pound nonfat ricotta cheese
1/4 cup grated parmesan cheese

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Simmer the tomato puree and paste with water, oregano, sugar, salt and pepper. Meanwhile, in a skillet, saute the onion and garlic in olive oil until the onion is golden. Add the turkey to the skillet and brown completely. Add turkey mixture to tomato mixture.

Spoon one-third of the sauce into a casserole pan. Put in a layer of noodles, then a layer of ricotta and a layer of mozzarella. Repeat the layering sequence twice, then top with parmesan. Bake for 30 minutes covered, then 15 minutes uncovered.

Sweet Smushed Spuds

Serves: 6
Preparation time: 5 minutes
Difficulty: 1 1/2 drops of sweat
Nutrition per person: Calories: 143; total fat: 8 g; saturated fat: 5 g; carbohydrates: 17 g; protein: 2 g; cholesterol: 22 mg

3 large sweet potatoes
1 large white potato
1/2 spanish onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
1/4 cup milk
4 tablespoons butter

Wash and peel potatoes. Cut into one-inch cubes. Microwave or boil with onion and garlic until tender. Mash while adding butter and milk.

Nana’s Nutmeg Kugel

This recipe is three generations older than Diane Girer, who submitted it to the 1995 NYC Marathon recipe contest and won! It was served at the pre-race pasta party.

Serves: 8
Preparation time: 15 minutes
Difficulty: 2 drops of sweat
Nutrition per person: Calories: 392; total fat: 11 g; saturated fat: 5 g; carbohydrates: 58 g; protein: 14 g; cholesterol: 115 mg

8 ounces low-calorie cream cheese
1 pound elbow macaroni
1/2 cup sugar
12 ounces low-fat sour cream
4 eggs
4 teaspoons butter
2 teaspoons nutmeg
2 teaspoons vanilla extract

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Cook macaroni according to directions. Put all ingredients but macaroni in a blender or mixing bowl and blend, adding water, until the mixture is somewhat more watery than the consistency of cake batter. In a 9 x 13 ungreased baking pan, mix pasta and blended mixture. Cook for 40 minutes.

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.
http://beta.docker.poz.com/article/nutrition-hiv-carbs-12561-5784