Here are some great recipes that are nutritious and hearty enough to satisfy an athlete's appetite and palate. These dishes range from extremely simple, to a little more complex, but generally most have a short list of ingredients, require little preparation, and many can be made in one pot (which minimizes cleanup). Exact measurements usually aren't necessary, and being creative and substituting ingredients based on what's available or your tastes is encouraged!

**Fast & Simple Meals for Athletes**

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SUPER QUICK

QUICK COUSCOUS SUPPER
Mix 1¼ cups of boiling water and ½ tsp salt (or use broth and omit salt) with 1 cup of couscous in a bowl. Cover for about 5 minutes. Fluff with a fork and add 1 can of drained tuna or chicken, and 1 cup thawed frozen peas. Top with feta or parmesan cheese.

QUICK BEAN DIP
Process (or mash with a fork) canned beans (kidney or black) with your favorite salsa. This is a great sandwich spread or dip.

FAST CHILI
Combine three cans of drained kidney beans with 2 cups frozen mixed vegetables and 1 large can of diced tomatoes. Add cumin or cayenne and heat in microwave until warm.

SALAD FOR SUPPER
Start with prewashed salad greens (the greener the better, since this means more nutrients), add canned tuna or salmon, cherry tomatoes, chopped green onions, light feta cheese, and almonds. Eat with whole grain bread.

TUNA PASTA SALAD
Start with cooked pasta, and add thawed frozen vegetables and canned tuna. Toss with Italian or Mediterranean-style salad dressing.

SOUTHWESTERN PASTA DISH
Combine cooked pasta with black beans and salsa. Add frozen or canned corn for more nutrients.

SWIFT SOUP
Make a hearty and savory soup in just minutes. Combine a can of diced tomatoes, a can of chicken broth, a can of rinsed and drained white kidney (cannellini) or great northern beans.

MINESTRONE IN MINUTES
Combine canned crushed tomatoes with chicken or vegetables broth, canned beans, and frozen vegetables. Heat and enjoy!

QUICK MEATBALLS & VEGGIES
2 servings frozen meatballs (meatless, chicken, or turkey also work well)
2 cups frozen or canned corn OR 2 cups frozen (loose pack) spinach
1 cup tomato sauce
Garlic powder and Oregano (to taste)

Combine ingredients in pot and heat until cooked through. Serve over brown rice, pasta, or on whole grain bread or rolls.

PASTAS & GRAINS

TIP: Cooking Peas with Your Pasta
Add a helping of color and nutrition to your pasta by tossing in some frozen "petite" peas at the end of cooking. "Petite" peas will thaw and cook rapidly in the pasta water. Here's how:
- Cook pasta according to package directions, until just tender but still firm to the bite (al dente).
- Toss in about 1/2 cup of "petite" frozen peas per individual serving of pasta
- Cook peas with pasta for about one minute, until peas are heated throughout.
- Drain pasta and peas. Serve, topped with your favorite pasta sauce.

PASTA WITH TUNA & TOMATO
A great combination of grains, protein and vegetables (you get quite a bit of tomato when it's made into pasta sauce!).

Pasta (whole grain if possible)
Tomato-based pasta sauce
Canned tuna
* Grated parmesan cheese (optional)

1. Prepare pasta according to package directions.
2. While pasta is cooking, drain tuna and heat with pasta sauce in a sauce pan.
3. Drain pasta, reserving 1 cup of the cooking water.
4. Mix pasta thoroughly with sauce. Add reserved cooking water as needed to moisten the mixture.
5. Top pasta with grated parmesan cheese.

Adapted from: COOK IT QUICK! University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension
**Pasta Shells with Broccoli, Chickpeas, & Tomatoes**

1 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil  
1 can (15.5 oz) chickpeas, drained  
1 clove garlic, crushed or grated  
1 tsp dried oregano  
1/8 tsp red-pepper flakes  
1 can (14.5 oz) diced tomatoes  
2 cups pasta shells  
1 bag (14 oz) frozen cut broccoli  
1/4 c grated Romano or Parmesan cheese  

1. Heat oil in 10” skillet over medium-high heat. Add chickpeas, garlic, oregano, and red-pepper flakes and heat, stirring gently, until chickpeas turn golden in spots, about 3 minutes. Stir in tomatoes (with juice), cover, and cook 5 minutes over low heat.  
2. Meanwhile, heat large pot of water to boiling. Add pasta, and salt to taste. Cook pasta 8 to 10 minutes. Stir in broccoli (with juice), cover, and cook 5 minutes over low heat.  
3. Drain pasta and broccoli and return to pot. Add chickpea mixture and reserved cooking water. Stir to blend. Spoon into bowls and top with cheese.  

Makes 4 Servings. PER SERVING: 350 cal, 15 g pro, 56 g carb, 7 g fat, 1.5 g sat fat, 5 mg chol, 8 g fiber, 470 mg sodium

**Shells with Tuna, Roasted Peppers & Artichokes**

1 can (6-1/2 oz.) tuna, packed in oil, drained  
1 jar (7 oz.) roasted red peppers, drained and cut into thin strips  
1 jar (6 oz.) marinated artichoke hearts, drained and halved  
2 tbsp olive oil  
1 tsp capers  
1 tsp chopped fresh parsley  
1 tsp minced garlic  
1 pound dried shell or bowtie pasta, cooked according to package directions  
2 tsp balsamic vinegar  
1/2 tsp salt  
1/4 tsp freshly ground black pepper  

1. Combine tuna, red peppers, artichoke hearts, olive oil, capers, parsley and garlic in large serving bowl.  
2. Toss hot pasta with tuna mixture. Add vinegar, salt and pepper; toss again.  

Makes 6 servings. PER SERVING: calories: 415, total fat: 10 g , saturated fat: 2 g, cholesterol: 5 mg, sodium: 476 mg, carbohydrate: 61 g, protein: 19 g.  
Adapted from: Ladies’ Home Journal

**Chickpea Orzo Pilaf**

3 tbsp olive oil  
1 cup chopped onion  
1 medium carrot, finely diced  
2 garlic cloves, minced  
1 1/2 tsp curry powder  
1/2 tsp dried thyme  
1 cup orzo (rice-shaped pasta)  
5 1/2 cups low-sodium chicken broth  
1 (15.5-oz) can chickpeas, rinsed and drained  
2 tbsp chili sauce  

1. Heat oil over medium heat in a large, deep skillet with a lid. Sauté the onion, carrot, and garlic with the curry powder and thyme until onion is soft.  
2. Add the orzo and sauté until the pasta is lightly browned. Stir in the chicken broth, chickpeas, and chili sauce; bring to a boil.  
3. Cover with a tight-fitting lid and reduce the heat to low. Simmer the stew 12 minutes, stirring occasionally, or until the orzo is fully cooked. (The stew should be a little brothy, not dry.)  

Makes 4 servings. PER SERVING: 335 calories; 29 g protein, 41 g carbohydrates, 7 g fiber, 6 g fat (3 g saturated), 66 mg cholesterol, 410 mg sodium.  
ADAPTED FROM: Real Simple, MAY 2000

**Couscous & Chicken**

Couscous is a coarsely ground semolina pasta. The grain is a staple in many North African countries. Ready-cooked rotisserie chicken works well in this recipe.  
1 cup thinly sliced carrots  
1/2 cup sun-dried tomatoes, cut into strips with scissors  
1 cup couscous (whole wheat if available)  
2 cups chopped cooked chicken  
1/2 cup crumbled feta cheese  

1. In a medium saucepan, bring 2 cups water to a boil.
2. Add carrots and sun-dried tomatoes, cover and cook until vegetables soften, about 8 to 10 minutes.
3. Add couscous, cover and remove from heat for 5 minutes. Fluff with fork.
4. If you're using refrigerated chicken, stir the chicken in with the couscous and set aside, covered, for 1 minute to warm the chicken. Then divide the couscous on serving plates and top with feta.
5. If you're using warm rotisserie chicken, divide the couscous first, and then top with chicken and feta.

Makes 4 servings. PER SERVING: CALORIES 461; FAT 14g (sat 2g); PROTEIN 18mg; CHOLESTEROL 0mg; CALCIUM 75mg; SODIUM 483mg; FIBER 7g; CARBOHYDRATE 68g.

SANTA FE CHICKEN WITH BLACK BEANS & RICE

This recipe features chicken breast, a source of high-quality protein; brown rice, providing carbohydrates, fiber and B vitamins; black beans, packed with fiber and heart-friendly folate; and red peppers, and excellent source of vitamin C.

1 cup instant brown rice
1 cup water or reduced-sodium chicken broth
1/2 lb boneless, skinless chicken breast, cut into 1-inch pieces
1 15-oz. can black beans, rinsed and drained
1 4-oz. can chopped green chilies
1 red bell pepper, seeded and chopped
2 tbsp chopped fresh cilantro
1 tsp ground cumin
1/4 tsp salt
1/4 tsp cayenne pepper

1. Put the rice in a large saucepan.
2. Add the rest of the ingredients and set the pan over high heat.
3. Bring the mixture to a boil.
4. Reduce the heat to medium-low, cover the pan with a lid, and cook for 10 minutes until all the liquid is absorbed.

Makes 2 servings. Per serving: 567 calories, 81g carbs, 48g protein, 6g fat, 21g fiber. ADAPTED FROM: Men’s Fitness, Dec 2002.
QUICK SOUPS, STEWS, & CHILIS

The ultimate one-dish meal...
If your recipe doesn’t contain a grain, serve with whole grain bread.

3 INGREDIENT VEGETABLE SOUP

- 16 oz. package frozen mixed vegetables
- 46 ounces tomato or vegetable juice
- ½ cup quick cooking barley or 4 oz. pasta
- Salt and pepper to taste

1. In a large saucepan, mix the juice and frozen vegetables. Bring to boiling over high heat.
2. Add the barley or pasta and simmer for 10-15 minutes. Serve.

Makes 8 SERVINGS. PER SERVING: 120 calories, 0.5 g fat, (.1 saturated), 0 mg cholesterol, 129 mg sodium, 24 g carb, 6 g fiber, 5 g protein.
ADAPTED FROM: Iowa State University Extension

CHICKEN & SALSA SOUP

- 1 3/4 cups water
- 1 14-1/2-ounce can reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 1/2 pound skinless, boneless chicken, cut into bite-size pieces
- 1 to 2 tsp chili powder
- 1 11-ounce can whole kernel corn with sweet peppers, drained
- 1 cup chunky garden-style salsa
- 3 cups broken baked tortilla chips
- 2 ounces Monterey Jack cheese with jalapeno peppers, shredded

1. In a 3-quart saucepan combine water, chicken broth, chicken, and chili powder. Bring to boiling; reduce heat. Cover and simmer for 8 minutes. Add corn. Simmer, uncovered, for 5 minutes more. Stir in salsa; heat through.
2. To serve, ladle soup into bowls. Top with chips and sprinkle with cheese.

Makes 4 servings. PER SERVING: 363 calories, 9 g fat (2 g saturated), 44 mg cholesterol, 26 g protein, 43 g carbohydrates, 4 g fiber, 569 mg sodium.
ADAPTED FROM: www.desperationdinners.com

CURE-ALL CHICKEN SOUP

- 1 3/4 cups water
- 2 cups quick-cooking (10-minute) brown rice
- 1 tsp vegetable oil
- 1 large onion (for 1 cup chopped)
- 20 already-peeled baby carrots (for 1 cup chopped)
- 3 ribs celery (for 11/2 cups chopped)
- 1 tsp bottled minced garlic
- 1 tsp bottled minced ginger
- 1 large can (10 ounces) white-meat chicken
- 2 cans (14 1/2 ounces each) fat-free chicken broth
- Black pepper to taste

1. Bring the water to a boil in a 2-quart saucepan. When the water boils, add the rice, cover the pan, reduce the heat to low and cook 5 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, heat the oil on medium in a 4 1/2-quart Dutch oven or soup pot. Peel and coarsely chop the onion, adding it to the pot as you chop. Coarsely chop the carrots and celery, adding them to the pot as you chop. Add the garlic and ginger. Continue to cook until the celery is crisp-tender, about 2 minutes, stirring from time to time.
3. Remove the rice pot from the heat and set aside, covered, to finish steaming. Add the chicken broth to the soup pot. Open and drain the chicken, flake it with a fork, and add it to the soup pot. Raise the heat to high, bring the soup to a boil, then reduce the heat to medium. Continue to cook at a moderate boil for 5 minutes to combine flavors. Season with black pepper. To serve, place some rice in each bowl and top with soup.

Makes 4 servings. PER SERVING: 363 calories, 9 g fat (2 g saturated), 44 mg cholesterol, 26 g protein, 43 g carbohydrates, 4 g fiber, 569 mg sodium.
ADAPTED FROM: www.desperationdinners.com
GREAT GARbanZO SOUP

1 tbsp olive oil
2 garlic cloves, minced (or jarred garlic)
1/2 cup chopped onion
4 cups canned vegetable broth
2 cups water
1 can (14 1/2 ounce) sliced carrots, drained (or frozen carrots and beans/peas)
1 can (14 1/2 ounce) canned French style green beans, drained (or frozen beans)
1 can (15 ounce) diced tomatoes in juice
1 can (8 ounce) tomato sauce
1 tbsp Italian seasoning
2 cans (19 ounces each) garbanzo beans, drained
1 1/2 cups spiral noodles, uncooked

2. Add vegetable broth, water, carrots, and green beans to the pot. Bring to boil. Stir in diced tomatoes, tomato sauce, Italian seasoning, and garbanzo beans. Add the pureed beans to the soup. Mix well. Return soup to a boil. Add noodles and cook for 10 to 12 minutes until the noodles are tender.

Makes 10 servings. PER SERVING: 185 calories; 8 g protein; 32 g carbohydrates; 7 g total fat; 0 g saturated fat; 0 mg cholesterol; 866 mg sodium; 7 g fiber. ADAPTED FROM: www.mealtime.org

MEDITERRANEAN CHICKPEA, TOMATO, & PASTA SOUP

2 tsp olive oil
1 cup diced onion
1-1/2 cups water
1 (16-ounce) can low-sodium chicken broth
1/2 tsp ground cumin
1/4 tsp ground cinnamon
1/4 tsp black pepper
1 (15-1/2-ounce) can chickpeas, drained
1 (14.5-ounce) can diced tomatoes, undrained
1/2 cup uncooked ditalini (very short tube-shaped macaroni)
2 tbsp chopped fresh parsley

1. Heat olive oil in a large saucepan over medium-high heat. Add onion, and sauté 3 minutes or until tender.
2. Add the water and next 6 ingredients (water through tomatoes). Bring mixture to a boil; cover, reduce heat, and simmer 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.
3. Add pasta, and cook 9 minutes or until pasta is tender. Stir in chopped parsley.

Yield: 4 servings (serving size: 1-1/2 cups). PER SERVING: CALORIES 242 (17% from fat); FAT 4.7g (sat 0.6g, mono 2.2g, poly 1.3g); PROTEIN 11.4g; CARB 39.9g; FIBER 4.6g; CHOL 0mg; SODIUM 560mg; CALC 79mg ADAPTED FROM: www.cookinglight.com

INSTANT BLACK BEAN SOUP

2 (15-ounce) cans black beans, undrained
1/2 cup bottled salsa
1 tbsp chili powder
1 (16-ounce) can low-sodium chicken broth
1/2 cup (2 ounces) shredded reduced-fat sharp cheddar cheese
5 tbsp low-fat sour cream
5 tbsp minced green onions
2-1/2 tbsp chopped fresh cilantro

1. Place beans and liquid in a medium saucepan; partially mash beans with a potato masher or a fork.
2. Place over high heat; stir in salsa, chili powder, and broth. Bring to a boil.
3. Ladle soup into bowls; top with cheese, sour cream, onions, and cilantro.

Yield: 5 servings (serving size: 1 cup soup, 1-1/2 tbsp cheese, 1 tbsp onions, 1 tbsp sour cream, and 1-1/2 tsp cilantro). CALORIES 212; FAT 4.9g (sat 2.6g, mono 1.2g, poly 0.5g); PROTEIN 14.7g; CARB 28.7g; FIBER 5.4g; CHOL 13mg; SODIUM 411mg; CALC 163mg ADAPTED FROM: www.cookinglight.com

SANTA FE RAVIOLI SOUP

2 cans (15.75 oz) chicken or vegetable broth
1 (9 oz) pkg fresh light cheese ravioli
1 cup refrigerated salsa
1 (15 oz) can black beans, rinsed and drained

1. Bring broth to a boil in a large saucepan. Reduce heat to low, add ravioli and simmer 5 minutes.
2. Add salsa and beans and cook 5 minutes until heated through.
3. Garnish with a dollop of reduced fat sour cream and some fresh cilantro.

Serving size: 1.75 cup soup. PER SERVING: 247 cal; 4g fat; 14g protein; and 5g fiber.

**TURKEY CHILI**

This recipe features turkey breast, packed with protein and low in fat; canned tomatoes, chock-full of the antioxidant lycopene; green peppers, a good source of vitamin C and vitamin A; and a significant amount of fiber.

3/4 lb skinless ground turkey breast
1 15-oz. can diced tomatoes
1 8-oz. can tomato sauce
1/2 cup chopped onion
2 celery stalks, chopped
1 green bell pepper, seeded and chopped
1/2 cup frozen lima beans
1/2 cup frozen corn
1 jalapeno pepper, seeded and minced
1 tbsp chili powder
1 tsp ground cumin
1 tsp dried oregano
1/2 tsp crushed red pepper flakes (or more to taste)
2 oz. baked tortilla chips
(Optional: Top the chili with shredded, reduced-fat cheddar cheese.)

1. Place the turkey in a large saucepan and add all ingredients but the tortilla chips.
2. Set the pan over medium heat and bring the mixture to a simmer.
3. Cook for 10 to 15 minutes until the turkey is cooked through, giving an occasional good stir.
4. Spoon the chili into bowls and serve the chips on the side.

Makes two servings. PER SERVING: 444 calories, 67g carbs, 36g protein, 4g fat (without the low-fat cheese topping), 16g fiber. ADAPTED FROM: Men’s Fitness, Dec 2002.

**HEARTY BLACK-EYED PEA & TOMATO STEW WITH RICE OR COUSCOUS**

Served over brown rice or couscous and topped with peanuts, it’s a hearty dish that makes a great meal!

2 tsp peanut oil
1 medium onion, chopped
1 can (15 ounces) black-eyed peas, drained and rinsed
1 can (15 ounces) diced tomatoes
1 1/2 cups ready-to-serve canned hearty tomato soup
3 cups cooked brown rice, couscous, or bulgur*
1/2 cup finely chopped peanuts

1. Heat oil in a medium, non-stick saucepan. Add onion. Cook and stir until onion is translucent, about 5 minutes.
2. Lightly mash peas with a fork. Add peas, tomatoes and soup to onions in saucepan. Cook over medium heat for about 10 minutes, stirring occasionally, until slightly thickened to a stew-like consistency. Add water or more soup if too thick.
3. Put 3/4 cup rice or couscous in each of four bowls. Top with stew, and garnish with peanuts.

*Tip: A rice cooker is ideal for cooking rice. Couscous is the quickest grain to prepare: Mix 1 1/4 cups of boiling water (or stock if you desire a richer taste) and 1/4 tsp of salt with 1 cup of couscous in a bowl. Cover with a dish towel or plate to seal in the steam and let sit for 5 minutes. Fluff with a fork to separate the grains.

Makes 4 Servings. PER SERVING: Calories 450; Total fat 13g; Saturated fat 2g; Cholesterol 0mg; Sodium 680mg; Carbohydrate 69g; Fiber 10g; Protein 14g. ADAPTED FROM: www.mealtime.org

**TINBUCKTUNA**

Mild and creamy tuna and rotini stovetop casserole.

8 oz (227 g) uncooked rotini pasta (about 3 cups)
2 cups frozen mixed vegetables
1 tbsp butter
1 cup diced onions
1 tsp minced garlic
1 can (10 oz/284 ml) condensed, reduced-fat cream of broccoli coup, undiluted
3/4 cup (3 oz/85 g) packed shredded light old (sharp) cheddar cheese
1/4 light sour cream
1/4 cup grated parmesan cheese
1 tbsp minced fresh dill or fresh basil leaves, or 1 tsp dried
1/2 tsp dry mustard powder
1/4 tsp freshly ground black pepper
2 cans (6 oz/170 g each) chunk light tuna in water, drained or boneless, skinless salmon, drained

Cook pasta according to package directions, adding frozen vegetables to the boiling water for the last 5 minutes of cooking time. Drain pasta and vegetables.

Meanwhile, prepare sauce. In a large, non-stick pot, melt butter over medium heat. Add onions and garlic. Cook and stir until onions are tender, about 5 minutes. Add soup, shredded cheese, sour cream, parmesan cheese, dill/basil, mustard powder, and black pepper. Mix well and cook until sauce is bubbly and cheese has melted. Remove from heat. Stir in pasta, vegetables and tuna/salmon. Serve hot.

Makes 6 servings. PER SERVING: calories, 349; total fat, 8.7g; saturated fat, 4.8g; protein, 24g; carbs, 14g; fiber, 2.6g; cholesterol, 35mg; sodium, 690mg. ADAPTED FROM: Eat, Shrink, & Be Merry by Janet and Greta Podleski, Granet publishing inc, 2005.

MEDITERRANEAN TUNA WRAP

2 whole wheat tortillas or lavash
1 can (6 oz) water-packed white tuna, drained
4 Tbsp fat-free dill vegetable dip (can substitute mayonnaise)
1 can (2.25 oz) black olives, drained
10 baby carrots, sliced lengthwise
1 cup salad greens
1/2 pt grape tomatoes, washed

1. Place the lavash across individual dinner plates.
2. Mix the tuna, dip, and olives in a small bowl, and spoon half of it down the middle of each lavash.
3. Line the tuna mixture with the sliced carrots, and cover it with the salad greens.
4. Tuck in one or both ends of each lavash, and roll up tightly. Slice them in half.
5. Add half of the tomatoes to each plate.

Makes 2 servings. PER SERVING: 405 cal, 29 g pro, 56 g carb, 9 g fat, 1 g sat. fat, 38 mg chol, 7 g fiber, 966 mg sodium. ADAPTED FROM: Prevention Magazine

PB & J SANDWICH

No recipe needed, but perhaps some guidance on how to make this a nutritious meal when you’re in a fix . . .

Use whole wheat bagel or bread, top with banana slices for added nutrition, carbohydrates, and potassium. Enjoy with ready-cut carrots and fresh fruit. PEANUT BUTTER is a dense source of calories, and a quick and easy option for busy athletes. It is a good source of healthy mono- and polyunsaturated fats and vitamin E. Contrary to popular believe, peanut butter is just a moderate source of protein, so round off your meal with a glass of milk.

SANDWICH MEALS

Although some don’t consider sandwiches a “proper” supper – they can be the perfect hotel room meal. You can make sandwiches nutritionally equivalent to a hot dish, and they are often much easier to prepare. Create a healthful sandwich with sliced tomatoes, sliced cucumbers, salad greens, and a protein source (hummus, cheese, fish, meat). Use whole grain bread or wrap into a whole grain tortilla or pita.