

Cheesy Beefy Mac



- 1 8 oz package elbow macaroni
- cooking spray
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 3 ribs celery, chopped
- 1 red or green bell pepper, chopped
- 2 tsp. minced garlic (optional)
- 1 cup shredded carrots
- 1 pound lean ground beef
- 1 cup tomato sauce
- 1 tsp. salt, divided
- 1/2 tsp black pepper
- 1 cup low-fat (or fat-free) milk
- 2 tblsp. all-purpose flour
- 2 cups reduced-fat sharp cheddar cheese, grated

Preheat oven to 350.

Cook the macaroni according to package directions. Drain and hold while you proceed with the rest of the recipe.

Heat a large skillet or dutch oven over medium-high heat. Coat the pan with cooking spray and add the onion, celery, bell pepper, carrots and garlic (if using). Saute 4 to 5 minutes or until vegetables are crisp-tender. Remove from pan and set aside. Add the ground beef and cook until browned, stirring to crumble. Drain ground beef and return to pan along with reserved vegetables, tomato sauce, 1/2 teaspoon salt and pepper.

Add cooked macaroni to beef/vegetable mixture and stir to combine well. Spoon the beef and macaroni mixture into an 11x7 baking dish coated with cooking spray.

Place milk, flour and 1/2 teaspoon salt in a medium saucepan. Stir with a whisk until well blended. Cook over medium heat 2 minutes or until thickened, stirring constantly with a whisk. Add 1 cup cheese, stirring until smooth. Pour cheese mixture over pasta mixture and stir together. Top evenly with remaining 1 cup cheese. Bake at 350 for 20 minutes or until lightly browned. Let stand 5 minutes before serving.

Enjoy!

Never Enough Thyme

<http://www.lanascooking.com>

Adapted from a recipe found on www.myrecipes.com