Lemon Pasta with Blackened Chicken

Diane McIlhon, RDN, LD – MercyOne Iowa Heart Center Prevention and Wellness Clinic

8 oz. whole wheat spaghetti
2 (6-8 oz.) boneless, skinless chicken breasts, halved lengthwise
2 Tbsp. olive oil, divided
2 Tbsp. salt-free blackening seasoning
1 tsp. lemon zest
2 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
2 tsp. lemon pepper
¼ cup Parmesan cheese, grated
¼ cup Asiago cheese, grated
4 cups arugula

Cook pasta in large pot of boiling water for 10-12 minutes or until el dente. Drain; reserve ½ cup of pasta water.

Sprinkle chicken with blackening seasoning. Cook chicken in air fryer @ 375° for ~ 15 minutes or until chicken reaches 165°. Cut chicken on an angle into ¼ inch thick slices.

Heat olive oil in skillet over medium heat. Add lemon zest, juice, and lemon pepper. Cook and stir for 1 minute. Add reserved pasta water; bring to simmer over medium heat. Add cooked pasta. Remove from heat.

Add chicken and arugula to pasta mixture. Toss to combine. Divided among 4 serving plates. Top with grated cheese.

Per serving: 322 Calories, 11 gm fat, 28 gm protein, 26 gm carbohydrate, 5 gm fiber, 205 mg sodium

Think of recipes as suggestions! You can make changes according to your taste buds and your health needs. I found a recipe that sounded good but was pretty high in saturated fat in the form of butter and large amounts of cheese. I swapped olive oil for the butter and reduced the suggested amount of oil (butter) and cheese in the original recipe. Instead of pan frying the chicken in butter, I used the air fryer without adding fat. By cutting those 2 ingredients, I reduced the calories by 200 per serving and cut the saturated fat in half!