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Buttermilk Ranch Penne Pasta with Chicken Sausage & Veggies

This is a super easy weeknight meal that will please kids and adults. It comes together quickly and is great as leftovers for lunch. If you don't like the veggies I use, just mix them up and add in what you like.

Ingredients:

Homemade Buttermilk Ranch:

1/2 cup light Sour Cream
1/2 cup Low-fat buttermilk
1/4 cup mayonnaise
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
1/2 teaspoon lemon pepper
3/4 teaspoon salt
Freshly ground pepper
1 teaspoon dried dill
2 teaspoons dried chives
2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
Few dashes of hot sauce, optional

Combine all of the ingredients in a medium bowl and whisk well. Chill until ready to serve. (Note: It is best to make this ahead to let the flavors develop. Make it the night before or earlier in the day and let it chill. The bonus is that it makes dinner prep even easier.)

Pasta with Chicken Sausage & Veggies:

13.25 oz box Whole Wheat Penne Pasta
6 carrots, peeled and cut into 1 inch pieces (I buy Greenwise Organic, but you can also use baby carrots here, about 2 cups cut in half.)
2 teaspoons olive oil
2 packages al fresco Country Style Chicken Breakfast Sausage links, cut into 1/2" pieces
1 package fresh broccoli, steamed (I use my microwave steamer)

Cook pasta according to package directions, adding carrots to the cooking water the last 2 minutes of the pasta cooking time; remove to drain. Add olive oil to same pot you used for pasta on medium heat. Add sausage until browned.

Add cooked sausage to large bowl. Add in pasta, carrots, and steamed broccoli. Pour Homemade Buttermilk Ranch dressing over and stir well to combine.

Nutrition Information (per serving):

Calories: 412 Total Fat: 16 g Saturated Fat: 4 g Cholesterol: 59 mg
Sodium: 777 mg Fiber: 11 g Sugar: 6 g Protein: 23 g