

Delta Gamma Well Aware

Encompasses eight dimensions: Social, Spiritual, Physical, Emotional, Vocational, Intellectual, Financial and Leadership Development

Vegetarianism

Different Types of Diets

As vegetarianism becomes more mainstream, variations on the diet have multiplied. Here are a few examples of the current spins on a vegetarian diet:

Vegetarianism – A diet in which the flesh of any animal (including sea animals) is not consumed

Veganism – A diet in which animal products are excluded from diet and attire, including dairy, eggs, honey, wool, silk, etc.

Flexitarian – A diet which is primarily vegetarian but allows occasional exceptions; sometimes called semi-vegetarianism

Lactovegetarianism – A diet which consists of plant foods plus cheese and other dairy products

Pescetarianism – A diet in which the only animals consumed are fish or other seafood

Pollotarianism – A diet, sometimes called pollo-vegetarianism, in which the only animals consumed are fowl

What is your vegetarian IQ?

Q: Is it difficult to get enough protein?

A: Unless the diet is very limited or low in calories, grains, legumes, nuts and seeds are good sources of protein. Including soybeans, dairy or eggs, you should have all of the complete protein you need.

Q: Are there health benefits to vegetarianism?

A: Yes, because a vegetarian diet is low in saturated fat and cholesterol while being high in fiber, vegetarians have lower average blood cholesterol and thus, a lower risk of heart disease. They are also less likely to be overweight and are at lower risk for gallstones and diabetes.

Q: Is vegetarianism becoming more popular?

A: About 2.5 percent of American adults and 4 percent of Canadians do not eat meat, poultry or fish and this appears to be on the rise. Being a vegetarian is easier these days; restaurants cater to a meat-free diet, college and school dining rooms offer vegetarian options and there are now famous vegetarian chefs and movie stars.

Q: Are there ecological and philosophical considerations?

A: Some people feel that slaughtering animals is wrong and that animals raised for food are often cruelly treated. Meat production has had destructive effects on the environment, such as air and water pollution. Antibiotics and other additives and contaminants also result in people choosing a vegetarian diet.

Q: Are there general guidelines for what to eat?

A: Consume four to six daily servings of foods rich in calcium or fortified with it. Eat two to three servings of beans, nuts or seeds. Do not forget vitamin B-12 (found in fortified cereals, soy milk or supplements) and vitamin D. Try to get six to 11 servings daily of whole grains and including an egg now and then with a little bit of dairy, makes it easy to meet nutritional needs.

Meatless Mistakes

Too much dairy & too many refined carbohydrates

- Many people fall into the trap of replacing meat with processed or familiar foods, sometimes referred to as the “cheese pizza and diet coke vegetarian diet.”
- To maximize nutrition in the absence of meat, replace it mostly with legumes (including whole soy foods) and substitute calcium rich vegetables for some dairy.

Not enough fruits and vegetables

- Vegetarians, vegans and meat eaters alike should strive for nine or more daily servings of fruits and vegetables, one to three servings of legumes, three or more servings of whole grains and one or more servings of nuts or seeds.
- Half of your plate should be filled with a rainbow of colorful produce to maximize phytonutrients.

The protein myth

- Even though many people believe that meat is the best source of protein, sufficient protein can be obtained from plants alone.
- Vegetarians and vegans can easily obtain the recommended amount of protein daily with a balanced, meat-free diet.

Relying solely on soy for protein

- Choose soy foods wisely.
- Fractionated soy products, such as meat analogues based on soy protein isolate, lack the nutrients that are abundant in whole soy foods.
- Look for whole soy foods such as edamame, soy nuts, soy milk, miso and tempeh.

Missing essential nutrients

- Reducing or eliminating meat from the diet can result in nutritional shortfalls of omega-3 fatty acids, vitamin B-12, zinc and iron.
- A multivitamin/multimineral supplement and omega-3 fatty acid supplement are good ways to ensure you are getting nutrients necessary for a healthy diet.
- Cooking in iron pots and consuming iron-rich foods, such as cocoa and leafy greens, will boost iron intake.

Fiber overload

- Sprinkling bran on everything, even though it is a great way to increase fiber intake, can be a mistake for vegetarians and vegans, who likely already get sufficient fiber.
- Wheat bran is a highly concentrated source of phytates that can impair the absorption of minerals that meatless eaters be already be lacking, such as iron and zinc.

Popular Meat Substitutes

Tofu

- This soybean product has a comparable amount of protein to a serving of meat but with fewer calories and no saturated fat.
- Look for whole soybean products and only eat processed tofu products in moderation.
- Use tofu in stir-fries, sautés, and kabobs and look for tofu products such as tofurky, tofu sausages, not-dogs, etc.

Tempeh

- This fermented soybean product has a nutty taste and meaty texture.
- It has low calories and fat, no cholesterol, contains as much protein as beef and is high in fiber, vitamin E and iron.

Quorn

- The makers of this product compare it to mushrooms, but it is actually made from a mold (*Fusarium venenatum*) that grows on grains.
- This fermented product has a hearty texture and is made into foods such as chicken-style nuggets to meatballs to a roast.
- Egg whites are added, which means it does have animal protein, but it is extremely high in protein and cholesterol-free.

Wellness Resources

Self Healing, July 2007

Self Healing, July 2006

UC Berkeley Wellness Letter, January 2005

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