



The Vegetarian Diet

Definitions

Vegan: A diet that includes only plant foods. No eggs, cheese, butter, etc.

Lacto-Vegetarian: A diet that includes plant foods and milk products but no eggs.

Ovolacto-Vegetarian: A diet that includes plant foods, milk products, and eggs.

Definitions

Legume: A plant that has a pod.

Complete Protein: a protein that contains all 8 essential amino acids.

Why Vegetarian?

Nutritional Reasons: believe that vegetarian diet is more nutritious and healthy.

Economic Reasons: Meat is more expensive. Also, some people don't want to support the meat farming industry.

Why Vegetarian?

Environmental or Political Reasons: Meat eating populations consume more than their share of the world's energy and resources.

Moral or Ethical Reasons: Believe that it's wrong to kill animals for human consumption.

Religious Reasons

Nutrient Needs

Calcium

- Dark green leafy vegetables = good sources of calcium.
- Broccoli and sesame seeds are also good sources.

Vitamin D

- Very few foods contain Vitamin D and they are all animal sources
- Milk is fortified with Vitamin D
- Take a supplement if all animal foods are eliminated.

Nutrient Needs

Protein

- Actually one of the easier nutrients to obtain
- Plants are considered incomplete proteins because they are missing 1+ essential amino acids.

Nutrient Needs

Protein

- If 2+ plant foods are eaten together they may form a complete protein.
- The best combination of plant foods = legumes + grains OR legumes + seeds
- If milk products are eaten it's easier to get proteins.

Nutrient Needs

Vitamin B12

- Only foods of animal origin contain B12 naturally
- Found in meat, eggs, fish, and dairy products.
- Supplements are recommended.

Nutrient Needs

Iron

- Greatest amounts found in red meats
- Good plant sources = prune juice, dry beans/peas, whole grains, dried fruit, leafy greens.
- Nuts and peanut butter have some iron but aren't the best choice.
- Supplements recommended.

The Magic of Soy



- Cholesterol free
- Low saturated fat
- High in fiber
- One of the few plant foods that is a complete protein.

Benefits of Soy

- Decreases cholesterol
- Prevents heart disease
- Boost the immune system
- Prevent some cancers (breast, colon, lung, and prostate).

Tofu

- Made by curdling fresh hot soymilk with a coagulant.
- Usually curdled with nigari which is found in natural ocean water.
- The curds are then pressed into a solid block.



Types of Tofu



- Firm tofu: dense and solid and holds up well during cooking. Also higher in protein, fat, and calcium than other forms.
- Soft tofu: good for recipes that call for blended tofu (i.e. cheesecake)
- Silken tofu: creamy and custard-like, used for blending.

Tempeh

- Made from fermented soybeans
- Nutty taste
- Nougat-like texture

