

Vegetarian Variety

Vegetarian diets can be healthy, nutritious and easy to prepare, if well planned. Put together a healthy, vegetarian plan.

Do You Know Your Veggie Facts?

Vegetarian is a broad category for diets that do not include foods of animal origin.

Lacto Ovo Vegetarians eat items containing milk & eggs, but not red meat, seafood or poultry.

Vegans eat only plant foods and avoid using products like silk, wool, honey and other animal products.

Semi-Vegetarians eat milk, eggs, poultry & seafood, but avoid red meat.

Make the Most of Your Vegetarian Diet

Protein

Sources include lentils, peas, beans, nuts, tofu and cereals. Eat a variety of these foods throughout the day to meet your needs.

Calcium

Consume 2-3 servings of calcium-fortified orange juice, calcium fortified tofu, calcium-fortified soy milk, broccoli, bok choy, kale, or turnip greens. For dairy, choose 2-3 servings of low-fat dairy products per day to meet calcium needs.

Vitamin B12

It's hard to meet minimums in a vegetarian diet, because **B12 comes mostly from animal sources** and is essential to your diet. Consume 2-3 servings of low-fat dairy products for lacto ovo vegetarians. Others, consider eating fortified cereals or a plant-based vegetarian supplement.

Zinc

Whole grains, legumes and nuts are good plant sources. Lacto ovos can get zinc from dairy products.

Iron

Rich vegetarian foods include spinach, lentils, dried beans, dried fruits and nuts, bulgur and prune juice. Eat Vitamin C rich foods, such as citrus fruits, to help your body absorb all the iron.

Tips to Eat a Healthy Vegetarian Diet

- Include at least 2-3 servings of lentils/dried beans or peas per day in your diet. These foods are rich in iron and other nutrients.
- Eat Vitamin C rich foods and iron rich foods together to increase absorption of iron.
- Substitute butter or cream cheese spreads with nut butters or bean dips.
- Add beans to your salad to pump up the protein and sprinkle some nuts on top for extra crunch and nutrition.

- Be sure to drink 2-3 servings of calcium-fortified soy milk/soy yogurt/soy cheese/orange juice per day to meet your calcium requirements.
- Remember to eat a variety of fruits, vegetables, grains, nuts and legumes to get optimal nutrition.
- Try something new! Many ethnic cuisines have wonderful vegetarian/vegan recipes that are nutritionally balanced.
- Watch portion size when you snack on nuts and dried fruit.