

BEING A HEALTHY VEGETARIAN



 **GRASSROOTS**
HEALTH

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BEING A HEALTHY VEGETARIAN

Being a healthy vegetarian can be difficult to navigate, especially if you're new to this way of eating. Please note that while there are several types of vegetarian, this information is based on lacto-ovo vegetarianism. The principles remain the same across the board and can be easily adapted for your specific preferences.

To achieve your health goals it is suggested you follow the recommendations outlined in this handout. If you're unsure of something or experience any road blocks, be sure to write them down so you can work through them with your practitioner.

You will likely find yourself spending more time in the kitchen as you experiment with food. This may not be easy at first, however, by creating a connection with your food you will soon find yourself reaping the rewards of good health.

It may take you a little while to get used to what works for you as a vegetarian. This is normal, but remember to listen to your body and try to objectively evaluate what you need. If you have changes in your energy levels, concentration, weight, or anything else, be sure to discuss these with your practitioner so they can assess any changes you may require.



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WHAT YOUR BODY NEEDS

It is important to remember that being a healthy vegetarian means not just cutting out animal products, but ensuring you replace them effectively. Nutrients that you should be particularly mindful of are Vitamin B12, Vitamin C, Iron, Zinc, Essential Fatty Acids (EFAs).

It is essential that you obtain sufficient complete proteins and good quality fats. A complete protein is a food that contains all 9 essential amino acids. In total we need 20 amino acids in order to function, but 11 of these can be synthesised by the body. The remaining 9 are essential as they need to be acquired through diet. Amino acids are literally the building blocks of life. They combine to form proteins that allow cells to grow and regulate.

The 9 essential amino acids are leucine, histidine, isoleucine, phenylalanine, lysine, methionine, tryptophan, threonine and valine. We can either get these from complete protein sources or by combining protein sources.



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B12

Food Sources

Eggs (must include yolks)
Swiss cheese

Spirulina and green powders are often used as a source of vegetarian B12. I do add a word of caution with these however, as they contain a form of B12 known as pseudo-vitamin B12, or analogues, that we aren't able to utilise.

Analogues are very similar to the real deal in that they bond to the same transport molecule used by B12, however, if these analogues are being bonded to the transport molecules instead of real B12, it can create a B12 deficiency. It's advised to eat spirulina and green powders with other B12 rich foods, such as eggs, so that it doesn't deplete your stores.

One thing that is essential to note in relation to B12, is that it is incredibly difficult for us to get bioavailable plant based sources. For this reason, you may need to consider supplementation due to lack of other viable options.



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VITAMIN C

Food Sources



Aloe Vera Juice
Blackcurrant
Broccoli
Brussel Sprouts
Capsicum
Citrus
Parsley (fresh not dried)
Pawpaw
Pineapple
Potatoes
Strawberries
Sweet potatoes
Tomatoes



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Food Sources

NB Plant based iron must be paired with vitamin C to ensure absorption.



- Almonds (raw)
- Apricots
- Avocado
- Leafy green vegetables
- Parsley
- Pine nuts
- Pumpkin seeds (pepitas)
- Sunflower seeds
- Tomatoes (dried)



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ZINC

Food Sources



Bilberry
Capsicum
Egg yolks
Ginger
Milk
Pumpkin seeds
Sunflower seeds
Wholegrains
Yeast



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ESSENTIAL FATTY ACIDS

Food Sources



Seaweed
Hemp seeds
Tofu (organic)
Walnuts
Avocado
Flax
Chia Seeds



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BEING A HEALTHY VEGETARIAN

COMPLETE PROTEINS

Food Sources

Quinoa

Tofu (organic)

Chia seeds

Hemp Seeds

Eggs

Amaranth

Buckwheat

CREATE COMPLETE PROTEINS

Grains + legumes

Legumes + nuts

Grains + dairy

Legumes + seeds



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BEING A HEALTHY VEGETARIAN PROTEIN CALCULATION

Ideally you should be having .8 of a gram of protein per kg of body. For example, if you weigh 50kg, you will require 40gm of protein per day. $50 \times .8 = 40$

If you find you're struggling to get enough protein each day, you may find it helpful to have a smoothie a few times a week, based on a *plain* protein. Below is a quick reference guide for common vegetarian proteins.

100gm of full fat coconut cream contains 2.3gm of protein.

100gm of mushrooms contains 3.1gm of protein.

100gm of broccoli contains 2.8gm of protein.

100gm of dry chickpeas contains 19gm of protein.

100gm of dry borlotti beans contains 23gm of protein.

100gm of organic tofu contains 8gm of protein. Be sure to only eat organic tofu.

Don't forget to choose your protein first and build your meal around that.

TIP - Adding hemp seeds to any dish is a great way to increase your protein, as well as your omegas. They're delicious in a smoothie, added to granola and yoghurt, and sprinkled on a salad or roast veggies.



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