

WHAT ARE THE NUTRIENTS TO CONSIDER IN A VEGETARIAN DIET?

- **Protein:** You don't need to eat foods from animals to have enough protein in your diet. Plant proteins alone can provide enough of the essential and non-essential amino acids, as long as sources of dietary protein are varied and caloric intake is high enough to meet energy requirements.
 - Whole grains, legumes, vegetables, seeds and nuts all contain both essential and non-essential amino acids. **You don't need to consciously combine these foods ("complementary proteins") within a given meal.**
 - Soy protein has been shown to be equal to proteins of animal origin. It can be your sole protein source if you choose.
- **Iron:** Vegetarians may have a greater risk of iron deficiency than non-vegetarians since the richest sources of iron are red meat, liver, and egg yolk. However, dried beans, spinach, enriched breads, cereals, grains, brewer's yeast, and dried fruits are all good plant sources of iron.
- **Vitamin B-12:** This comes naturally only from animal sources, so vegans need a reliable source of vitamin B-12. It can be found in some fortified breakfast cereals and soy beverages, some brands of nutritional (brewer's) yeast and meat (check labels), as well as vitamin supplements.
- **Vitamin D:** Vegans should have a reliable source of vitamin D, which can be found in fortified breakfast cereals and soymilk. Vegans who don't get sunlight may need a supplement.
- **Calcium:** Studies show that vegetarians absorb and retain more calcium from foods than non-vegetarians do. Vegetable greens such as spinach, kale and broccoli, and some legumes and soybean products, are good sources of calcium from plants. Calcium-fortified orange juice and soymilk are other reliable sources.
- **Zinc:** Zinc is needed for growth and development. Good plant sources include grains, nuts and legumes. Shellfish are also an excellent source of zinc. Take care to select supplements containing no more than 15-18 mg zinc. Supplements containing 50 mg or more may lower HDL ("good") cholesterol in some people.

Any type of vegetarian diet should include a wide variety of foods and enough calories to meet your energy needs.

- Keep your intake of sweets and fatty foods to a minimum. These foods are low in nutrients and high in calories.
- Choose whole and unrefined grain products when possible and/or use fortified or enriched cereal products.
- Use a variety of fruits and vegetables, including foods that are good sources of vitamins A and C.
- If you use milk or dairy products, choose fat-free/non-fat and low-fat varieties.
- Eggs are high in cholesterol (213 mg per yolk), so monitor your use of them. Limit your cholesterol intake to no more than 300 mg per day.

Test Results and Advice Nurse

Please call the nurse for test results and advice: 863-4463

Appointments

Appointments can be made in person or by phone. If you are unable to keep your appointment, please call and cancel. Otherwise you will be charged for the visit.

To schedule or cancel appointments, call: 863-0774

For more information about health care issues, visit the UHS Web site at www.sa.psu.edu/uhs

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