

Balance Your Plate with Plant Power – Plant-Based Diet



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Vegetarian diets may have positive health outcomes such as reducing the risk of and improving your blood pressure, cholesterol levels, high blood sugar and helping you with your weight management goals.

You don't need to go full vegetarian to enjoy these health benefits. A balanced diet including plant-based protein options will provide your body with more fibre and less saturated fat than animal-based proteins. There are various types of vegetarian lifestyles, some include milk products, eggs and even seafoods (fish, shrimp), although a vegan diet excludes animals and their by-products.

The recent version of Canada's Food Guide encourages us to eat more plant-based foods, without excluding the animal-based proteins.

Plant-Based High Protein Foods



Soy products:
Tofu, soy milk,
soybean, and tempeh



Cooked beans, peas
and lentils



Nuts, seeds and nut
butters



Whole grains such
as quinoa provide
some protein

To have a well-planned and balanced vegetarian diet, you need to consider including these nutrients:

Protein, zinc, vitamin B 12, calcium, and vitamin D: Food sources include legumes, nuts, seeds, fortified soy and milk product, and eggs (check the food label).

Iron: Vegetarian food sources of iron include, legumes, nuts, soy product, dark green leafy vegetables, iron-enriched whole grains. Fruits and vegetables legumes, nuts, soy product high in vitamin C can increase the absorption of iron from these sources.

Omega-3: Vegetarian sources are walnuts, flax seed, and flax oil.

Discuss with your health care provider to learn if you need to take vitamin and mineral supplement to prevent any nutrient deficiencies.

Review these resources to learn more about healthy and balanced plant-based diet:

- ▶ What is a plant-based diet?
<https://www.heartandstroke.ca/articles/what-is-a-plant-based-diet>
- ▶ All about legumes
<https://www.unlockfood.ca/en/ViewPDF.aspx?docid=8741&respgid=2161&lang=en&dated=2017-04-25%2012:04:32%20PM>
- ▶ All about lentils
<https://www.unlockfood.ca/en/ViewPDF.aspx?docid=9198&respgid=2615&lang=en&dated=2016-10-09%2010:04:49%20PM>
- ▶ Healthy vegetarian eating
<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/info/nutrition/if-nfs-healthy-vegetarian-eating.pdf>

