

healthy eating for vegetarians



10 tips for vegetarians

A vegetarian eating pattern can be a healthy option. The key is to consume a variety of foods and the right amount of foods to meet your calorie and nutrient needs.

think about protein
Your protein needs can easily be met by eating a variety of plant foods. Sources of protein for vegetarians include beans and peas, nuts, and soy products (such as tofu, tempeh). Lacto-ovo vegetarians also get protein from eggs and dairy foods.

bone up on sources of calcium
Calcium is used for building bones and teeth. Some
vegetarians consume dairy products, which are
excellent sources of calcium. Other sources of calcium for
vegetarians include calcium-fortified soymilk
(soy beverage), tofu made with calcium sulfate,
calcium-fortified breakfast cereals and orange
juice, and some dark-green leafy vegetables
(collard, turnip, and mustard greens; and
bok choy).

make simple changes

Many popular main dishes are or can be vegetarian—
such as pasta primavera, pasta with marinara or pesto
sauce, veggie pizza, vegetable lasagna, tofu-vegetable stir-fry,
and bean burritos.

enjoy a cookout
For barbecues, try veggie or soy burgers, soy hot dogs, marinated tofu or tempeh, and fruit kabobs.
Grilled veggies are great, too!

include beans and peas

Because of their high nutrient content, consuming beans and peas is recommended for everyone, vegetarians and non-vegetarians alike.

Enjoy some vegetarian chili, three bean



try different veggie versions

A variety of vegetarian products look—and may taste—like their non-vegetarian counterparts but are usually lower in saturated fat and contain no cholesterol. For breakfast, try soy-based sausage patties or links. For dinner, rather than hamburgers, try bean burgers or falafel (chickpea patties).

make some small changes at restaurants

Most restaurants can make vegetarian modifications
to menu items by substituting meatless sauces or nonmeat items, such as tofu and beans for
meat, and adding vegetables or pasta
in place of meat. Ask about available
vegetarian options.

nuts make great snacks
Choose unsalted nuts as a snack and use them in salads or main dishes. Add almonds, walnuts, or pecans instead of cheese or meat to a green salad.

get your vitamin B_{12} Vitamin B_{12} is naturally found only in animal products. Vegetarians should choose fortified foods such as cereals or soy products, or take a vitamin B_{12} supplement if they do not consume any animal products. Check the Nutrition Facts label for vitamin B_{12} in fortified products.

find a vegetarian pattern for you Go to www.dietaryguidelines.gov and check appendices 8 and 9 of the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, 2010 for vegetarian adaptations of the USDA food patterns at 12 calorie levels.



filled pita sandwich.

salad, or split pea soup. Make a hummus-

provider and employer.