

Seven Reasons Why Eating Vegan is Good for You

A growing number of health-conscious and environmentally concerned people of all ages are adopting a vegan diet so they can live more efficiently and improve their overall health. A vegan diet promotes efficient living because it requires fewer resources to grow vegetables than to raise animals.

Statistics show that since 2009, the percentage of people eating a non-meat diet have doubled in the U.S. Today, 5 % of the population, an estimated 16 million people, are vegetarians, and one-half of them are vegan. That's about 8 million people.

The vegan diet is growing in popularity, as many celebrities (Bill Clinton, Carrie Underwood, Tobey Maguire, Natalie Portman, etc.) and top athletes (Mike Tyson, Dave Scott, etc.) are promoting it. But the diet has continued to stir controversy because it is such a drastic lifestyle change from the traditional meat eater diet that has been the mainstay of American culture for hundreds of years.

Vegans don't eat any meat, fish, honey, or dairy products, which includes milk, eggs, cheese, yogurt, etc. Strict vegans also avoid using cosmetic or chemical products made with animal-derived ingredients, and they don't wear fur, leather, or wool clothing. Most vegans do not eat refined white sugar (made with charcoal from bone fragments) and some types of wine (includes isinglass, fish bladders).

7 Common Benefits of Eating a Vegan Diet

1-Better Overall Health

People on a vegan diet eat a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables and whole grains, nuts, berries, beans, and soy. As a result, they tend to have lower blood pressure and cholesterol and a lower risk of cardiovascular and heart disease; type 2 diabetes; prostate, colon and breast cancers; macular degeneration; cataracts; arthritis; osteoporosis; PMS; migraines; and allergies.

2-Weight Loss

A U.S. News and World Report article named the vegan diet as the best for overall weight loss, heart health, diabetes prevention, and long-term weight loss. Vegans have lower rates of obesity and weigh 5 to 20 pounds less than those on a meat diet. Studies show that vegans tend to eat fewer calories than meat-eaters and therefore have a lower body mass index (a measure of body fat). The vegan diet contains fewer saturated fats, so vegans have a better chance of losing weight and keeping the weight off. One study showed that people who eat a low-fat vegetarian (vegan) diet averaged a 24 pound weight loss the first year and kept the weight off 5 years later.

3-Increased Energy

Many successful athletes are vegans. Too much fat in your bloodstream from eating meat prevents arteries from opening to supply oxygen to the muscles. Vegetarian diets are high in carbohydrates that are good for efficient energy conversion.

Vegan athletes include marathon runner Scott Jurek, triathlete and ironman champion Dave Scott, NFL player Tony Gonzalez, and Olympian track and field star Carl Lewis.

4-Healthier Skin and Hair

Meat-based diets are high in fats that can clog skin pores, but a plant-based diet is low in fat and high in vitamins and

antioxidants that are good for skin. Fiber and whole grains help your body flush out toxins, and vitamins C, A and E from a variety of vegetables and nuts help fight wrinkles and brown spots. The zinc found in beans may help to decrease acne.

5-Reduced Body Odor

One study in the Czech Republic found that those who ate a plant-based diet (vegetarians and vegans) were judged to have a more pleasant body odor than the study group who ate meat. The conclusion was that meat consumption has a negative impact on body odor. This is because the meat diet does not have an adequate intake of phytochemical and micronutrients, so cellular detoxification is impaired. Some vegans report fewer problems with bad breath and others have discontinued the use of deodorant products.

6-Boost Immune System

Eating fruits and vegetables means a diet high in fiber, vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants that help improve your immune system. A good immune system means your body's cells and organs are working efficiently, so your body has defenses that protect you from the threats posed by bacteria and viruses. Your diet works in partnership with other good health practices such as getting enough sleep, reducing stress levels, and exercising.

7-Live Longer

A recent study of 173,000 people showed that vegetarians (and vegans) have a 20 percent lower mortality rate than meat-eaters. This means they live about 10 years longer. A 30-year study in Okinawa attributed the longevity of centenarians there to a fiber-rich diet of fruits, vegetables, unrefined complex carbohydrates, and soy.

Another recent study published in *The Daily Mail*, found that a

poor diet is the biggest contributor to premature deaths across the globe. One in five deaths are caused by diets that are high in red meat consumption and sugary drinks and lacking in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Unhealthy eating is contributing to the rise in heart disease, stroke, and diabetes.

A long-term study of more than 121,000 men and women in the U.S. found that eating beef, pork, lamb, or processed meat such as bacon, bologna, hot dogs, salami, or sausage, increased the chances of early death by 12 percent.

Conclusion

When you consider the advantages of a vegan diet, including improved health, weight loss, increased energy, healthier skin and hair, reduced body odor, a boosted immune system, and longer life, eating vegan is a very tempting choice, anyway you look at it.

Recommended Reading:

- *10 Vegan-Friendly Sources Of Protein*
- *Animal vs. Plant Protein – What's Better?*

Sources:

- *2014, The Year of the Vegan – One Green Planet*
- *Vegan Diet – U.S. News*
- *Why Go Veg? – Vegetarian Times*
- *Body Odor: Do Nutritarians Smell Better? – Dr. Fuhrman's Disease Proo*
- *Go Vegetarian, Live Longer – Men's Journal*
- *Red Meat Consumption Increases Risk of Early Death – Scientific American*
- *42 Health Benefits of Going Vegan – Wildflower*