

Vegetarian Variety Store

Are you thinking of becoming a vegetarian?
 Are you eating less meat than before?
 Vegetarian eating can be tasty and healthy when it includes a wide variety of nutritious foods.

People become vegetarians for many reasons, including health, religion and environmental concerns. Almost one million Canadian adults say that they are vegetarians.



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Types of Vegetarians

Types of Vegetarian	Pork, beef, other red meat	Chicken, turkey, other poultry	Fish, other seafood	Eggs	Milk and Milk Alternatives	Vegetables and fruit, legumes, nuts, seeds and other grains
Semi-vegetarian		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Pollo-vegetarian		✓		✓	✓	✓
Pesco-vegetarian			✓	✓	✓	✓
Lacto-ovo-vegetarian				✓	✓	✓
Lacto-vegetarian					✓	✓
Ovo-vegetarian				✓		✓
Vegan*						✓

*Vegans should ask their dietitian or doctor about taking extra Vitamin B12.

Whatever type of vegetarian you are, rest assured that plant-based foods are loaded with nutrients including plenty of protein, iron, calcium, vitamin D, iodine, omega-3 fatty acids, and zinc. Vegans need a reliable source of vitamin B12. Whether you eat a vegetarian or non-vegetarian diet, the key to health is simple. Include a wide variety of different foods in your diet – no one food source is nutritionally complete by itself. Vegetarians should choose foods from grains, vegetables, legumes, nuts, seeds and fruits. Whole unrefined foods are best. Eggs and dairy are optional.



Teens: Are You Ready to Become A Vegetarian?

A vegetarian diet can be enjoyed by people of all ages. Generally for teens, the hardest part about going vegetarian is figuring out which foods to eat in place of meat. Your body is growing and changing a lot. You should try to eat a variety of foods high in protein, iron, zinc and Vitamin B12 to replace the nutrients found in meat.

Try some of these vegetarian choices:

- Bean burrito
- Falafel
- Vegetarian chilli
- Baked beans
- Peanut butter and jam on a whole grain bagel
- Egg salad sandwich
- Hummus on a whole grain pita
- Egg or tofu fried rice
- Tofu/soy burger
- Vegetables and fruit with bean dip
- Trail Mix – nuts and seeds with dried fruits
- Cheese and crackers



Pack Some Protein Power! Protein helps your body grow. Teens should have 2 to 3 servings from the Meat and Alternatives per day. You don't need to spend your cash on costly protein powders to meet your protein needs. Foods high in protein include:

- Beans (refried, stewed and baked)
- Nuts and seeds, and their butters
- Soy products
- Yogurt
- Lentils



Ironing out Your Options! Iron helps your blood carry oxygen to the cells, so the cells will get energy. Red meat is one of the best sources of iron. If you don't eat red meat, other good sources of iron are:

- Iron-fortified breads, pastas and cereals
- Seeds and nuts (e.g. pumpkin seeds, cashew nuts)
- Dried fruit (e.g. raisins, apricots)
- Legumes (e.g. dried peas, beans, lentils)



Eat foods high in Vitamin C, such as broccoli and orange to help your body absorb iron.

Calcium for Strong Bones! Try to eat 3–4 servings of milk and milk alternatives everyday to meet your calcium and Vitamin D needs. If you don't eat milk products, then you can get calcium from other sources. Try soy beverages with added calcium.

Check out ***Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide*** at www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide to find out more about serving sizes for each of the food groups.

Nutritional Needs During Pregnancy and Breastfeeding

When you are pregnant or breastfeeding, you need extra vitamins, minerals and slightly more calories for you and your growing baby. Eat small meals more often. Eat an extra two to three snacks during the day, such as an extra fruit, yogurt or a slice of whole grain toast, to give you the nutrients you need.

During pregnancy or breastfeeding, you need to make sure your body is getting enough protein, iron, calcium, vitamin D, folate and zinc. Foods high in nutrients include:


- vegetables and fruits that are dark green or orange in colour (e.g., romaine lettuce, winter squash)
- whole grain and enriched breads, pastas and cereals
- nuts and seeds
- legumes – dried peas, beans and lentils
- milk and fortified soy beverage


Check out the Food Facts Chart section in this newsletter for nutrients that need special attention for vegetarians.

Note: All women who could become pregnant and those who are pregnant or breastfeeding need a multivitamin with **0.4 mg folic acid** each day in addition to eating a healthy diet according to **Canada's Food Guide**. Pregnant women need to ensure that their multivitamin also contains iron.

Food Facts Chart

The following nutrients need special attention in vegetarian meal planning:

Nutrient	Food Source	Nutrition Tips
Calcium	Milk, cheese, yogurt, kefir Calcium-fortified soy, almond and rice beverages Calcium-fortified orange juice Legumes-dried peas, beans, lentils Canned sardines and salmon with bones Blackstrap molasses Nuts, seeds Green leafy vegetables (broccoli, bok choy)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vitamin D helps your body absorb calcium. • Too much caffeine (more than two cups of strong coffee or tea daily), salt, alcohol, pop and periods of being inactive cause your body to lose calcium. 
Iron	Seeds and nuts (pumpkin seeds, pine nuts) Tofu, tempeh Blackstrap molasses Legumes (dried peas, beans, lentils) Dried fruits, such as raisins and apricots Fortified whole grain products-breads, cereals, pasta Eggs Fish, poultry, meat and alternatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To help your body absorb iron, eat vegetables and fruit rich in Vitamin C with your iron-rich foods (oranges, orange juice, cantaloupe, kiwi, mango, broccoli, tomatoes) • Cook with cast iron cookware because the iron can seep into the food. • Do not drink coffee or black tea with food. Caffeine found in these drinks makes it harder for your body to absorb iron.
Linolenic Acid (Omega-3 Essential Fatty Acid)	Nut, seeds (walnuts, flax seeds) Wheat germ Fish and seafood Algae Tofu Canola, flax and soybean oil Omega-3 eggs and Omega-3 fortified foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our body needs 2 to 3 tablespoons of unsaturated fat each day. Choose vegetable oils that are low in saturated fat and trans fat. • Many baked and fried foods in stores have saturated fat and trans fat. Try to eat less of these foods.

Protein	<p>Legumes (dried peas, beans, lentils) Milk and alternatives Calcium-fortified soy, almond and rice beverages Whole grain products (breads, cereals, pasta) Nuts and seeds and their butters Tofu, tempeh Eggs Fish, poultry, meat and alternatives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eat a variety of these foods throughout the day and you will get enough protein.  <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">Atari, Gracinha & Marco</p>
Vitamin B12	<p>Milk and alternatives Eggs Soy, almond and rice beverages with added Vitamin B12 Nutritional yeast with added Vitamin B12 Fish, poultry, meat and alternatives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegans who do not eat any animal products should ask their dietitian or doctor about taking a Vitamin B12 supplement.
Vitamin D	<p>Milk Soy, almond and rice beverages with added Vitamin D Egg yolks and fatty fish Canned sardines</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our skin can make Vitamin D from sunlight in the summer months. Use sunscreen to help protect your skin from too much sun. • During Canadian winters we do not have much sunlight. Try to get Vitamin D from food or take a Vitamin D supplement. • Everyone over the age of 50 should take a daily Vitamin D supplement (400 IU).
Zinc	<p>Legumes (dried peas, beans, lentils) Tofu, tempeh Nuts, seeds (pumpkin seeds, pine nuts) Milk, cheese, yogourt Eggs Oyster, crab, lobster, clams</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calcium or bran supplements make it harder for our body to absorb zinc, so do not take these with meals

Resource Guide

Magazines:

- Vegetarian Journal magazine
- Vegetarian Times magazine

Phone Numbers and Websites:

Dietitians of Canada
www.dietitians.ca

Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide
www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide

EatRight Ontario
www.Ontario.ca/EatRight

You can also talk to a Registered Dietitian for free at 1-877-510-510-2

The Vegetarian Resource Group
www.vrg.org/nutrition