



Top 10 Reasons for Going Veggie

1. Reduce risk of the number 1 killer – heart disease

Vegetarian diets are naturally lower in saturated fat, and cholesterol, and higher in plant nutrients than most meat-based diets. Vegetarians have been shown to have a 24% lower risk of dying of heart disease than non-vegetarians.¹ New Harvard research has shown high consumption of red meat and heme iron may increase the risk of heart disease by 50% amongst diabetics.² World-renowned physician Dr. Dean Ornish found that patients on a low-fat vegetarian diet actually reversed coronary heart disease.³

2. Cancer prevention

“Studies have shown that significant reduction in cancer risk among those who avoided meat...Meat is devoid of fiber and other nutrients that have a protective effect. Meat also contains animal protein, saturated fat, and, in some cases, carcinogenic compounds such as heterocyclic amines (HCA) and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH) formed during the processing or cooking of meat. HCAs, formed as meat is cooked at high temperatures, and PAHs, formed during the burning of organic substances, are believed to increase cancer risk.

In addition, the high fat content of meat and other animal products increases hormone production, thus increasing the risk of hormone-related cancers such as breast and prostate cancer...Vegetarian diets and diets rich in high-fiber plant foods such as whole grains, legumes, vegetables, and fruits offer a measure of protection.”⁴

Local Hawaii legend Ruth Heidrich is another great example of the power of a vegetarian diet. Following the advice of Dr. John McDougall, Ruth switched to a vegetarian diet after she was diagnosed with breast cancer. Ruth not only overcame the cancer, she went on to become an award-winning, record-breaking triathlete. She tells her incredible story in the best-selling book, "A Race for Life."⁵

3. Lose excess weight and keep it off

On average, vegetarians tend to be slimmer than meat eaters. Obesity rate in the general public is extremely high, while in vegetarians, the obesity rate only ranges from zero to six percent.⁶

A vegetarian diet low in fat and rich in vegetables, fruits, whole grains and legumes accompanied with daily exercise is the perfect formula for healthy weight loss.

4. Live longer, slow the aging process

A 12-year Oxford study published in the British Medical Journal found that vegetarians outlive meat eaters by six years.⁷ Plant-based diets are generally rich in fiber, phytonutrients, antioxidants, vitamins and minerals, which in turn strengthen the immune system and slow down the aging process.

5. Avoid toxic food contaminants

Flesh foods are loaded with dangerous poisons and contaminants such as hormones, herbicides, pesticides, and antibiotics. As these toxins are all fat-soluble, they concentrate in the fatty flesh of animals. Not to mention the viruses, bacteria, and parasites such as salmonella, trichinella and other worms, and toxoplasmosis parasites.

6. Reduce Global Warming

The United Nations said in its 2006 report that livestock generate more greenhouse gases than all the cars and trucks in the world combined.⁸ Therefore, the single most important step an individual can take to reduce global warming is to adopt a vegetarian diet.

7. Humans are vegetarian by design.

Our flat teeth are perfect for grinding grains and vegetables, not for tearing apart animal flesh. Similarly, our hands are designed for gathering, not for flesh-ripping. Our saliva contains the enzyme alpha-amylase, the sole purpose of which is to digest the complex carbohydrates in plant foods. (This enzyme is not found in the saliva of carnivores.) Basically we have all the right apparatus to consume vegetarian products, and none of the right apparatus for flesh foods.

8. Help end world hunger

Every day forty thousand children on this planet needlessly starve to death. Crops that could be used to feed the hungry are instead being used to fatten animals raised for food. If everyone on Earth received 25 percent of his or her calories from animal products, only 3.2 billion people could be nourished. If everyone ate a vegetarian diet, there would be more than enough food to nourish the world's entire population of more than 6.3 billion people.⁹

9. Have compassion for animals

Animals on today's factory farms have no legal protection from cruelty that would be illegal if it were inflicted on dogs or cats. Yet farmed animals are no less intelligent or capable of feeling pain than are the dogs and cats we cherish as companions. A vegetarian lifestyle awakens our spirit of compassion and guides us towards a kinder, gentler society in which we exercise a moral choice to protect animals—not exploit them.

10. Enjoy the diverse, colorful, and delicious world of vegetarian cuisine

Vegetarian meals can be tasty, fast, and easy. Plus, you can make any of your favorite non-vegetarian dishes by substituting with ready-made meat alternatives. There are lots of vegetarian cookbooks available as well. The Down to Earth all-vegetarian Deli is perfect when you don't have time to cook but don't want to compromise on taste and quality.

Footnotes

1. Key TJ, Fraser GE, Thorogood M, Appleby PN, Beral V, Reeves G, Burr ML, Chang-Claude J, Frentzel-Beyme R, Kuzma JW, Mann J, McPherson K (1998). "Mortality in vegetarians and non-vegetarians: a collaborative analysis of 8300 deaths among 76,000 men and women in five prospective studies." *Public Health Nutr* 1 (1): 33-41. PMID 10555529.
2. Lu Qi, MD, PHD, Rob M. van Dam, PHD1, Kathryn Rexrode, MD, MPH and Frank B. Hu, MD, PHD (2007) "Heme Iron From Diet as a Risk Factor for Coronary Heart Disease in Women With Type 2 Diabetes," *American Diabetes Association, Diabetes Care*: <http://care.diabetesjournals.org/cgi/content/full/30/1/101> [2]
3. Ornish D, et. al. Intensive lifestyle changes for reversal of coronary heart disease. *JAMA* 1998; 280(23): 2001-2007. <http://jama.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/full/280/23/2001> [3]
4. The Cancer Project, Cancer Prevention and Survival, "Cancer Facts - Meat Consumption and Cancer Risk": http://www.cancerproject.org/survival/cancer_facts/meat.php [4]
5. Saltzberg, Rebecca. 10 Reasons to Go Veggie. From PlanetVeggie.
6. Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine, Newsrelease, "New scientific review shows vegetarian diets cause major weight loss," : http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2006-04/pcfr-nsr033106.php [5]
7. Key, Timothy J, et al., "Mortality in British vegetarians: review and preliminary results from EPIC-Oxford" *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, Vol. 78, No. 3, 533S-538S, September 2003 <http://www.ajcn.org/cgi/content/full/78/3/533S> [6]
8. "Livestock a major threat to environment," United Nations FAO Newsroom, Nov. 29, 2006: <http://www.fao.org/newsroom/en/news/2006/1000448/index.html> [7]
9. Vegan Outreach, "Try Vegetarian!" Feb. 2004.

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