

Vegan Diet



Allina Health

Vegan Diet

A vegan diet is a way of eating that includes:

- vegetables
- fruits
- beans
- legumes
- grains.

Foods from animal sources (meat, milk, eggs, cheese, honey) are **not** eaten.

Planning Your Plate

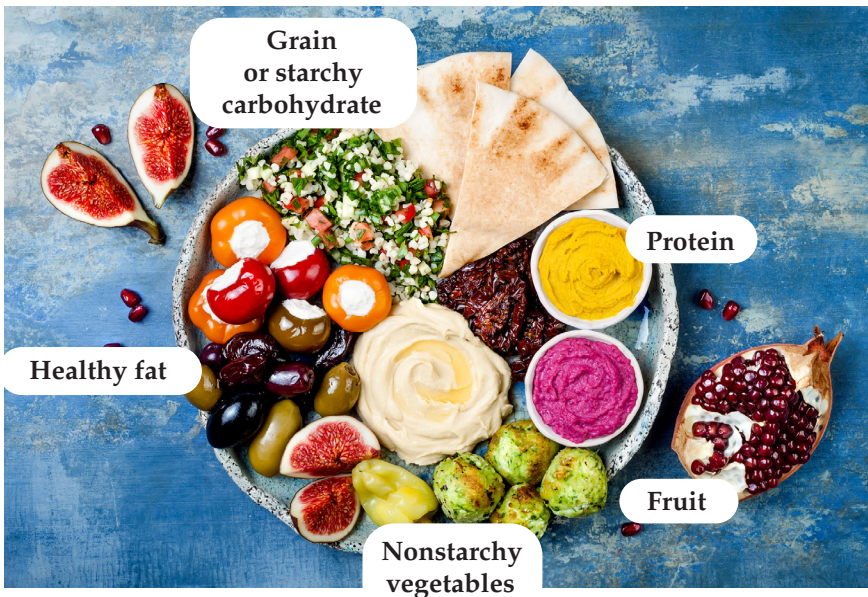
When you're following a vegan diet, it's important that you eat a variety of foods to get the nutrients you need to feel your best.

As you plan your plate, make sure to include at least one serving from each of the following:

- fruit
- grain or starchy carbohydrate
- healthy fat
- nonstarchy vegetable
- protein.



Water or
non-dairy beverage























Mix-and-match Your Plate

The chart on the next page shows examples of other foods you can eat instead of the ones shown (on left). Mix-and-match your favorites! Just make sure you're including one food from each column.

Take a second look!

After putting together your plate, make sure you've included at least 1 serving of a calcium-rich food. Examples include leafy greens, tofu, and calcium-fortified foods and beverages.

Nonstarchy vegetable	Protein	Grain or starch carbohydrate	Fruit	Beverage
 <p>lettuce and greens</p>	 <p>non-dairy yogurt</p>	 <p>cooked rice</p>	 <p>small banana</p>	 <p>non-dairy milk</p>
 <p>bell peppers</p>	 <p>nuts</p>	 <p>sweet potato</p>	 <p>grapes</p>	 <p>unsweetened tea</p>
 <p>broccoli</p>	 <p>cooked beans</p>	 <p>fortified cereal</p>	 <p>orange</p>	 <p>sparkling water</p>
 <p>green beans</p>	 <p>cooked tofu</p>	 <p>cooked peas</p>	 <p>apple</p>	 <p>black coffee</p>

Important Nutrients for Your Body

No matter how healthful your plate looks, some nutrients aren't easy to get when you aren't eating foods from animals (meat and fish, milk, eggs, cheese, honey). These include:

- calcium
- iodine
- iron
- omega 3 fatty acids
- protein
- vitamin B₁₂
- vitamin D
- zinc.

You may need to take a supplement or eat foods with these nutrients added (fortified). The charts on the next pages list vegan foods in which these nutrients can be found.

Nutrient	What it does in the body	Vegan food sources
Calcium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ helps strengthen bones and teeth ■ supports nerve health ■ helps blood vessels and muscles work properly ■ helps release enzymes, which keep your body working properly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ dark leafy greens ■ cruciferous vegetables (broccoli, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts) ■ dried beans, dried peas and lentils ■ almonds and brazil nuts ■ tahini (sesame seed paste) ■ Chia and flaxseeds ■ amaranth and teff (gluten-free grains) ■ seaweed ■ figs, oranges and black currents ■ soy ■ fortified juice

Nutrient	What it does in the body	Vegan food sources
Iodine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ helps make thyroid hormone, which is important for metabolism, bone health and brain development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ iodized salt ■ seaweed ■ prunes ■ lima beans
*Iron	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ helps carry oxygen to your tissues ■ converts food to energy ■ supports your immune system ■ helps your brain work properly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ dark leafy greens ■ dried beans
Omega-3 fatty acids	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ supports heart, eye and brain health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Chia and flaxseeds ■ walnuts ■ soy ■ nori seaweed ■ marine algae supplements

***Iron from meat, poultry and fish is easier for your body to absorb than iron from vegetables, fruit and grain sources. Iron from all sources can be absorbed better when you eat them at the same time as a food that contains vitamin C. Good sources of vitamin C include oranges and bell peppers, kiwi, strawberries and oranges.**

Nutrient	What it does in the body	Vegan food sources
Protein	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ helps maintain bone and muscle mass ■ supports your immune system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ most plant foods ■ nuts and seeds ■ whole grains ■ dried beans, dried peas and lentils ■ soy
Vitamin B₁₂	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ supports metabolism ■ helps make red blood cells ■ supports your nervous system ■ helps make DNA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ nutritional yeast ■ foods fortified with vitamin B₁₂
Vitamin D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ helps your body absorb calcium and phosphorus ■ blocks the release of parathyroid hormone, which makes bones thin and brittle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ mushrooms ■ fortified cereals ■ fortified orange juice ■ fortified almond and soy milk
Zinc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ supports your immune system ■ wound healing ■ helps break down carbohydrates ■ supports your sense of smell and taste 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ wild rice ■ dried beans ■ peas ■ peanuts ■ pecans ■ fortified cereals

Supplements

One supplement you need to take

Everyone who eats a vegan diet needs to take a vitamin B₁₂ supplement. This vitamin is found naturally only in animal products.

■ Vitamin B₁₂

— 25 to 100 micrograms each day

or

— 1,000 micrograms, 2 to 3 times each week

Supplements you may need to take

Here are some other nutrients for which you may need to take a supplement.

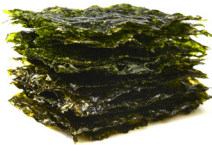
■ Calcium

In general, your body needs about 1,000 milligrams (mg) of calcium each day. How much you need will depend on the amount of calcium you get through the foods you eat.

■ Iodine

In general, your body needs about 90 micrograms (mcg) of iodine each day. You only need to take this supplement if you do not:

- use iodized salt ($\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon each day)
- or
- eat sea vegetables regularly.



If you don't eat sea vegetables such as nori (left) or dulse (right) regularly, you may need to take an iodine supplement.

■ Iron

You will need to get your iron levels tested before taking a supplement. Talk with your health care provider about getting this test.

■ Omega 3 fatty acids

In general, your body needs about 200 to 300 mg of omega 3 fatty acids each day. Your specific dose will depend on the amount of omega 3 fatty acids you get through the foods you eat.

■ Protein

Protein is important for healing, building muscle, strengthening your immune system, helping your body recover from stress and more! The amount of protein your body needs will depend on factors such as your size and activity level. Talk with your health care provider to determine how much protein your body needs, and if a supplement is needed.

■ Vitamin D

In general, your body needs about 1,000 International Units (IU) of vitamin D each day. Your dose will depend on the amount of vitamin D you get through the foods you eat and how much time you spend in the sun.

Get your vitamin D level tested before taking a supplement. Talk with your health care provider about this test.

Sample 1-day Vegan Meal Plan

Breakfast

- 1 cup cooked oatmeal
- ¼ cup blueberries
- ¼ cup strawberries
- 2 tablespoons flaxseeds
- 1 cup milk substitute with calcium added (fortified)

Lunch

- tofu sandwich
 - 3 ounces baked tofu
 - 2 slices whole-grain bread
 - 2 leaves romaine lettuce
 - 2 slices avocado
- ½ cup carrot sticks
- 1 medium apple
- 1 cup unsweetened tea

Dinner

- bean burrito
 - 1 corn tortilla
 - ½ cup vegetarian refried beans
 - ¼ cup chopped tomatoes
 - ¼ cup chopped romaine lettuce
 - ¼ cup salsa
 - ½ tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- ½ cup cooked brown rice
- ½ cup zucchini sticks
- 1 cup milk substitute with calcium added (fortified)

Snack (evening)

- 6 whole-grain crackers
- 1 medium peach
- 1 ounce nuts
- ½ cup orange juice with added (fortified) calcium and vitamin D



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