VEGAN & VEGETARIAN NUTRITION & CONSULTANCY COURSE

DIPLOMA LEVEL

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Vegan and Vegetarian Health & Nutrition

Part 1

Lesson 1

The different types of vegetarianism and veganism

There are many reasons why you may be looking to transition to a vegan or vegetarian diet. You may be choosing foods which are more wholesome for health reasons or you may be looking to take up a fully plant based diet due to ethical reasons. Here we will discuss some of the different types of vegan and vegetarian diets (there are many!) so that you have an informed choice and a starting point for your new or existing journey.

Terminology:

Vegetarian:

Someone who does not eat animals, which yes includes chicken and fish! Vegetarians will often consume dairy and/or eggs, drink alcohol which may go through an isinglass filter (more on this later) and often may eat sweets (often being unaware) that contain gelatine (again, more information will follow). The Vegetarian Society defines vegetarianism as: A vegetarian is someone who lives on a diet of grains, pulses, legumes, nuts, seeds, vegetables, fruits, fungi, algae, yeast and/or some other non-animal-based foods (e.g. salt) with, or without, dairy products, honey and/or eggs.

Dietary Plant Based:

Someone who does not eat animals, or eat or drink anything that comes from an animal, such as milk, eggs or cheese. This may also be due to allergies and food intolerances.

Vegan:

As the above (Plant Based) yet also brings animal ethics into other areas of their life, for example, a vegan would not usually choose to wear a leather jacket. The Vegan Society definition is as follows: Veganism is a way of living which seeks to exclude,

as far as is possible and practicable, all forms of exploitation of, and cruelty to, animals for food, clothing or any other purpose.

Junk Food Veggie/Vegan:

Someone who is happy to consume mock and processed foods such as mock burgers, mock sausages, faux bacon, ice cream and more!

Raw Vegan:

Someone who eats only raw plant based foods such as fruits, vegetables and some nuts.

As mentioned, there are many more, such as Pescatarian (an otherwise vegetarian who still eats fish), or someone who may eat vegan the majority of the time with some exceptions. You may fall into one of the above, or another category, or you may be starting out on this road and unsure of which path to take. So next we discuss transitioning…

Transition:

It is not necessary to transition to a vegan diet by going vegetarian first. Some people do, and the reasons may be that they find food choices easier, or that taste is a big issue until they learn how to cook amazing vegan meals for example. Some will go almost plant based but maybe still eat fish or eggs. Scientific research has proved that eating less animal meat is beneficial for our health and it is also clear that dairy is far from the glass of hand milked liquid that adverts still often lead us to believe. It is a good philosophy to do what you can to lead a better life, whether that means a better life for you or for the animals you may no longer wish to eat, or use products from. Work without judgement and find what works for you at this time. Each step is a positive change.

History and background of vegetarian and vegan diets

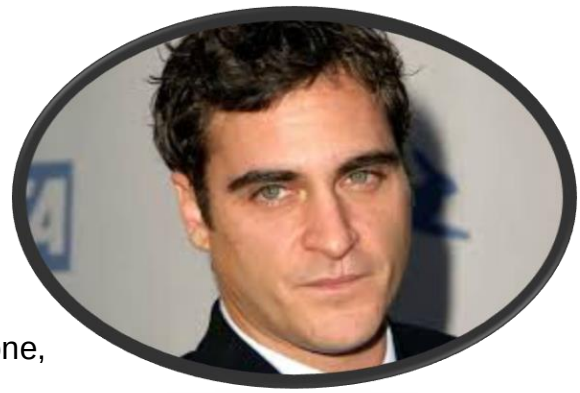
Vegetarianism is believed to have its roots in Ancient Greece and the Far East. Even today, much of the diet of the Far East is plant based. As this changes due to the American diet spreading, people in what were once believed to be more vegetarian countries and cultures are getting sicker. Japan was the leader in low levels of heart attacks and is known for having citizens with long life spans. Diets here have often consisted of fruit, vegetables, noodles and legumes for example. The Vegetarian Society has its roots at the turn on the 19th century. Yet it could be argued that early man was mainly a vegetarian. The diet of our ancestors is thought to have been mainly that of plants, with meat consisting of a very small part of our diet. A kill would have been done by the hands of those involved in the sharing and eating, much removed from the mass slaughterhouses which are hidden from view of those consuming the products of them.

Veganism was born of vegetarianism and took a different approach. As the vegan society explains, Donald Watson coined the term vegan in 1944 when he co-founded the Vegan Society in England. At first, he used it to mean "non-dairy vegetarian", but from 1951 the society defined it as "the doctrine that man should live without exploiting animals". Thus, you can see the ethical and moral shift which came with veganism, moving from a diet to that of a lifestyle which aimed to remove animal suffering in many walks of life.

Vegetarianism and veganism in modern times

Vegetarian and vegans for many years struggled for acceptance within mainstream society. Food choices will have been limited (supermarkets with wide ranging product choices simply did not exist, nor did online shopping of course!). Both lifestyles are now widely accepted in certain countries and cultures, yet still also found unfathomable in others. Nowadays it is relatively easy to walk into a restaurant in the UK, for example, and ask about vegan options. Some cafes and restaurants will even have a vegan menu. Most will have at least a couple of vegetarian choices and can be very approachable when asked if these could be ‘veganised’. With a little bit of planning you can even travel around the world and not have to go without a meal. Yet there will be places where, as a vegan or vegetarian, you will have some restrictions. This is why knowledge is power! Knowing to check in advance, researching places you are unfamiliar with and carrying supplies will come in very useful indeed!

There are many famous vegetarians, too many to begin to list, yet it the rise of veganism that is creating a very exciting shift in modern society. It is now believed that over half a million people in the UK are vegan, 1 million in America and worldwide that figure sits somewhere, it is thought, between 550-900 million people.



Famous vegans you may have heard of include Joaquin Phoenix, Ellen DeGeneres, Alicia Silverstone, Woody Harrelson, Moby, Morrissey, Tobey McGuire, Bryan Adams, Alanis Morissette, James Cromwell (changed his diet after filming the famous pig movie 'Babe'), Leonardo De Vinci, Chrissie Hynde, Albert Einstein, Heather Mills and Natalie Portman.

We have come a long way from talk of vegetarians being hippies and vegans being pasty and sickly looking and are moving towards a society where people are making informed and ethical choices, for themselves, for other sentient beings and for the planet.

Lesson 2

Environmental benefits

Did you know the worlds hunger problem could be eradicated completely if everyone moved to a vegan diet? One statistic is that for each calorie of animal protein a person eats, eleven times as much fossil fuel is used as that for one calorie of plant protein consumed. Studies suggest that the diet of meat eaters creates seven times as much greenhouse gas emission that the diet of vegans.

Sadly, although plant based diets and lifestyles are on the increase, so is meat consumption. This is due to a rapidly expanding population and people who may already eat meat, eating more. There is an epidemic of obesity and diabetes in the US, for example, and one only needs to walk into a meat based fast food restaurant to see why. The planet cannot sustain this demand for animals for food. It is literally killing the earth. The choice we make now many very well secure the words future, or ultimate destruction. Here are some reasons why:

Climate Change:

The animals we rear for food contribute massively to methane emissions and other toxic greenhouse gases, which contribute to climatic changes. Climate change is not a myth. Rising sea levels due to melting glaciers and ice-caps threaten humanity like never before.

Wildlife and Deforestation:

Species are disappearing from our planet at a massive rate. You only need to look at the REDD/IUCN lists of endangered species to see the losses occurring and likely in progress. All of the great apes for example are now severely threatened. There are a variety of factors for this, yet clearing land for grazing stock for food is one of the contributors.

Water:

Raising animals for food takes up 8% of the global water supply. This is probably our major contributor to water pollution also, responsible for dead water zones, coral loss, the spread of disease and more. The pollution comes mainly from animal wastes, the use of antibiotics and hormones, a cacophony of chemicals from tanneries plus the pesticides and fertilisers used on the crops to feed the animals.

Physical benefits

Physical benefits of vegetarianism can be varied and it may be suggested that there are not nearly as many benefits as going vegan. This will be discussed more in detail in this section. Often those turning to a vegetarian diet will continue to eat a lot of dairy produce, including cheese, which we now know is an addictive substance due to the casein content. In fact, using the Yale Food Addiction Scale, scientists found that cheese can be as addictive as hard drugs. It is not at all surprising that most people who are looking to go vegan say they may not be able to give up 'cheese'. As silly as this sounds, it may have a lot of weight to it. Vegetarians who continue to eat cheese may eat more of it than before they went vegetarian and not only may they put on weight, but may also feed that addiction further, leading to clogged arteries and serious health problems. Yet, of course there may be many benefits also to a vegetarian diet. Cutting out meat is likely to improve your health and reduce the risks of some cancers, studies suggest.

Physical benefits of veganism can also vary from individual to individual. There are people who have said veganism was even detrimental to their health. Moving to a vegan diet does take a commitment to being aware of your nutrition. You must be sure to eat enough and if you wish to be healthy, limit the junk food vegan intake (if that's what you enjoy). Yet benefits may include reduced cholesterol, higher intakes of naturally occurring vitamins and minerals (it is advised to take a B12 supplement as a wholefood vegan) Many vegans will also tell you they have increased energy levels, better hair and skin, a more balanced BMI (Body Mass Index), and less allergic responses, for example. Maybe the best way to test this is to try it! Yet, do your research first. There can be common pitfalls when you do not have the knowledge of where to start! Read on!

Disease prevention

We have touched upon a vegetarian diet reducing the risk of heart disease and type 2 diabetes, yet again this must be looked at from a health point of view. If you are a vegetarian who is eating mainly pizza and ice-cream on a daily basis, these risks may not be reduced at all. Vegans can also be very unhealthy and most disease prevention will come when there is a shift to a more balanced intake of good and not so good foods! There is no need to go raw vegan (although you may wish too and there are many benefits, although the lifestyle may be difficult for many to uphold).

Here are some areas of disease prevention suggested by scientific study:

Vegetarian & Vegan Diets:

- Extended life span in general
- Reduction of risk from many chronic degenerative diseases
- Low rates of obesity
- Low rates of coronary disease
- Reduction in occurrence of cancer
- Reduction in diabetes risk

Solely Vegan Diets:

As above, plus:

- Increases the intake of protective nutrients and phytochemicals
- Vegans experienced the most risks reduction for all-cancers
- Studies in progress suggest reduction in Parkinson's Disease

Lesson 3

Concerns with vegan and vegetarian diets

I may lose friends

There should not be, yet there can be a big difference in terms of friend's reactions when you make changes such as moving to a veggie or vegan diet. This idea of how friends will react is very valid for many. Your friends may fully support you or question your choices. When we make positive life choices this will often hold up a mirror as such to others around us and there may be thrilled or they may be defensive of their own choices. Many of us have habits and patterns and if someone in a group of friends who used to share our patterns changes, we can have conflict. If you are lucky you will have a very supportive group of friends and you can explain why you are making the changes and that is that. As a vegetarian this may be easier than a vegan. I will explain why.

It is easy to ask for the veggie options in most places or see them marked on the menu for example. When you go to a friend's house and they know you have gone veggie they can likely make or buy you something, and they probably have things in their home you can instantly have. They can likely buy you a gift that is veggie.

As a vegan, things may be more complex. For many this is very worth it for the ethical reasons they may have chosen to be vegan. Eating out means you may ask more questions or wish to suggest a different restaurant to your friends where you have more vegan choices. This may make your friends comment that you are difficult. Or! They may choose other foods themselves and love having a change of course! When you go to a friend's house there may not be plant based milk for a cup of tea or biscuits you kindly refuse. They may buy you a soap that has been tested on animals and you must work out what to do with that!

Thus 'will I lose friends?' is an important question and all our friends are different. What may be worth thinking about is what a friend really is. A friend is someone who

likes or loves us and as such should support our positive changes and cheer us on. If they don't we need to wonder why. Your choices are just that and if you move through life doing what you feel is compassionate or right then you have to do that. As with all stages of life, some people fall by the wayside and you pick up others on the way. You may even acquire lots of new veggie and vegan friends too as there are many networks and social groups, offering advice, support and friendship. As an aside, when I made my changes, the one or two people I knew who mocked me, were not people I really wished to be around when I actually thought about it! Onwards!

What do I do when I go out?

Restaurants:

Research! If you can, give them a call or look them up on the web and see what they offer. See if they have a separate veggie/vegan menu. You may even be lucky enough to have exclusively veggie/vegan restaurants in your nearest town. Italian restaurants may let you take your own vegan cheese for pizzas and many chains now have full vegan options such as Pizza Express and Zizzi. Oriental food often have options, try Sri-Lankan, Thai, Indian, Chinese….

Cafes:

Again, you may find exclusive veggie and vegan cafes and many will have options. If unsure, again just check ahead of time. You can usually get falafel, hummus or plain old beans on toast (you may need to use the words 'no butter please!'). Soups may be suitable, jackets, curries, bean chilli and so on. The more people ask, the more options places are likely to provide.

Pubs: Many pubs will offer veggie options and often a vegan option too (at least something they can change). Don't be afraid to ask. You can ask what the chips are cooked in and if veg oil then have with a salad if nothing else forthcoming! Wetherspoons and many other pubs now also have a separate vegan or veggie menu!

Parties/Barbecues: Offer to take food! Don't worry if at first all you can think of is olives and hummus! If you cook grab an easy recipe book and wow people with a veggie or vegan dish or snacks. Many snacks are vegan too. Just get used to looking at ingredients!

Take-away:

Yes, ok, not strictly going out but worth a mention!! Indian and Chinese can be very easy. The best way is to tell the take-away that you are veggie or vegan and not to have anything with meat, dairy or eggs for example. Tofu from a Chinese is often truly delicious, with rice rather than noodles which contain egg, so vegans beware!

What about my family?

Family might be trickier than friends! They can be accepting but they may also be judgemental, for the same or other reasons as friends. Stick to your guns! If you still live at home, offer to help shop and cook. Be honest and upfront about the changes you are making. If you are married and your partner is not supportive, understand that you may be questioning their way of life and that may be difficult for them. Just do what you need to do and give people time. Yet also do not take abuse. That is not acceptable. Your family, if they do not support you, may come to understand, given time. Leave the odd veggie magazine lying around or ask them if they will watch a documentary such as 'Forks over Knives', 'Cowspiracy', or 'Earthlings' with you.

I won't get enough nutrients

There is a whole section on this shortly! Yet the brief answer is that yes you will, if you eat a balanced diet. You will likely get more nutrients on a veggie or vegan diet than you will eating animals. The foods are more nutrient rich and will provide all you need. Just don't eat pizza and vegan burgers all day every day! More later in the nutrients and recipes section!

Is it safe?

Yes, again if you have a balanced diet. A veggie or vegan diet is not a starvation diet or a weight loss diet. You may change weight and shape of course but in a healthy way. If you are eating fruits, veg, grains, nuts and more, in healthy quantities you will

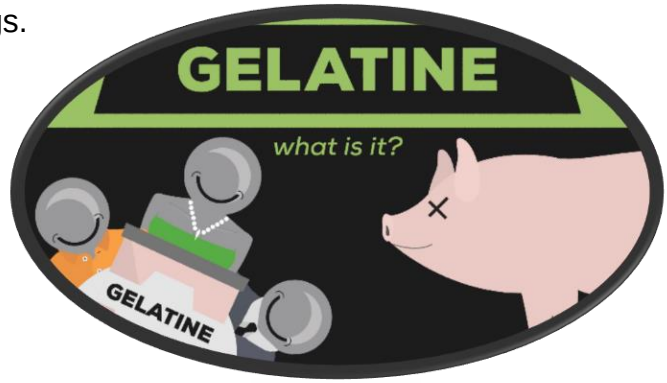
likely be fine and positively thrive! Just be aware of B12 as this is the only vitamin you cannot get on a vegan diet. You used to be able to as it was in the soil in veg but now most veg are chemically washed we have lost this natural source. Grab a B12 vitamin to supplement your vegan diet.

What if I am pregnant, or ill, or elderly, for example?

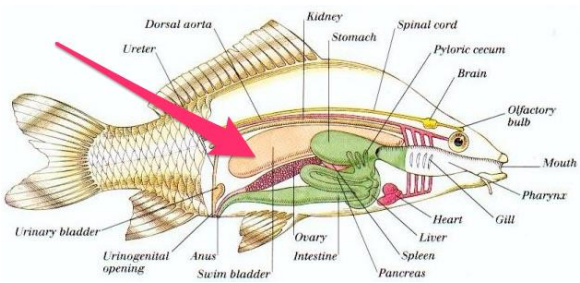
Again, we go into more detail on pregnancy later, yet if you are eating well and feel well, then chances are you are well! You can get all you need from a non-animal based diet. You can go through the whole pregnancy, you can breast feed and get ample nutrition. You may in fact be a lot healthier! Vegan diets are being shown to be the best for longevity and there are many vegan athletes and fitness professionals who defy ageing!! Look them up!

Hidden animal products and exploitation!

There are animal bits hidden in many things. Learn to ask more questions! This knowledge is also useful to others so when you find things you can share with others on their journey! For example, many jelly sweets contain gelatin, which is made of animal glue (often the bits left over in the slaughterhouse, boiled down into glue). Maybe for you (and your children) that is a 'no thanks!'



Some alcohol is fined using isinglass, which is fish bladders. If you don't wish your wine or beer to have gone through fish bladders, find one that is vegan. Sainsbury, M&S, Co-op and more, now mark their own brands if they are vegan. Barnivore is a website you can check your tipples! If you wish to avoid companies that test on animals, ask Animal Aid for a copy of the updated list, which is also on their website. Crisps may have milk in (important to know if going vegan),



clothes may have leather bits (important if vegan) parmesan cheese contains rennet, enzymes produced in the stomach of some mammals (important to know if veggie). There are more and you will find your way!

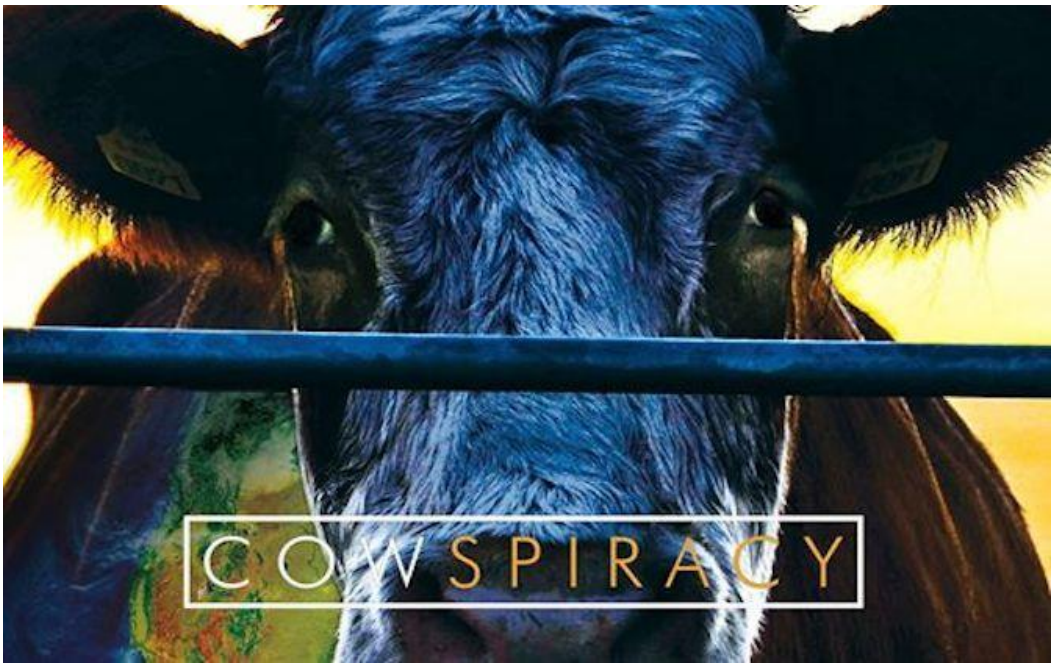
Which type of diet is best for me?

Questions to ask yourself:

The main thing is the WHY!

Why are you wanting to make this change? This will then inform all that you do. If you are wishing to be healthier and have not concerns about animal welfare in the dairy industry for example, then you may wish to try being veggie and see how that sits. If you have seen, read or just feel something and believe you need to stop all animal consumption then you likely need to go vegan! Brainstorm reasons behind your choices and don't be afraid to face yourself here. This is just for you. Know your WHYS! Then begin to think of the HOWS 😊

Films and documentaries to watch



There are many films you can watch to inspire you to go veggie or vegan. Here is a list of just a few of them!

Cowspiracy: www.cowspiracy.com

Vegan and Vegetarian Health & Nutrition

Forks over Knives:
https://www.forksoverknives.com

Earthlings: www.earthlings.com
(narrated by Joaquin Phoenix, quite hard hitting)

What the Health:
www.whatthehealthfilm.com

Live and Let Live: www.letlivefilm.com

Vegucated: www.getvegucated.com

Food Matters: www.foodmatters.com

Conversations to have

Any that inspire you! No-one will be as concerned about your health as when you go veggie or vegan! Where will you get your protein? Will you become anaemic? What will you eat?!! Arm yourself with some answers. Some of the info already will give you an idea and there is plenty more to come. If you go vegan, everyone will be concerned about your protein intake. Everyone. It is amazing! Vegans abound and none of them are dying of protein deficiency, let me tell you, so it's no big deal, yet do reassure people – they have your best interests at heart! The major thing is don't apologise for your choices. Be who you are and be proud of that. Empower yourself and that in turn will lead to a positive, enjoyable and confident life!

Networks to build

Finding others who share an interest provides encouragement and inspiration. Join your local vegetarian or vegan society. Go to meet ups. Find Facebook groups and other social media groups. These might be to do with supermarket finds, raw diets, social events, animal rights action groups, vegan runners, vegan singers – there are many exciting groups! Follow blogs. Start a group! Use your imagination to find ways to connect with others!

Special considerations

We will cover most of these in Part 2, including getting enough iron, more on B12, health conditions which you may be concerned about, fitness and mental health. A special consideration may also be useful in terms of what raised awareness may bring! Once you decide to go veggie or vegan, you will become more aware of animal exploitation, there is little doubt about that. You may only be wishing to go veggie yet end up becoming vegan as you find out more about how animals are farmed and used for human food and other goods. Be aware that you may be going down a path where you will see things that you may not be able to take back. That is definitely not seeing don't do it! Most veggies and vegans stay as veggies and vegans. Even the vegans who get very upset by any animal suffering (which is most!) would not choose to be anything different and most would wish they had done

it sooner. Whatever your choices, awareness is a gift you can give yourself right now. Having open eyes leads to an honest life.

Learning Review for Part 1:

Please answer all of the questions and although you are not required to submit these answers it does help you to consolidate what you have read. If you cannot answer at least 80% of the questions it is recommended that you read the information again. Some of these questions may be repeated as part of your final exam.

1. Name three different types of plant based diets and possible reasons behind them.
2. Is it best to gradually reduce animal meat and dairy intake before going wholly veggie or vegan?
3. What makes veganism more than just a diet?
4. Please give a brief history of vegetarianism and veganism.
5. Specify two environmental benefits which may occur if more people moved to a plant based diet.
6. What physical benefits might you see?
7. What might be a concern for someone new to a veggie or vegan diet?
8. What about eating out? Is it possible?
9. Please watch and write a short review on one of the films or documentaries.
10. How have you found this first lesson e.g. informative, engaging, overwhelming, common sense…?

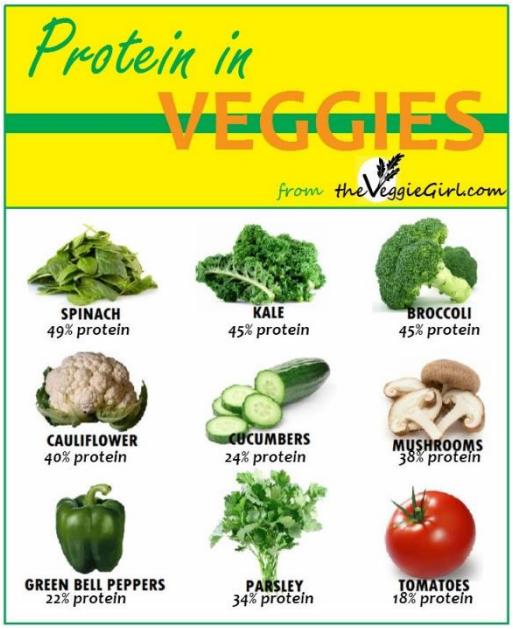
Well Done! You are ready for Part 2!

Part 2

Lesson 4

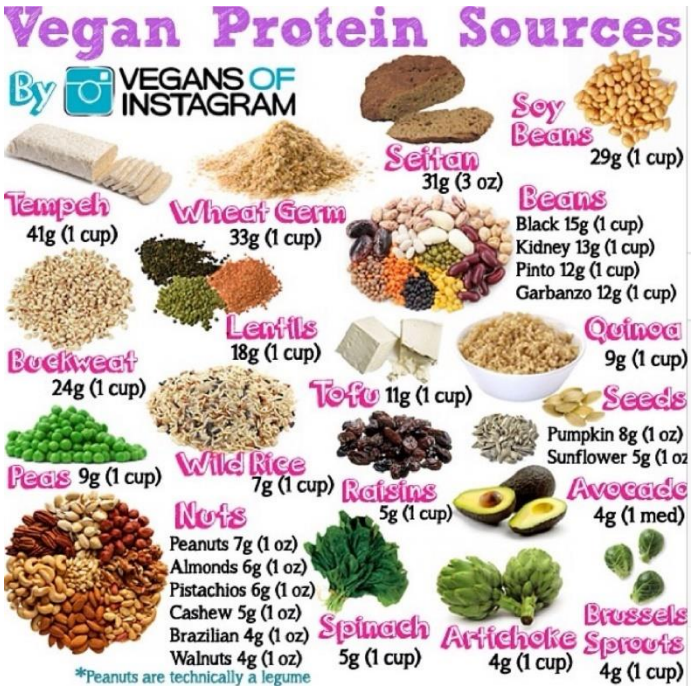
Protein consumption

Protein is a subject that comes up a lot when you move to a plant based diet, especially if you are going fully vegan. It is the number one question that vegans regularly get asked. There seems to be a lot of misinformation regarding this subject and it is often used as a reason not to stop eating animals. There are some websites which state that lack of protein is a concern on a plant based diet, yet looking closely, most of these are based on studying fad diets such as the banana only diet, and we would agree that more than one food is needed for a balanced nutrient intake!



There is plenty of protein in many vegetables and fruits, an adequate supply for anyone eating a varied plant based diet. There is really no need to worry.

Eastern diets are often plant based and we don't hear stories about people suffering from protein deficiency. If you are at all concerned, get yourself checked out. Signs of severe deficiency can include bloating, brittle hair, skin rashes, weakness and muscle pain.



Myth busters!

1. Protein is only found in animal products.

Truth: Protein can be found in many places! A serving of tofu contains 13 grams of protein. See the list in the next section for all the high protein veggie foods!

2. We need a LOT of protein!

Truth: Eating too many animal products can give you twice as much protein as the body needs. This can lead to health problems not solutions! The risk of diabetes increases with too much protein consumption, for example.

3. I don't need protein.

Truth: Yes, you do, for healthy muscles along with healthy skin and overall body functioning. It is a vital nutrient! Yet you can get all you need by a healthy (occasionally not so healthy!) and delicious plant based diet!

High protein vegan and vegetarian foods:

Lentils

Tofu/Soya Milks

Beans

Greens:

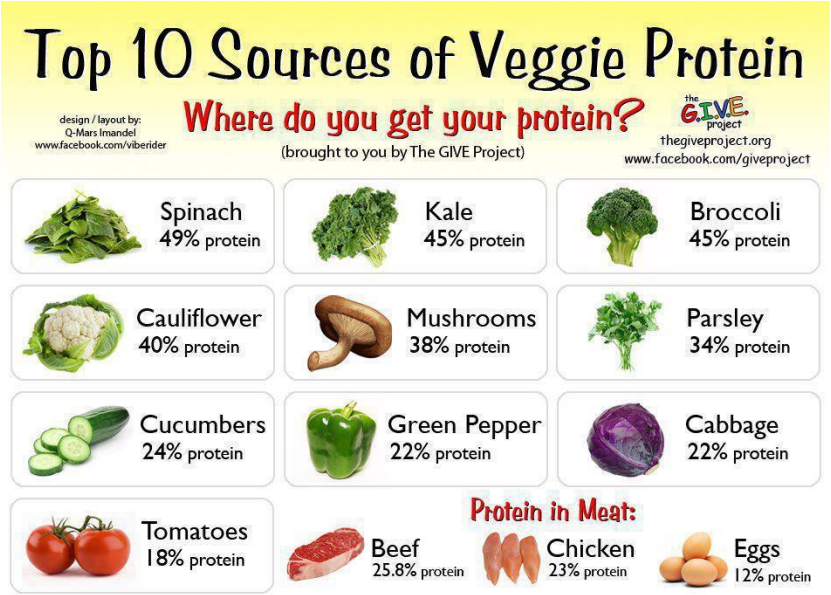
E.g. Spinach/Broccoli/ Asparagus/Peas/Artichokes

Seitan

Quinoa

Oats

Seeds (and product such as Tahini)



Nuts such as: Almonds and Nut butters! Yum!

The short answer:

"I get all the protein I need from fresh fruits, vegetables and legumes – leafy greens especially have lots of protein in them, so I eat them whenever I can. I figure that if gorillas and elephants can thrive on plant-based protein, I can too!"

Iron consumption and anaemia:

Case Study (Jill F.)

I was a meat eater until I was 25 years old. I had toyed with vegetarianism but never quite did it fully. I then chose to be a pescatarian (veggie mainly but occasionally ate fish and seafood). I didn't eat healthily at this time. As a veggie I fell into eating cheese all the time. This was before I understood cheese was a chemical addiction. I went to the doctors and was given iron tablets. These gave me vivid nightmares and I had constipation a lot (apologies for the detail). I felt weaker than before and wasn't sure this was right. About the same time, I had made the connection between not causing any animal any suffering and becoming vegan. I listened to a podcast called Vegetarian Food for Thought by Colleen Patrick- Goudreau and that was all it took for me to ditch dairy and any other habit which was causing (often indirect) pain to the animals I claimed to love. I also decided to see what a more natural diet would be like, without the iron tablets too.

I looked up iron dense vegan foods and incorporated spinach, almonds and dried apricots into my diet on a regular basis. Within 3 months I was iron tablet free, feeling super healthy, had dropped two dress sizes, had more energy than ever before and felt mentally clear and inspired to do anything I put my mind to. I went to the doctors for another test and my iron levels were normal. 7 years later I went for my 40 year old general health check-up and was fine not just on iron levels but on everything. The doctor actually said to me 'Whatever you are doing, keep on doing it!' Don't get me wrong I don't always pick the healthiest option, I also love pizza, crisps and wine…yet I know my choice to eliminate animals from my plates, glasses, shoes and more have created a healthier and happier person. When I went vegan, my mother was worried about anaemia for me. She thought I needed to eat lots of steak. It then transpired that both my mother and grandmother had both suffered from anaemia. My grandmother had to have regular iron injections for example and consumed a very dense animal diet. So, genetics may have been playing its part. Yet what you choose to eat and make a difference. It did for me!

Iron-rich vegan and vegetarian foods.

Here is a non-exhaustive list of iron-rich foods for you to enjoy!

Lentils, soybeans, tofu, tempeh, beans, brown rice, oats, quinoa, fortified cereals, nuts and seeds, nut butters and pastes, tomatoes, kale, spinach, swiss chard, collard greens, prunes, apricots, molasses, vegemite,

Note that Vitamin C also aids iron absorption so add some into your daily mix and reap the benefits!

Lesson 5

Vitamin B12

A lack of vitamin B12 may cause anaemia and nervous system damage. As stated earlier, it is recommended to take a B12 supplement if you are following a vegan diet and possibly a vegetarian diet. You may also be lacking in B12 as a carnivore. Some foods are fortified yet, as the symptoms of a B12 deficiency may not show up until the damage is irreversible, sometimes up to 5 years after the body is lacking, it is suggested to take a daily or weekly supplement. Vitamin B12 comes from micro-organisms and deficiency may include not only the above-mentioned anaemia and nervous system damage, but also may present increased risk of heart disease or pregnancy complications.

The Vegan Society recommends ten micrograms of B12 spread over a day and suggests you be aware of any possible B12 deficiency symptoms, which may include loss of energy, tingling, numbness, reduced sensitivity to pain or pressure, blurred vision, abnormal gait, sore tongue, poor memory, confusion, hallucinations and personality changes. Often these symptoms develop gradually over several months to a year before being recognised as being due to B12 deficiency and they are usually reversible on administration of B12. There is, however, no entirely consistent and reliable set of symptoms and there are cases of permanent damage in adults from B12 deficiency.

Vitamin A

On a plant based diet the body converts carotenoids (organic pigments) into vitamin A; the most common being beta-carotene, which you have likely heard of.

Symptoms of having a vitamin A deficiency may include eye problems such as night blindness, corneal ulcers, and possible blindness. Again, such things are not often heard of on a vegetarian or vegan balanced diet as you will likely be eating more nutrient dense food than

previously! Vitamin A is good for immunity and although it's pure form is found in animal produce, beta-carotenes may cancel out the negatives of meat eating e.g. increased risks of diseases such as cancers and diabetes. Most people are not at risk of a lack of Vitamin A.

Vitamin A dense foods include: Pumpkin, carrot, spinach, cantaloupe, kale, broccoli, mango, apricots. Again, this is just a short list to give you an idea of balancing your diet and often, as long as you eat a varied diet, you will get all you need without too much thought to this.

Calcium

As with protein, there are many myths surrounding calcium. The main issue with dairy is that people find it hard to give up so if looking more to a vegan diet, rather than a vegetarian diet, this needs to be considered. There is casein in cheese for example which studies have shown to be as addictive as alcohol and hard drugs!

Yet, breaking the cycle is possible. Take a break from dairy for a short while and then use substitutes if you like, such as plant based milks and vegan cheeses.

You can get all the calcium you need from a fully plant based diet.

Foods such as broccoli, avocado, dates, squash, berries and many more provide a high calcium content.

More and more cases of osteoporosis are being seen in those with a high dairy intake, maybe suggesting some people actually have too much calcium and this is having negative effects. As with everything, balance is the key. The dairy industry is huge and finances many of our governmental studies and adverts telling the population to build bones by drinking more milk, there is profit at stake here don't forget! If you are not going vegan, it may be worth limiting dairy intake and seeing if any health conditions improve. Vegans often site a reduction in eczema, healthier

skin and more energy/less lethargy. Many processed vegan foods also have calcium added. Just watch your body. You can take an all-round supplement too if you prefer to have all bases covered!

Vitamin D

Our sunshine vitamin! Not brilliant if you live in the UK haha!

Vitamin D can help us with healthy bones and muscles. It also helps regulate the amount of calcium and phosphate in our bodies. When we are exposed to sunlight we actually make Vitamin D ourselves. If you live in a country without a lot of sun, it may be wise to take a supplement as there may not be enough sun exposure to give ourselves a decent amount. Please also be wary of spending too much time in the sun though!! We may also notice a deficiency during long winter months.

You can also get Vitamin D from food, such as organic mushrooms, tofu and fortified foods and beverages, yet likely not enough. Supplements can be on their own or as part of a multi-vitamin. Just be aware that not all sources are plant based so please check! Vitamin D2 is always suitable for vegans, but vitamin D3 can be derived from animal sources such as sheep's wool

The Vegan Society also suggest that sufficient vitamin D intake may help to prevent cancer, while a deficiency is linked not just to cancer, but also to multiple sclerosis, muscle weakness, and depression.

Omega 3 acids

Omega 3 are also known as essential fatty acids, which are varieties of polyunsaturated fats. The body cannot produce Omega 3 on its own.

Fatty acids such as Omega 3 aid our cells and nervous system. This is important for healthy body (especially brain and eye) functioning.

Omega 3 may also help reduce inflammation and assist in healing from skin conditions.

As Omega 3 assists brain functioning, it is being considered as a vital treatment for mental health conditions, such as depression and Alzheimer's. It is also thought that this is an optimal nutrient for pregnant women as it may assist development of cognitive functions. Other studies suggest fatty acids can help reduce heart conditions such as inflammation of the arteries.

Top natural sources of Omega 3 include flax seeds, chia seeds, hemp seeds, berries, mustard, oil, seaweed, herbs and spices, spirulina, beans, wild rice, squashes, melon, mango, cabbage, cauliflower and leafy greens.

L-Cartinine

A healthy person will not usually need to worry about an L-Cartenine deficiency. If you have an issue with your liver and kidneys then you may wish to check your levels. The body makes Carnitine and its purpose is to help burn fat. Sometimes body builders supplement Cartinine to improve performance but it may interfere with a normal person's metabolism if over-used. Our advice is not to worry about this natural nutrient unless there is a serious reason to do so.

Lesson 6

Pregnant women

It is perfectly safe to have a veggie or vegan pregnancy. A varied plant based diet is full of perfect nutrients to keep you and your baby healthy. Have an awareness of your iron, protein, vitamin B12 and vitamin D intake and supplement if required. This is the same advice whatever diet you may be following. The NHS advices also to keep an eye on calcium intake and avoid certain cheeses and undercooked eggs due to potential risks.

Eating a balanced plant based diet is likely to keep you healthy and strong especially if combined with gentle exercise. This question of a balanced diet is emphasised by experts, including the American College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, and the American Dietetic Association (ADA), who have given you the green light to continue your current way of eating— as long as it's well-planned.

It is also perfectly safe, for both you and your baby, to nurse/breastfeed on a veggie or vegan diet. You would be mindful of your eating and drinking habits at this time on any diet so just be sure that you are getting all you need.

Children

"Why do people worry about veganism being unhealthy more than we do about eating pizza and sitting washed out in front of the television?"

— Sivan Berko, Vegan Kids: How To Raise Healthy Vegan Children And Keep Them On The Right Track.

The Young Veggie website has encouraging pages including nutritional information, tips on how to talk to parents about wishing to stop eating animals, recipes, a veggie-chat forum and other activities to encourage a move towards a plant based diet.

The Vegan Society has sections dedicated to helping to raise healthy vegan children, and breaks advice down into age groups which is especially helpful. The advice really boils down to making sure that they are eating enough of the good foods and not so much of the junk foods…. kids do love junk foods, therefore it can be a great skill to learn how to make your own treats which pack in the goodies! Homemade smoothies and ice-creams, veggie fritters and hummus plates are often favourites with kids of most ages!

Elderly people

This image to the left is of Bernadette Bohan. After having cancer twice, she switched to a plant based diet. Aged 60 she is convinced an animal free diet slows down ageing and by nourishing cells and aiding immunity.

Below is Dr Ellsworth Wareham, 100 years old. He practiced medicine until the age of 95, when he retired. He turned vegan aged 50 after reading the health benefits.

There are strong cases to suggest that a plant based is the healthiest way to eat as we grow older. Including all the sources we have thus far mentioned, such as good proteins, though eating tofu, nuts, grains, seeds, leafy greens etc, iron, calcium and a balance of all the other required nutrients (which we have mentioned doesn't need to be tracked with every mouthful if your meals are often varied and healthy), you can maximise your health.

You are more likely to fight off disease or escape its clutches in the first place if you are eating living foods and not rotting flesh. It is common sense really and studies are showing that animal products are being linked more and more to the diseases that kill us. Often the best advice is to eat things you know the source of. Local organic fruit and veg for example, are likely the most vibrant sources of nutrients you can find. Look out for local organic sellers and schemes. It doesn't have to be expensive, when you combine with rice, lentils and other products.

Bodybuilders and athletes

In the final section of the course, a little later on, we look at case studies. One of these studies is of a vegan runner. Thus, combined with the info you are about to read, you should get an all-round idea of what it is like to be a vegan athlete and the extra considerations you may need to make when planning your meals!

This is Jim Morris. He is 79 years young. Looks pretty buff on his plant based diet! He is a former Mr Universe and has been plant based for over 10 years. He has credited his vegan diet for the disappearance of arthritis and other conditions which were weighing him down.

There is a lot of information available about diets for sports people and vegan often comes out better than vegetarian. This may be due again to many vegetarians relying heavily on dairy, which is mostly very processed, and this reliance is not allowing for a more varied food and drink intake. You can download a plan from the 'No Meat Athlete' to get you going if you the sporty kind! The link is: http://www.nomeatathlete.com/vegetarian-diet-athletes/.

All the advice regarding what to eat is relevant to bodybuilders and athletes. You can also add in some plant based protein powders and if you wish to really monitor your calories or nutrient intake, then of course you can (some advice is to look for ratios such as 65% carbohydrate,13% protein and 22% fat) yet it shouldn't be necessary if you are eating well, often and listening to your body!

Learning Review for Part 2:

1. Describe two protein myths! Use those in the course or offer others.
2. Name 5 protein rich plant based foods.
3. What might I do if I am concerned about my iron intake?
4. Why is B12 important for anyone to be aware of?
5. Please name 8 sources of calcium that excludes eating animals or drinking what they produce.
6. What does Omega 3 do and where can I get it?
7. What can I tell people who are concerned about my (or my partners/friends etc) veggie (or more likely to be commented upon, vegan) pregnancy?
8. Can I raise my kids as veggies or vegans? Is it safe?
9. Don't I need more meat as I get older for protein and strength?

10. I exercise a lot. Can I still consider a plant based diet?

Well Done! You are ready for Part 3!

Part 3

Lesson 7

Creating a balanced diet

To begin with it is an idea to have some kitchen basics. All the below are vegan and you can adapt to vegetarian as needed.

Some of these will be according to taste – for example if you do not like spicy foods you may wish to omit items such as harissa paste! Always check that the brands you buy are vegan – a quick look on the label will show you, most dairy products are now highlighted in bold on most labels.

In terms of sourcing items, you can now find many ingredients in most supermarkets, either mixed in with the everyday basics or on the free from aisle. Health food shops are also full of goodies, yet you may be paying a premium. Have a shop around. Most of these items can be gained for reasonable prices, or in the case of things like vegan mayo, you can even make your own!

Cupboard staples:

Beans of any kind – dried or ready to use.

Tins and packets – chickpeas, passata, chopped tomatoes, sweetcorn, veg, mock meats (Chinese supermarkets), tofu, tomato puree.

Lentils – dried or ready to use.

Nuts – you can throw nuts into lots of things so a variety is good to have in stock e.g. cashew, walnuts, pecans…

Couscous, rice, pasta, quinoa.

Herbs and spices – experiment here yet some useful herbs and spices may include, mixed herbs, basil, coriander, mint, turmeric, chilli, paprika (normal or smoked), garam masala, cumin, ginger.

Seeds – pumpkin, sesame and sunflower are great starting points!

Soy sauce.

Nutritional yeast.

Mustard.

Sauces – sweet chilli for example.

Vegan stock cubes or marigold loose stock.

Oils – Olive oil, coconut oil, sesame oils work well and are a healthier option, yet sunflower oil remains cheap and cheerful for cooking.

Mixes – vegan burger mix, vegan sausage mix, nut roast, falafel etc.

Potatoes and other root veg.

Coconut milk.

Refrigerator items:

Vegan mayo.

Harissa paste (refrigerate once open).

Vegan red or green pesto (refrigerate once open)

Olives – fresh in fridge, jars place in fridge once opened.

Vegan spread – Pure, Vitalite, most own brand free from spreads are all vegan (please check this as this is just correct at the time of writing).

Vegan milks (only need to be in the fridge once opened if long life) – soya milk, almond milk, hemp milk, rice milk, oat milk, coconut milk, hazelnut milk….

Tofu.

Hummus.

Fruit and veg e.g. mushrooms, leeks, kale, aubergine, chillies, tomatoes, bananas, avocado…

Garlic & ginger.

Freezer items:

Vegan sausages, pies, burgers, strips.

Frozen fruit – mango, pineapple, berries etc.

Frozen veg – peas, spinach, cauliflower etc.

Vegan ice cream, vegan choc ices, vegan cornettoes and lollies.

Puff pastry.

Vegan Milks

These are brilliant substitutes and those new to veganism may wonder where to start!

It is well worth buying several milks and trying them to see which you like the best. You may find you have a couple which you link with or in different things, for example soya, almond and hemp milks work well in tea but you may find some curdle in coffee. Almond milk may add a new lovely taste to breakfast cereal, whereas soya milk may give a more familiar taste.

You can also buy sweetened and unsweetened plant milks, so see which you like. You can also choose many organic milks, sometimes more expensive yet sometimes now. Once you learn what you like you can shop around, prices can vary a lot!!

Nutrient and mineral checklist.

We would suggest at first, that you make the transitions you would like in a way that is most loving to yourself. To move from an unhealthy carnivore diet to raw veganism for example may not be the most appetising route. You can find plenty of nutritional information here in the course and also for reference, you can visit the vegan society pages on plant based nutrition at https://www.vegansociety.com/resources/nutrition-and-health/vitamins-minerals-and-nutrients/overview

We would suggest that you incorporate certain foods to make sure you are getting what you need in terms of nutrition, such as iron and calcium. Yet to be honest, when you move to a near or full vegan diet it is likely that you will be consuming an overall healthier diet anyway. Maybe don't just jump right into all the vegan junk food but if you wish to try it, try it!

Once you find your feet you can begin to move towards what you are aiming for, yet for now, just experiment with vegan food, vegan cooking, dining out, meeting others and exploring the joys of a vegan lifestyle!

Be aware of any changes in health which may give you any concerns. We would advise taking a multi-vitamin or at least a B12 supplement. Yet try different foods and this should provide a rich vitamin and mineral dense diet which should give you a spring in your step!

Meal planning

There are a wealth of wonderful cookbooks, websites and more to give you plenty of ideas for meal choices. As a start we have provided you with some fantastic breakfast recipes to get your day off to a great start! Eat when you are hungry and be ready to try new things to keep you inspired! If you have your basics ready, you are good to go with just a handful of fresh ingredients in most cases

On busy days, try pastas and rice dishes, if time to prep, then stews and soups are wonderful. Make things up in advance, batch cook and freeze, ready for use. Enjoy!

Vegan Breakfasts!

Avocado and tomatoes on crusty bread:

Ingredients:

One soft avocado for 1-2 people

Cherry tomatoes

Cayenne Pepper

Rock Salt

Olive Oil

Fresh crusty bread e.g. baguette, ciabatta, (works on toast too, if maybe sliced bread is what you have to hand, on toasted olive bread is a delight)

Very easy breakfast, lunch or snack. Remove the avocado from skin and stone (halve and scoop with a spoon). The avocado needs to be soft (if too hard you may wish to just slice but you will get used to judging an avocado!).

Smush the avocado in a bowl, using a fork. Chop the cherry tomatoes into 4s and add in, along with a pinch of salt, a sprinkling of cayenne pepper and a dash of olive oil. Mix in and serve on the crusty bread.

Scrambled tofu with optional vegan bacon:

Ingredients:

Block of tofu (hard tofu is better than silken)

Turmeric

Pepper

Soy Sauce

Optional vegan milk (see above – unsweetened best)

Optional vegan bacon

Optional tarragon

Optional Piri piri sauce

Drain the block of tofu and mash into a bowl. Add a few splashes of soy sauce and a teaspoon or more of turmeric. Mix in. You can add in some chopped vegan bacon. Fry in a fairly hot pan with some olive oil. You can add in some tarragon (or any herb) and season with black pepper. If it gets too dry add in a splash of vegan milk and cook for a little longer. Serve on toast or as a side for a full vegan breakfast addition! The piri piri sauce can be drizzled on the top for any spice addicts!

As a variation add some lightly fried asparagus.

Vegemite and beans on toast:

Ingredients:

Vegemite

Baked beans

Toast

Very simple but sometimes not thought of. All of course depends if you are a lover or hater of vegemite! Beans on toast as usual but smear vegemite on the toast for a tasty twist to a breakfast favourite!

Porridge with dates, berries and agarve syrup:

Ingredients:

Porridge Oats

Vegan milk

Pitted dates

Agave syrup

Berries of your choice!

Another very simple staple. Sweetened soya or almond vegan milk can be lovely with this. Heat the oats with half vegan milk and half water, until cooked (approx. 5 mins). Finely chop some dates and throw over the top and then drizzle with agave syrup. Yum! Date syrup is also delicious if you have it!

Bagels and vegan cream cheese:

As with milks there are a variety of vegan cream cheeses you can buy or you can easily look to the internet for a recipe to make your own. Here we just pick one brand which gets a big thumbs up!

Ingredients:

Tofutti Cream Cheese (plain or garlic and herbs)

Sesame bagels

Yes, this one isn't rocket science. Put the two together and enjoy!

Mushrooms and vegan cheese toasties:

A George Forman or similar style grill will make amazing toasties, otherwise, it's the grill!

Ingredients:

Handful of mushrooms – chestnut mushrooms can be particularly nice here

Vegan cheese – again there are lots of choices, Sainsbury or Tesco have their own vegan cheeses, also try Sheese and Tofutti for good melting brands. You can grate or thinly cut.

Vegan spread/Marg.

Vegan spread the outsides of the toast. Place one side of the vegan spreaded bread facing down on the grill or griddle. Place the cheese on the dry side, facing up. Sprinkle or lay chopped mushrooms on the cheese. Place the other piece of bread, dry side down, onto the cheese and mushrooms, with the vegan spread side up.

Compress the grill/griddle for a few minutes until cooked (or put under the traditional grill until lightly browned and very carefully turn over to grill the other side.

Cool a little as it will burn your mouth if you are too hasty! Maybe serve with a dipping of brown or barbecue sauce. Yum!

Peanut butter and banana crumpets or topped muffins:

Yes, many crumpets are indeed vegan! Just check the labels! Muffins work just as well!

Ingredients:

Crumpets

Peanut butter – smooth or crunchy, standard or organic…

Banana

A simple and effective breakfast. Simply top the crumpets with peanut butter and add some banana slices!

Blueberry and date pancakes:

Pancakes sometimes take some practice so be kind to yourself if it doesn't quite work the first time. Have patience. Making sure you have lump free pancake batter makes for much nicer pancakes too…

Ingredients:

Flour – 2 cups (makes around 10 pancakes)

Baking Powder (1-2 tsp)

Salt (couple of pinches)

Oil for frying (Olive oil, coconut oil or other)

Vegan milk – 2 cups – soya, almond milk, or other (or can use half vegan milk and half water)

Vanilla essence – tsp or a drizzle

Blueberries

Agave syrup.

Optional cinnamon

Sift the flour through a sieve. Mix the dry ingredients together. Add the vegan milk slowly and vanilla essence, stirring.

If mixture looks too thin, add a little more flour. If too thick, add more liquid. Try one in the pan and you will see if you need to adjust the mixture.

The pan should be hot with a few drops of oil in it. Cook until brown on one side and then flip (or carefully turn haha!). For those of us who do not excel at this you can buy pancake pans that you just turn over at the halfway point!

Serve with blueberries, chopped dates and agave syrup.

Note – you could also mix the blueberries into the mixture before cooking!

Banana, mango, spinach and ginger smoothie:

Smoothies are a great way to get nutrition in and fast. You don't just have to reserve for breakfast either!

Ingredients:

1 banana

Handful of frozen mango

Handful of fresh spinach

Chopped ginger – about half a thumb's worth

Vegan milk – almond or hemp especially nice or use water.

Throw the ingredients in a blender (nutribullet or similar makes life very easy) and whizz up until smooth! Enjoy!

Examples of meal planning

Breakfast: Porridge with chopped dates, roughly crushed nuts, bananas and agave syrup.

Lunch: Smashed avocado, cherry tomatoes and olive with salad or on a bagel.

Dinner: Stir fried tofu and veg with whole-wheat or pumpkin noodles.

Breakfast: Smoothie.

Lunch: Roasted veg tortilla wrap.

Dinner: Baked Sweet potato with salad and hummus.

Breakfast: Toast and vegan cheese spread.

Lunch: Homemade soup (leek and potato, carrot and coriander, tomato, red lentil and chilli – experiment!)

Dinner: Curry/Dhal or chilli with rice or potato wedges.

Lesson 8

Vegan and vegetarian fast food and snacks

There are plenty of veggie and vegan fast foods and snacks, readily available to buy. Just check the labels. These may include spring rolls, samosas, hash browns, biscuits (oh yes, plain hob-nobs, most bourbons, most ginger nuts and Oreos are all vegan!) yet you can also make your own fast food and snack food quite easily! Here are just some ideas!

Healthy (maybe with some cheats too!):

Popcorn, Nuts, Dried peas, seeds

Naughty but nice:

Fried tofu cubes, home-made chips, home-made garlic bread,

Batch cooking

When you are making a meal that can be frozen, just make extra, then you can have it again, either the same or jazzed up to be a little different. Or have a cooking afternoon and make a few meals for the week. Ideal candidates are curries, chillies, casseroles, soups and pasta sauces.

Eating out

We have discussed eating out and it really is becoming a lot easier than people first realise. Oriental cuisine has so many options. Try Chinese, Indian, Sri-Lankan, Thai, Bangladeshi and Asian Fusion, there are some remarkable dishes and chefs out there! Also, easily accessible is Mexican and Italian food. Many Italian chains offer vegan bases, vegan cheese and many other substitutes. Again, as mentioned many pubs and cafes will cater. Veggie and vegan menus are popping up all over the place so what's your excuse, get your coat on and go and find what's on offer!

Lesson 9

How to become a nutritionist

Society is greatly in need of more people qualified in plant based nutrition. Many qualified doctors may have taken no more (if indeed that) than a single module in nutrition and it is still quite unsettling how many health organisations are sponsored by industries with their own self interests at heart. An independent nutritionists voice can be a big help to people trying to find the way to a healthier and happier body and mind.

It may be that you have a background in physical or mental health or are thinking of a change in career, or maybe you wish to supplement what you already do. You may not have any aspirations this way so you can either skip this section, or read on if you are interested in either becoming a nutritionist or going to one.

You can take short courses to build upon your existing knowledge, in the areas you are keen to offer support. You can even study at degree level if you wish to take things further. It may be that you have a range of qualifications that you are adding to.

Complementary studies may include juice therapy (which we advise only as a supplement to a healthy diet and not as a long-term process), fitness qualifications such as yoga teaching or personal training, life coaching, neuro-linguistic processing and more. Often these areas combine to help people in many ways as they make choices which have a positive effect on their lives.

Nutritionists are experts in food consumption who provide evidenced-based dietary advice to improve the health and wellbeing of others. They are often based in public health, local authorities or the food industry, and work closely with dieticians, nurses, other healthcare professionals. Nutritionists have great communication skills, a positive mental attitude, and have the ability to motivate others to improve their lifestyle (National Careers Service).

Nutritionists are able to sign up to voluntary regulatory professional bodies, who monitor qualifications and experience to ensure that their members are engaged professionals.

Setting up your own clinic

You can work from home, from a specified space (which you may work alone from or with others in similar fields) or virtually. It all depends on what you are looking to do and to achieve. Being accessible is key thus word of mouth, a good website and a social media presence are all key – more on this shortly!

Joining up with others in similar fields can be mutually beneficial. Sharing a space can mean cheaper rent and can provide you with encouragement and shared interests.

You can offer introductory consultations. Ask people about their motives for getting in touch. Have a questionnaire. Let people feel involved as then they are more likely to feel a part of their own change rather than having someone tell them what to do! Look what other people are doing and offering. Take control of your own choices and opportunities. If you have a space you are working from maybe run an open day.

There are also start-up programs you could take advantage of. The government are encouraging more practices such as this as they are aware of the growing pressure on the health system of illness and disease caused by poor dietary choices. You may be able to get financial support. Or you could also look to local businesses for sponsorship. See what's out there for you by contacting your local council or ask in local holistic groups.

If you have other skills, you could consider running a clinic a couple of times a week, along with other areas of work. You may find a happy balance doing this and then when demand is lower there are other things you can be working with and when demand picks up you can also adjust. You can approach businesses and community organisations. If you are looking to have your own business in this area, as with anything else you need to have some creative flair!

How to conduct sessions

Nutritionists provide sound knowledge regarding the impacts of chosen diets, and one would imagine if you are studying this course then you are looking to focus on the benefits of plant based diets. One of the first things to do with a client is to identify their specific issues or needs. Clients may come to you for a number of reasons which may include just wishing to get info on a healthier way to live, or a visit or call may be triggered by an underlying health reason, such as chronic fatigue, IBS, eczema and skin issues, bloating, diabetes or other issues they are trying to eliminate or minimalise. You may also get individuals training for a sport who are looking to maximise their potential. You can identify this on an initial consultation, and this will allow time for more in-depth research should you need it to be able to provide the best service you can for your client(s).

You should have a standard questionnaire which you offer clients, along with asking them to compile a food diary so that you (and they) can see what their food habits are. The questionnaire should include questions such as age and medical history, family medical history, food attachment issues (such as I can't stop eating cheese!), levels of fitness/exercise/activity, symptoms, general lifestyle and reasons for seeking change. You can spend time at the sessions expanding on these responses and tailoring a program to suit your client, even if this is just making suggestions to begin with and informing the client on basic plant based nutrition.

Advertising and promotion

If you are working freelance in your own space, consider the effects of different types of advertising. Use the web and social networks to tell people what you are offering! Posters too, in local cafes, sports centres and noticeboards, for example, can be very effective. If you are in a shared space, consider sharing advertising, for example with a brochure highlighting the services available.

You can offer incentives such as offering an initial consult for free or for a low fee. Offer one session free if two are booked and incorporate this into your rates. Don't feel that you have to set very low prices. You can stress to people how much it costs in terms of poor health not to engage in a couple of sessions which will help them. Be honest with people and stay authentic. You are doing this likely because you have found that advice has helped you and now you can pass this on. If you have a space which you are working from maybe you can run an open day. Make yourself approachable. Be friendly, yet also be professional. Approach your local health service too as they may be able to put you in touch with people and organisations who may require your services.

Legal and certification considerations

It is best to always stay on top of current advice and regulations. Refer to professional bodies such as The British Association for Applied Nutrition and Nutritional Therapy (BANT) for their current guidelines.

Please do be aware that you should not prescribe supplements or advise a client as if you were a medical professional, unless you are. You are giving advice, based on

the nutritional knowledge that you hold. Always advise that you are not a replacement for seeing a doctor, especially if there is a serious medical concern.

At the time of writing there are no laws against providing nutritional advice, as long as you are just using pointers towards a healthier and happier life, based on sound scientific knowledge.

There are lots of course providers offering in-depth courses. Look around for the one which is suitable for you, and continue to build and review your knowledge as you expand. Knowing you have qualifications to back you up with be more empowering for you and give your client reassurances. If you do not have this, just be honest about your knowledge and reasons for sharing it.

Learning Review for Part 3:

1. What in your cupboards right now happens to be veggie or vegan? See if you can name up to 10 items.
2. What staples might you want to have in the fridge?

3. Please provide a suggestion for a healthy plant based breakfast.
4. Please provide a suggestion for a 'fry up' plant based breakfast!
5. What would you consider to be an enjoyable plant based evening meal?
6. Based on what you know, have read, or can research, please suggest 3 ways to serve/prepare/eat tofu.
7. What is a nutritionist?
8. Why would people likely contact a nutritionist?
9. What might you need to consider regarding insurance?
10. What might motivate you to help others in this way?

Well Done! You are ready for Part 4!

Part 4

Case Studies

We conclude our course with two case studies. These are useful as they are honest stories from people who have decided to make changes. You can see some reasons why some people choose to go plant based and the effects this has had on their

lives. We wish to thank the people who gave these stories and hope they are an inspiration for you.

Sue H – Vegan Story

Going vegan in 1993 wasn't the easiest thing to do. I was living mainly on ready meals and they didn't have vegan ones then – except the occasional sausage or burger you could only get at health food stores. It was a Compassion in World Farming video (an actual video tape) which tipped me over the edge. I was lucky enough to have a friend to help me but I still found it tough at first. I was working full time and having to make three square meals a day from scratch was difficult. After a couple of weeks, I remembered those beautiful calves, victims of the dairy industry, being transported, terrified, to veal crates. I wasn't responsible for their suffering anymore and suddenly it all made sense. I found it easy after that and I love being vegan. It's living life in accordance with my values, you can't get better.

One of the first benefits I noticed was that I felt better physically. I had more energy. I think my body was no longer being dragged down by the milk products (especially cheese) that I had so much of as a vegetarian. Indeed, I thought I would struggle to give up cheese (many do), but I didn't miss it once. My conviction was strong and I never gave it a thought. When vegan cheeses hit the shops, I used to miss them when I couldn't get hold of them.

The biggest benefit was with my asthma. I'd had it since I'd been a small child and was being put on increasing (and less effective) drug doses over time. Within a week or two I noticed I wasn't using the reliever inhaler and I gradually reduced the steroid inhaler, too. I went vegan for the animals but losing the asthma I thought would kill me before I was 40 was a great bonus.

My then husband went vegetarian shortly before I went vegan which was helpful, but I've never found being vegan a problem in relationships with omnivores. Non-vegan food is banned from my home and, as I cook well, my boyfriends have simply eaten whatever I make them (they do the washing up which I loathe so it works out).

In the last 24 years I've seen veganism grow massively. I've met and loved some awesome vegans. I've seen supermarkets who at one time thought they were doing us a favour by stocking a soya milk, now courting the vegan market with their own brand vegan cheeses, ready meals and desserts (when I went vegan if you wanted cake you baked the sucker yourself). And my own home town finally had its first vegan fair just a few weeks ago. Something I could never have imagined in 1993.

G. Davies – Vegan Runner

Why I went vegan

My transition to veganism seemed a logical next step after being vegetarian for 2 years. Prior to becoming vegetarian, I was pretty much a vegetarian by proxy. My step-daughter at the time was vegetarian, and it just made meal times simpler for the whole household to have the same food. Around the same time, I got interested in the work of the Sea Shepherd charity through the "fly-on-the wall" TV series following them around as they sought to protect whales from the Japanese whaling fleet. One of the things that interested me was that each Sea Shepherd vessel was totally vegan. From this I started to look more into vegetarianism, and watched a number of documentaries, including the infamous Earthlings. I watched through tearful eyes, and that disconnect, started to reconnect. I decided at that point that I would not eat another animal, and whilst the idea of veganism did appeal, I felt that it was too much to do at once, and that if I struggled too much that I would give up and revert back to my old ways. I found being vegetarian was fairly simple and I had no issues at all.

In December 2015, a friend who was also a member of Vegan Runners UK posted in a Facebook running group asking if anybody wanted to participate in Veganuary. This is an initiative to attract people into having a vegan lifestyle for a month, with the hope that they would continue afterwards. I signed up for this, and on January 1st 2016, I began my life as a vegan.

Running

I took up running in May 2014. I was in an unhappy relationship and was feeling quite low. A friend who knew my situation, and was a runner, suggested I take up running. Something I had not done since I left the Army in 2000, and something I had never done voluntarily. "Why not try?" I thought to myself, so I got myself off to one of the many cheap sports shops and bought myself a pair of trainers for £12, and some cheap shorts. I wasn't going to spend a fortune on something that I might dislike. My first run was 3.5km in 19 mins 34 seconds, and I distinctly recall feeling like I was having a heart attack, yet at the same time feeling quite a buzz, and I decreed that I would go out every few days. I surprised myself. Something that I always found was chore was now something that I was starting to enjoy. To alleviate the boredom of running the same routes on my own each time, I ended up joining a local running community called Great Run Local, then I joined the Sweatshop Running Community, and really enjoyed running with others and making lots of friends. I soon found myself entering races, a couple of 10Ks and a half marathon. The latter

was quite a disaster, as I ran it when I was injured with scarring of my glute muscles. Subsequently, I had to take a number of months off running, and volunteered at events instead. On returning to running I managed to get my running back up to where I was before injury. In April 2016, I was attending a half marathon, and saw a number of Vegan Runners participating, and realised that there must be a group locally, and I joined them shortly after. The local group had regular meetups, usually followed by breakfast afterwards, and it was great to meet like-minded individuals, runners AND vegan!

My running has now taken me to a point that in 2017, in a period of 7 weeks and 1 day, I completed 4 ultramarathons, 1 marathon, and two 10K races. When I started to look at completing ultramarathons, I was concerned that I would not have enough fuel (food) to complete the events, so I looked into it and worked out the required calorie intake that I would need per hour and how I could take it in. I found that Medjool dates are pretty much on the nail as far as calories are concerned, and took to carrying them with me, as well as vegan energy gels and electrolyte tablets from High-5. These have managed to see through all my events.

Vegan Runners UK

I'm never going to be first, but I'm always happy with the time and distance that I cover. Aside from completing ultras, I have found that my normal everyday vegan diet is sufficient enough to see me through all my non-ultra runs. One of the things I have noticed since becoming vegan is that I do seem to have more energy and think nothing of just deciding to put on my trainers and going for a 20 mile run. Another thing I have noticed is that my recovery seems to have improved a lot. As part of training for ultramarathons, it is suggested that you run "back-to-backs" ie. running on consecutive days to get used to running on tired legs.

I find that I can run at the same pace on each day. One of my proudest running moments was running a 36 mile ultramarathon, and on the next morning, running a sub-50 min 10K race the next, and still have energy left. A lot of races provide a goody bag after the race (and on ultras aid stations en route with food), unfortunately we vegans tend to be forgotten about on most of these, although the Stockport 10K, which has a strong vegan runner attendance provided vegan specific goody bags for us.

Recommendations for new vegans

Based on my experiences in the two years I have been vegan, there are a few things I would suggest to those looking at becoming vegan.

Skip vegetarian. Yes, giving up milk and cheese is tricky, but after a couple of weeks your body will not crave it anymore, and you will feel so much better in yourself.

Use social media to find local vegan groups. Join them online and in the real world. I see so many posts on Facebook from vegans saying that they don't know any other vegans. The support, tips and advice you can get from these groups is immense. One caveat is to use the search facilities before posting. There are some hot topics that people will shoot you down for asking. Don't let them put you off. If you are a runner join Vegan Runners UK (there are similar groups for other athletic interests)

Get an item of clothing that says "vegan" on it. This may seem narcisstic at first, but it is a great way to help identify other compassionate individuals. It also helps those who are interested in veganism to break the ice with you.

Conclusion

Whatever your reasons for taking this course, we hope you have found some valuable knowledge and are ready to embark on a life without animal exploitation. There is plenty more you can research, for example, the internet is alive with many more success stories, films, blogs, social groups you can join and much more. A lot of how we live is based on habits and habits can be easily changed by a shift in mindset. Set your intentions and goals and move towards them, be that in small steps or with a giant and exciting leap!

Final Learning Review:

1. What were your motivations for taking this course?

2. Have your thoughts about vegetarianism or veganism changed since taking this course?

3. If you had friends over, what sort of plant based meal might you make to eat?

4. Has anything on this course surprised you?

5. Do you know where to go for further nutritional advice if you need it?

6. What might you ask yourself if you were looking to set up as a plant based nutritionist?

7. Can you name any famous vegetarians or vegans who inspire you?

8. What might you say to someone who suggests you won't get all you need on a plant based diet?

9. What steps are you going to take at this point, if any?

10. Turning the question of 'why are you vegetarian or vegan' around, if you are not vegan, please write down why not…..If you are please write down why you are.

Many thanks for taking this course and we wish you a happy, healthy and compassionate future You may now request your exam on successful completion of 80% pass mark you will then receive your accredited Diploma!