



Nutrition Bits and Bites!

Vegetarian and Vegan Eating

What is it and can it be done?

Vegetarian and Vegan - Frequently Asked Questions

What does vegetarian or vegan mean?

Vegetarians don't eat meat, but typically eat dairy and eggs. Vegans don't eat meat, dairy or eggs.

Don't I need to eat meat to get enough protein?

It is easy to get enough protein eating a plant-based diet, by eating variety of foods throughout the day. Many foods contain protein, but good sources include legumes, soy-foods, meat substitutes, milk, nuts, seeds, grains, and bread.

Is it safe for a growing child to be a vegetarian/vegan?

Yes! A well-planned vegetarian/vegan diet is safe for people of all ages, including babies, children, teenagers, pregnant/nursing mothers and adults. Eating a variety of nutritious plant foods along with Vitamin B12 and Vitamin D supplements can provide all the nutrients children need for growth.



Where can I find more information?

Maybe you or someone in your family is a vegetarian or vegan, or would like to become one. Here are some helpful resources to learn more:

<https://vegetariannutrition.net/>

<http://veganhealth.org/>

[Healthy vegetarian diet--Eatright Ontario](#)

Books:

[Becoming Vegan](#) by Brenda Davis & Versanto Melina

[Vegan for Life](#) by Jack Norris & Virginia Messina

Cook and Enjoy! Cooking Tips!

Wondering how to replace some common foods? Try these plant-based swaps!

Cow's milk: There are many types of plant-based milks available, most commonly made from soy, almond, coconut, or rice. Make sure they have Calcium, Vitamin D, and Vitamin B12 added.

Cheese: Tasty and available in shreds, blocks or slices, you are sure to find a plant-based cheese to suit your needs. You can even find plenty of recipes to make your own cheese using nuts!

Ground meat: Give textured vegetable protein, ground veggie “meats” or cooked lentils a try in your meat sauce.

Burgers: There are many delicious pre-made veggie burgers, but it is also easy to make them yourself using beans, grains, vegetables and spices.

Eggs: In baking, use 1 Tbsp. of ground flax mixed with 4 Tbsp. warm water to replace 1 egg. Instead of scrambled eggs, try crumbling medium-firm tofu and sautéing with a little turmeric (for colour), garlic and your favourite seasonings.

RECIPE

Sweet Potato & Chickpea Burgers (Makes: 12 burgers)

2 cups cooked, mashed sweet potato	1-2 cloves garlic
2 cup canned or cooked chickpeas	1 ½ tsp cumin
1 cooked brown rice	1 ½ tsp curry powder
¾ cup quick oats (gluten free, if needed)	1 ½ tsp chili powder
½ medium onion, finely chopped	Salt and pepper (to taste)

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Coarsely mash the chickpeas with a potato masher. Stir in the sweet potato, rice, onion, quick oats, garlic and spices. The mixture should be moist, but holds its shape when formed. If the mixture is too wet, add a little more oats.
3. Lightly oil baking sheet, or line with parchment paper. Each burger patty should measure ~ ¼ to ⅓ cup. Scoop out mixture, form into patties and lightly press onto baking sheet.
4. Bake for 60 minutes, or until they are firm, flipping them halfway through.
5. Serve on a burger bun, in a pita, crumble in a wrap, or on top of a salad.
6. Makes 12 patties. These are great for batch cooking. Store in the fridge for a few days or keep extra ones in the freezer.

** Refer to the Allergy Newsletter (September issue) for substitution ideas.

For more information on nutrition and healthy eating, visit:

<https://www.southernhealth.ca/finding-care/health-info-for-you/nutrition-and-healthy-eating/>

To access previous school nutrition newsletters, visit:

<https://www.southernhealth.ca/whats-happening/nutritional-newsletters/>

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