

Vegetarian Diets Overview

Potential health benefits of a vegetarian diet include: high in fiber, high in complex carbohydrates, low in saturated fat and can result in lowered cholesterol. However, some vitamin and mineral deficiencies can develop if an individual adheres strictly to this diet.



Diet	Eats	Avoids	Health Risks
Vegan	Only plant-based foods	All products obtained from animals, including dairy, eggs, honey, and gelatin.	B12, Iron, Calcium, and Vitamin D deficiency
Lacto Vegetarians	Consume plant and milk products.	Meat, eggs, seafood and products containing animal-derived ingredients like gelatin and Worcestershire	High intake of saturated fat from dairy, B12, and Iron deficiency
Lacto Ovo Vegetarians	Consume plant, milk and egg products.	Meat, seafood and products containing animal-derived ingredients like gelatin and Worcestershire	High intake of saturated fat from dairy, B12, and Iron deficiency
Pescatarians	Consume seafood and plant products.	Meat	High intake of saturated fat from dairy, B12, and Iron deficiency

In order to make up for some of the nutrient deficiencies of the above vegetarian diets it is necessary to supplement with certain foods and sometimes over the counter supplements.

Nutrient	Source
Calcium	soy, leafy greens, almonds
Vitamin B12	fortified products (soymilk) and nutritional yeast
Protein	complementary proteins
Iron	whole grains, nuts, leafy greens, seeds, fortified products
Zinc	legumes, seeds, nuts, pumpkin, wheat germ, cereals
Vitamin D	Mushrooms, fortified soy and almond products (soymilk)