

## Overcoming Nutritional Deficiencies

- **Protein:** growth and maintenance of the body
  - Consume assortment of plant foods to provide all essential and non-essential amino acids
- **Omega-3 Fatty Acids:** act as an anti-inflammatory agent in the body
  - Eat foods like flaxseed, chia seeds, hemp seeds, walnuts, canola oil and soy.
- **Iron:** important for red blood cells and preventing anemia
  - Eat plant sources of iron, such as dark green leafy vegetables, with foods high in vitamin C
- **Zinc:** present in plant foods but better absorbed from animal sources
  - Include foods such as soy products, legumes, grains, cheese and nuts.
- **Calcium:** needed for strong bones and teeth, normal blood clotting and muscle + nerve function.
  - Fruit juices and plant milks fortified with calcium good sources of calcium.
- **Vitamin B12:** necessary for normal blood cell formation and nerve function
  - Consider using a vitamin B12 supplement
- **Vitamin D:** required to absorb calcium during digestion and incorporate calcium into bones and teeth
  - Spend 15 minutes in the sun daily
- **Iodine:** essential component of thyroid hormones
  - Include sea vegetables (kelp, nori, kombu, wakame) and iodized salt

## Types of Plant-Based Diets

**Vegans** eat only plant foods, including fruits, vegetables, legumes, grains, seeds and nuts.

**Raw vegans** eat only plant foods, including vegetables, fruit, nuts and seeds, legumes, and sprouted grains (75-100% uncooked food).

**Lacto vegetarians** eat plant foods as well as dairy products.

**Lacto ovo vegetarians** eat plant foods, dairy products and eggs.



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**College of Agricultural, Consumer  
and Environmental Sciences**  
Cooperative Extension Service  
Bernalillo County Extension Office

1510 Manual Blvd. Ext NW  
Albuquerque, NM 87107  
Phone: 505-243-1386  
bernalilloextension.nmsu.edu

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Enjoying a  
Satisfying and  
Protein Rich  
Plant-Based Diet



## Meat Substitutes

**Tofu:** packed with protein and soaks up flavors in the prepared dish

**Mushrooms:** meaty texture and savory flavor, good source of selenium, vitamin C and iron

**Jackfruit:** often compared to pulled pork, packed with vitamins and minerals

**Beans and Legumes:** nutty and earthy in flavor, great source of protein and help digestion because they are packed with fiber

## Integrating into Your Life

**Gradually transition:** overhauling your diet overnight will not work  
Start with 1-2 meatless days per week

**Remind yourself that it gets easier:** stick to it and keep learning  
It's what you do consistently over the long-term that makes all the difference.

**Remember your why:** it's all about why you started eating a more plant-based diet

Come back to that why if you find yourself struggling to maintain a healthy, plant-based diet.

**Stop worrying about protein:** eating a balanced diet will give you enough protein

Focus on balanced and whole food plant-based diet

**Vegan food is just food:** let go of the label "vegan"

Think about all the nourishing, healthy, plant foods you'll be eating

## Cooking Plant-Based Basics

**Spice it up:** incorporate a variety of spices to bring out the flavors

**Make Vegetables the star:** begin with vegetables then add protein and other components from there



Vegetarian diets have been associated with lower BMI, and reduced risk of cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, hypertension, and certain cancers.

## Where is the evidence?

Vegetarians tend to consume fewer overall calories; a lower proportion of calories from fat; and higher quantities of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts, soy products, and fiber.

A recent study found that, among vegans to non-vegetarian diets, increased meat consumption corresponded with diabetes prevalence, with 2.9% in vegans to 7.8% in meat consumers (Barnard et al., 2009).

Vegetarians and vegans are typically slimmer than non-vegetarians. These dietary features help promote lower LDL cholesterol levels, better serum glucose control, and reduced risk of chronic diseases (Barnard et al., 2005).

Barnard ND et al., A low-fat vegan diet and a conventional diabetes diet in the treatment of type 2 diabetes: a randomized, controlled, 74-wk clinical trial. *Am J Clin Nutr* 89:1588S-1596S, 2009

Barnard ND et al., The effects of a low-fat, plant-based dietary intervention on body weight, metabolism, and insulin sensitivity. *Am J Med* 118:997, 2005

