

# Vegan diet: myths & facts



Vegan diets excludes all animal products, including meat, eggs, milk, cheese, and even honey. A vegan diet CAN be healthy when done right. Let's take a closer look.



## MYTH #1: VEGAN DIETS ARE SHORT ON PROTEIN

**Fact:** While animal foods contain concentrated protein, many plant foods also contain protein. As long as a variety of plant proteins are eaten at every meal, getting adequate protein is no problem. Vegan sources of protein include:

- Beans
- Legumes
- Nuts
- Seeds
- Soy products
- Whole grains such as quinoa, oatmeal, and millet

## MYTH #2: DAIRY IS NEEDED FOR STRONG BONES

**Fact:** Calcium, vitamin D, vitamin K, and magnesium are all essential nutrients for strong bones. However, dairy is not the only food source. Lots of plants contain those nutrients:

- Spinach
- Broccoli
- Tofu
- Edamame
- Beans and chickpeas
- Chia seeds

Safe amounts of sunlight provide vitamin D, but supplements of both vitamin D and calcium may be beneficial.

## MYTH #3: VEGAN DIETS CAUSE MALNUTRITION

**Fact:** Poor nutrition is possible for anyone who doesn't make wise food choices. Being vegan does require a certain amount of planning to ensure adequate protein, fat, and nutrient intake. But being a healthy vegan is very doable.

Because it is plant-based, a balanced vegan diet may decrease the risk of some chronic diseases such as:

- Heart disease
- Diabetes
- High blood pressure
- Obesity

## MYTH #4: VEGAN DIETS AREN'T SAFE FOR CHILDREN

**Fact:** Kids can be healthy vegans, too. However, due to their unique nutritional needs, it takes extra care and planning to ensure their growing bodies get enough protein, fat, vitamins, and minerals. It's best to work with a pediatrician to ensure a vegan diet works for your child.

## MYTH #5: VEGAN DIETS ARE RESTRICTIVE

A vegan diet may not be for everyone. But, those who follow this way of eating enjoy a wide variety of delicious plant foods. If you choose to switch to a vegan diet, give yourself plenty of time to adapt to new ways of shopping, cooking, and eating.

