

Plant-Based Nutrition

QUOTE OF THE MONTH



- Sophia Joan Short

CHOOSE A CAUSE & PARTICIPATE IN AN ACTIVITY THAT RAISES AWARENESS THIS MONTH...

- American Heart Month
- National Cancer Prevention Month
- Feb 5: National Wear Red Day
- Feb 21-27: National Eating Disorder Awareness Week



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ARE THEY THE SAME?

Plant-Based vs. Vegan

There is a lot of overlap between plant-based and vegan lifestyles, but the two approaches are not synonymous.

VEGAN:

According to the Vegan Society, veganism is a "way of living which seeks to exclude, as far as possible and practicable, all forms of exploitation of, and cruelty to, animals for food, clothing or any other purpose."

Strict vegans do not consume or wear animal products, and many avoid products that have been tested on animals. For many, the choice to be vegan is a moral decision.

PLANT-BASED:

A plant-based approach allows for a little more wiggle room. It entails being mindful of your food choices and their effects on an ethical scale, with a focus on foods centered on plants. Plant forward eating patterns include vegetables, fruits, nuts, seeds, oils, whole grains, legumes and beans. It does not mean that you never eat meat or dairy, but that you are proportionately choosing more of your foods from plant-based sources.



MOST RESEARCHED Plant-Centered Diets

MEDITERRANEAN DIET:

The Mediterranean diet has a foundation of plant-based foods; it also includes fish, poultry, eggs, cheese, and yogurt a few times a week, with meats and sweets less often. The Mediterranean diet has been shown in both large population studies and randomized clinical trials to reduce risk of heart disease, metabolic syndrome, diabetes, certain cancers (specifically colon, breast, and prostate cancer), depression, and in older adults, a decreased risk of frailty, along with better mental and physical function.

To follow a Mediterranean diet, follow this simple guideline:

- **Eat:** Vegetables, fruits, nuts, seeds, legumes, potatoes, whole grains, breads, herbs, spices, fish, seafood and extra virgin olive oil.
- **Eat in moderation:** Poultry, eggs, cheese and yogurt.
- **Eat only rarely:** Red meat.
- **Don't eat:** Sugar-sweetened beverages, added sugars, processed meat, refined grains, refined oils and other highly processed foods.

VEGETARIAN DIET:

Vegetarian diets have also been shown to support health, including a lower risk of developing coronary heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, and increased longevity.

Vegetarian diets come in all shapes and sizes, and if interested in trying one, you should choose the one that works best for you:

- **Semi-vegetarian** or **Flexitarian** includes eggs, dairy foods, and occasionally meat, poultry, fish, and seafood.
- **Pescatarian** includes eggs, dairy foods, fish, and seafood, but no meat or poultry.
- **Vegetarian** includes eggs and dairy foods, but no meat, poultry, fish, or seafood.
- **Vegan** includes no animal foods.



Source:

<https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/mediterranean-diet-meal-plan#foods-to-eat>
<https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/what-is-a-plant-based-diet-and-why-should-you-try-it-2018092614760>

Why MORE PLANTS?

"Plant-based" is a buzzword we're seeing more and more. But what exactly makes a plant-based diet so healthy?

LOWER BLOOD PRESSURE:

University of Warwick Medical School researchers have found that consumption of a plant-based diet can lower blood pressure even if small amounts of dairy and meat are consumed too. They argue that any effort to increase plant-based foods in your diet and limit animal products is likely to benefit your blood pressure and reduce your risk of heart attacks, strokes and cardiovascular disease.

DECREASE RISK OF CANCER:

Research consistently shows that regularly eating plenty of fruits, veggies, legumes and grains is associated with a lower cancer risk. And, don't forget, studies also show an association between eating red and processed meats and increased cancer risk, especially colorectal cancer. So there's benefit not only from just eating more plants, but also from replacing some less-healthy foods with those plant foods.

STRONG IMMUNE-SYSTEM:

An astounding 70 to 80 percent of your immune system resides in your gut. Eating plants high in fiber help to keep your gut healthy and functioning properly, which benefits your immune system. The foods that are highest in fiber are whole plant foods, including vegetables, fruits, whole grains, legumes, nuts, and seeds.

BRAIN HEALTH:

"There is some compelling research examining plant-based diets and their role in slowing the progression of Alzheimer's. A review of 9 studies in *Frontiers in Aging Neuroscience*, found that eating an extra one-half cup of fruits and vegetables per day led to a 13% reduction in the risk of cognitive impairment and dementia. The likely reason: Fruits and vegetables are rich in polyphenols, which help to reduce inflammation and neutralize harmful free radicals that cause damage to cells.

REDUCE RISK OF DIABETES:

Adding about a third of a cup of fruit or vegetables to your daily diet could cut your risk of developing type 2 diabetes by 25%, while higher consumptions of whole grains such as brown bread and oatmeal could cut the risk by 29% according to two new studies in *British Medical Journal*.



HOW TO EASILY INCORPORATE *More Plants Into Your Diet*

Here are some tips to help you get started on a plant-based diet:

1**EAT LOTS OF VEGETABLES:**

Fill half your plate with vegetables at lunch and dinner. Make sure you include plenty of colors in choosing your vegetables. Enjoy vegetables as a snack with hummus, salsa, or guacamole.

2**CHANGE THE WAY YOU THINK ABOUT MEAT:**

Have smaller amounts. Use it as a garnish instead of a centerpiece.

3**CHOOSE GOOD FATS:**

Fats in olive oil, olives, nuts and nut butters, seeds, and avocados are particularly healthy choices.

4**COOK A VEGETARIAN MEAL AT LEAST ONE NIGHT A WEEK:**

Build these meals around beans, whole grains, and vegetables.

5**INCLUDE WHOLE GRAINS FOR BREAKFAST:**

Start with oatmeal, quinoa, buckwheat, or barley. Then add some nuts or seeds along with fresh fruit.

6**GO FOR GREENS:**

Try a variety of green leafy vegetables such as kale, collards, Swiss chard, spinach, and other greens each day. Steam, grill, braise, or stir-fry to preserve their flavor and nutrients.

7**BUILD A MEAL AROUND A SALAD:**

Fill a bowl with salad greens such as romaine, spinach, Bibb, or red leafy greens. Add an assortment of other vegetables along with fresh herbs, beans, peas, or tofu.

8**EAT FRUIT FOR DESSERT:**

A ripe, juicy peach, a refreshing slice of watermelon, or a crisp apple will satisfy your craving for a sweet bite after a meal.

MINDFUL MOMENTS

Stress Scale

Use this chart to check-in with yourself a few days a week. Are you thriving? Surviving? Or in crisis mode? Become more mindful of what your body is trying to tell you. If you find that your stress is elevating, try the simple breathing technique below to bring yourself back to neutral.



4-7-8 Breathing Exercise:

To practice 4-7-8 breathing, find a place to sit or lie down comfortably. Be sure you practice good posture, especially when starting out. If you're using the technique to fall asleep, lying down is best.

1. First, let your lips part. Make a whooshing sound, exhaling completely through your mouth.
2. Next, close your lips, inhaling silently through your nose as you count to four in your head.
3. Then, for seven seconds, hold your breath.
4. Make another whooshing exhale from your mouth for eight seconds.

N O U R I S H

PESTO, ASPARAGUS & TOMATO RISOTTO

Recipe From: www.chefjen.com

ingredients

Risotto:

- 1 onion finely diced
- 2 garlic cloves, chopped
- 1 1/2 cups short grain brown rice
- 7 cups vegetable stock
- Salt and peper to taste

Pesto:

- 2 cups fresh basil leaves
- 4 cups baby spinach
- 1/2 cup nutritional yeast
- 1/2 cup cashews, raw
- 2 garlic cloves, peeled
- 1/2 cup water
- 1 tsp salt



recipe preparation

- Heat a large saucepan over a high heat and dry sauté the onion and garlic (no oil). Add the rice and 5 cups of the vegetable stock, then stir well. Cover with a lid and bring to a boil. When boiling, reduce the heat to very low and cook for 1.5 hours, or until all the liquid is absorbed and the grains of rice are soft.
- While the rice is cooking, steam the asparagus until tender, then run under cold water to cool. Once cool, slice the stems into small rounds and the spear tips in half lengthwise. Set aside. Heat a frying pan and add the tomato halves, cut side down. Cook until lightly browned and soft, then remove from the heat and set aside.
- To make the pesto, place all ingredients into a high-speed blender or food processor and blend to combine. Set aside.
- Once the rice is cooked, add the pesto and the remaining 2 cups of stock. Stir vigorously for 2-3 minutes, until the rice is creamy, then add the asparagus rounds.
- To serve, spoon the risotto into two bowls, top with the grilled tomatoes and asparagus spear tips. Sprinkle with some nutritional yeast and top with a few basil leaves.