

# Nutrition for Teens' LIFE

## Vegetarian Diets in Teenagers

Many teenagers are choosing to follow some type of vegetarian diet. With careful planning, a vegetarian diet can provide you with all the nutrients you need and foods you enjoy.



### THERE ARE MANY TYPES OF VEGETARIAN DIETS

#### LACTO-OVO DIET:

This diet includes dairy products such as milk, cheese and yogurt, and eggs but excludes meat, poultry and fish.

#### LACTO DIET:

This diet includes dairy products but excludes eggs and foods containing eggs as well as meat, poultry and fish.

#### VEGAN OR STRICT VEGETARIAN DIET:

This diet includes only foods of plant origin: fruits, vegetables, legumes (dried beans and peas), grains, seeds and nuts.



### IMPORTANT NUTRIENTS THAT NEED TO BE CONSIDERED

#### CALORIE NEEDS:

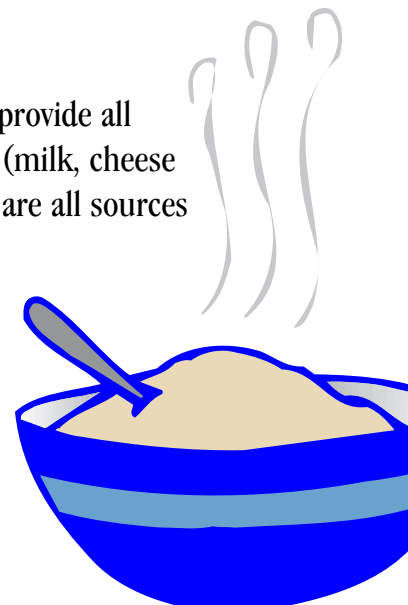
Calorie needs are unique for each individual and are important in growth and development, especially during your teen years. Females need about 2,200 calories and males need about 2,500 to 3,000 calories. These amounts vary depending on activity level. Your energy needs will be greater if you are active and lower if you don't participate in many physical activities.

#### PROTEIN:

Teenagers need about 45 to 59 grams of protein each day. Plant proteins alone can provide all the protein you need as long as you have a variety of sources. Lowfat dairy products (milk, cheese and yogurt) and combinations of whole grains, vegetables, legumes, nuts and seeds are all sources of protein in your diet.

#### CALCIUM:

Teenagers need about 1,300 milligrams calcium daily for strong bones. Vegetarians who do not drink milk or eat other dairy products can get calcium from calcium-fortified products such as orange juice, soymilk and breakfast cereals, as well as spinach, kale and broccoli, and some legumes and soybean products.



By Beth H. Olson, Ph.D., MSU Extension Nutrition Specialist, Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition, 3/09

## IMPORTANT NUTRIENTS THAT NEED TO BE CONSIDERED

continued

### IRON

Vegetarians may be at risk for iron deficiency. Teenage girls need to eat an iron-dense diet because of their lower calorie intake and greater iron needs. Good sources of iron include fortified breakfast cereals, and oatmeal, fortified breads, nuts, nut butters and dried fruits.

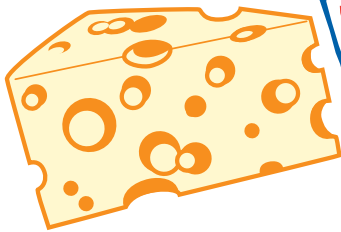
### VITAMIN B-12

Vitamin B-12 comes naturally only from animal sources. It is found in dairy products and can also be found in fortified breakfast cereals. Vegans need to include products such as fortified breakfast cereals or vitamin pills to get enough vitamin B-12.

### ZINC

Zinc is important for growth and sexual maturation. Vegetarians may not get enough zinc because plant foods are low in this mineral.

Zinc can be found in whole grains, nuts, legumes and fortified breakfast cereals.



## Eating Out

As a vegetarian, you can go out with your friends and still make healthy choices. There are many vegetarian choices on restaurants' menus such as pasta, salads and vegetable entrees. Selections at fast-food restaurants include bean burritos, veggie burgers, baked potatoes, salads and vegetarian sandwiches.

## VEGETARIAN SNACKS

There may be times you eat on the go. Here are some quick and easy vegetarian snack choices:

- Dried or fresh fruit
- Trail mix
- Lowfat or fat-free yogurt with granola
- Hummus with pita bread
- Peanut butter and whole-grain bread or bagel
- Almond butter on crackers
- Muffin and juice

## FURTHER INFORMATION

### Food and Nutrition Information Center

<http://fnic.nal.usda.gov/>

Go to: Lifecycle Nutrition under "Subject", then go to: Vegetarian Diet

### Kids Health – Nemours Foundation

[www.kidshealth.org/parent/nutrition\\_fit/nutrition/vegetarianism.html](http://www.kidshealth.org/parent/nutrition_fit/nutrition/vegetarianism.html)

Vegetarianism – Older Vegetarian Kids and Teens

### The Vegetarian Resource Group

[www.vrg.org/family/kidsindex.htm](http://www.vrg.org/family/kidsindex.htm)

Vegetarian Kids and Teens

