

Why go Vegetarian?

Growing in popularity, vegetarianism has now gone mainstream. Polls show that there are now about eight million Americans following a vegetarian diet. Also growing in popularity are the dishes produced by the many new vegetarian food companies and restaurants. In fact, vegetarianism is America's trendiest cuisine, attracting the most gifted and creative chefs. Even the finest cooking schools now feature training in vegetarian cuisine.

But there's also a growing awareness of the many profound health advantages of a vegetarian diet. There's a reason that, on average, vegetarians live several years longer than non-vegetarians. As study after study shows, a health-promoting vegetarian diet not only helps prevent a wide range of diseases but also helps those already suffering from disease to get well again.

People who follow a vegetarian diet have much lower rates of many common diseases, including heart disease, high blood pressure, stroke, cancer, and diabetes, just to name a few. Advantages are seen at all ages and for all demographic groups. Vegetarian children have a much lower rate of childhood cancers; women have lower rates of disease such as osteoporosis; men have lower rates of prostate cancer; seniors have lower rates of Parkinson's disease and dementia. The list goes on and on. We can make a real improvement in the quality of our own lives and those of our families, by choosing a vegetarian diet.

How we can help you!

If you'd like to start making changes to your diet, we're here to help.

Vegetarians of Washington is an independent, 501(c)3 nonprofit organization made up of people from all walks of life who are interested in a vegetarian diet for a variety of reasons: health, environment, compassion for animals, spiritual, and more.

We support people making vegetarian choices while having fun. We encourage you to proceed at your own pace and do the best you can. You don't have to be a vegetarian to join.

Our Monthly Dining Event includes a multi-course buffet-style dinner catered by a different local restaurant or chef each month. All are welcome to attend. Members of Vegetarians of Washington receive a special discount price.

Free classes are offered on the many benefits of a vegetarian diet at various local venues throughout the region. These include practical information on shopping, cooking and nutrition.

Vegetarians of Washington members can obtain discounts from a wide range of restaurants, businesses, and services. Check our website for the latest listing.

Vegfest, the largest vegetarian food festival in the United States, is held at the Seattle Center in March of each year. It is a celebration of healthy vegetarian food including cooking demonstrations, speakers, many cookbooks, and a huge variety of free food samples to try.

Members receive a free subscription to Vegetarian Times, a popular magazine packed with nutritional advice, articles, and recipes.

Become part of the fastest growing community of vegetarians in the country. Join Vegetarians of Washington today



Defeating Diabetes with a Vegetarian Diet

Diabetes is the leading cause of blindness in the United States; it often leads to kidney and heart disease and can shave ten to fifteen years off a person's life. 11% of men and 9% of women over the age of 20 have some form of diabetes. It represents a growing crisis—one in three Americans born in the year 2000 will develop diabetes in their lifetime.

A vegetarian diet can help reverse and even prevent this condition.

A vegetarian diet is the single best solution to the growing problem of diabetes.

TYPE 1 DIABETES

Type 1 diabetes (also known as insulin dependent or juvenile diabetes) results from the body's failure to produce insulin, the hormone that unlocks the cells of the body and thereby allows glucose to enter and fuel them. It is estimated that about ten percent of Americans who are diagnosed with diabetes have type 1.

Doctors have long suspected cow's milk as the culprit in type 1 diabetes. When infants and young children drink cow's milk, they sometimes develop an immune response that leads to the production of cow's milk protein antibodies. This immunological response can lead to an attack on the insulin-producing cells in the pancreas. Several studies have documented the connection between cow's milk in baby formula and the production of antibodies associated with type 1 diabetes. The presence of these antibodies is a risk factor for this disease.

An increase in dairy consumption has been associated with a rise in the prevalence of type 1 diabetes in country after country.

By breast-feeding and then choosing dairy substitutes such as soy and nut milks for your children, you can reduce their risk of getting type 1 diabetes.

For those who already have type 1 diabetes, a vegetarian diet can help reduce many of the complications of this disease.

TYPE 2 DIABETES

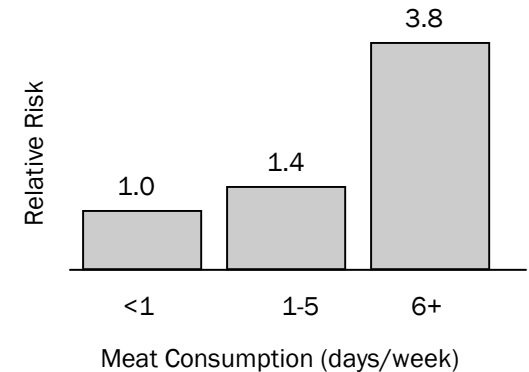
Type 2 diabetes (also known as non-insulin dependent or adult-onset diabetes) results from insulin resistance, a condition in which the body fails to properly utilize insulin, combined with a relative insulin deficiency. Most Americans who are diagnosed with diabetes have type 2.

Vegetarians have been found to have much lower rates of type 2 diabetes. Those following a vegetarian diet also exhibit significantly less insulin resistance than non-vegetarians. Studies have correlated meat consumption with increased risk of diabetes, while a vegan diet has been shown to benefit the specific cells that produce insulin.

In fact, a vegetarian diet can not only help prevent type 2 diabetes but may actually help reverse the disease as well. Almost half of the diabetics placed on a vegan diet were able to stop or reduce doses of insulin in only six months, according to one study. In another, it was found that a majority of patients placed on a vegan diet experienced a rapid remission of nerve pain, a common complication of diabetes. A low-fat vegetarian diet was shown in yet another study to improve type 2 diabetes—even without any exercise!



RISK OF DEVELOPING DIABETES as Affected by Eating Meat



Source: D.A. Snowdon and R.L. Phillips. 1985. Does a vegetarian diet reduce the occurrence of diabetes? *American Journal of Public Health* 75(5):507-512.

The material for this brochure was taken from *The Vegetarian Solution*, by Stewart Rose, Vice President of Vegetarians of Washington. This book contains further information and complete medical references for the many diseases helped by a vegetarian diet.

The Vegetarian Solution: Your answer to heart disease, cancer, global warming and more, by Stewart Rose. Summer 2007

Also by Vegetarians of Washington, look for

Veg-Feasting in the Pacific Northwest: Vegetarian Dining, Shopping and Living. 2004

The Veg-Feasting Cookbook, 2005