

# TOP 10 BENEFITS OF VEGETARIANISM

A vegetarian diet has several benefits when properly balanced and nutrient-dense. However, just because a diet is “meat-free” doesn’t necessarily mean it’s healthy. Benefits can be negated when the diet isn’t paired with a healthy lifestyle. In contrast, a diet containing meat is not always unhealthy. For example, eating a salad isn’t enough if you’re sedentary, eat a lot of high-fat junk food, or smoke cigarettes! Consuming an adequate amount of calories and eating a variety of healthful food is just as important. Below is a list of 10 health benefits one can obtain from a properly-balanced vegetarian diet.

*Note:* Vegetarian diets may not be for everyone; it’s all about bio-individuality.



## BETTER MOOD

Research shows information suggesting vegetarians may be happier than their meat-eating counterparts. It was found that vegetarians had a lower chance of depression and were happier overall compared to fish and meat-eaters.<sup>1</sup>

## DISEASE FIGHTING

When done right, lacto-vegetarian, lacto-ovo-vegetarian, or vegan diets are naturally low in total fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol and have been shown to reduce heart disease risk. Epidemiologic data has shown vegetarians suffer less disease caused by a modern Western diet (e.g., coronary heart disease, hypertension, obesity, type 2 diabetes, diet-related cancers, diverticulitis, constipation, and gallstones, among several others<sup>2</sup>). This can be attributed to a higher intake in fiber, phytonutrients, antioxidants, flavonoids, and carotenoids.

## LEAN FIGURE

Vegetarians typically weigh less as a result of a diet made up of fewer calories in the form of grains, legumes, nuts, seeds, fruits, and vegetables.<sup>3</sup>

## LESS TOXICITY

Foodborne illnesses, antibiotics, bacteria, parasites, and chemical toxins are more common in commercial meat, poultry, and seafood when compared with plant foods, particularly organic fruits and vegetables.

## SAVING THE PLANET

A plant-based diet is better for the planet as it requires less energy and farmland to feed a vegetarian.

## SIGHT

Vegetarians tend to have better vision and less macular degeneration.<sup>4</sup>

## MONEY SAVING

Plant foods tend to be less expensive, except for a few delicacies, saving on overall costs.

## BETTER ATHLETIC PERFORMANCE

While most active people focus on protein intake, they should be advised that, when done right, a high-carbohydrate, low-fat, and vitamin and mineral-rich vegetarian diet may be optimal for sports performance. Conflicting studies exist, but the number of world-class vegetarian athletes continues to rise.

## SUPPORTING ANIMAL RIGHTS

Ethical reasons can be a consideration when choosing a vegetarian diet.

## LONGEVITY

Vegetarians have been found to enjoy longer and healthier lives when compared to meat-eaters.<sup>5</sup>

1. *Restriction of meat, fish, and poultry in omnivores improves mood* <http://geti.in/15vBI8k>

2. *Health aspects of vegetarian diets* <http://geti.in/WMAXCm>

3. *Weight gain over 5 years in 21,966 meat-eating, fish-eating, vegetarian and vegan men and women in EPIC-Oxford* <http://geti.in/XLlzTD>

4. *Vegetarian diet: panacea for modern lifestyle diseases?* <http://geti.in/102atK8>

5. *Does low meat consumption increase life expectancy in humans?* <http://geti.in/1bRs8LW>