

## Benefits of Vegetarian Dieting

Many of us look at vegetarians differently than we look at meat eaters. This is generally due to the fact that we eat meat and think it is healthy. In most cases meat is healthy for us, but red meat is not always the healthiest. Think of how many times this week you have enjoyed eating a meal with little or no meat. For me this is almost impossible. I eat meat all the time, generally with every meal.

Studies have shown that vegetarians live longer, healthier lives than meat eaters. Even those who eat eggs and drink milk, known as lacto-ovo-vegetarians, can live up to three years longer than a minimal meat eater. In fact, vegetarians have a lower risk of heart disease. Although vegetarians can still have heart attacks they may come up to 20 years later than that of a meat eater. Vegetarians also have fewer problems with their immune systems and a lesser chance of getting sick.

Why do vegetarians live longer and have fewer illnesses?

This is because vegetarian meals have less fat and calories. Also, vegetarians eat more polyunsaturated fat and saturated fat when compared to meat eaters. Vegetarians avoid all meat including fish, poultry, and slaughterhouse by products. The makeup of a vegetarian meal includes fruit, vegetables, grains, and nuts, with many vegetarians eating dairy products and free range eggs.

Breakdown of different types of vegetarians:

Vegans avoid any and all animal products.

Lacto-vegetarians will eat dairy products but avoid eggs.

Lacto-ovo-vegetarians will eat both dairy and eggs.

Fruitarianism avoid any and all animal products and processed food.

Semi-vegetarians will eat fish and chicken but will avoid red meat.

These are classes of vegetarians. Although semi-vegetarians are not an "actual" vegetarian class they are still considered vegetarians because they avoid red meat, eating only poultry, fish, vegetables, fruits, seeds, etc. The other classes listed above are complete groups of vegetarians and will only eat what is specified in that class.

You don't have to be a vegetarian to have half the benefits of being a vegetarian. I am not trying to tell you to get rid of the red meat or meat in general. All I am saying is cut back on it. The less red meat you eat during the week, the healthier you will feel. Try to include more vegetables, nuts, berries, grains, and seeds in your daily intake. This will help you take in fewer calories and less fat, putting you on a road to a happier, healthier lifestyle.

## About the Author

<http://www.celluleanworks.com>

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