



Veg Out! Eating a Plant-Based Diet

Plant-based diets are becoming more popular among college students. Many higher education dining facilities are incorporating vegan and vegetarian diets into their daily menu offerings. Some institutions, like Georgetown University Dining, have earned national recognition from Peta2 for their wide assortment of plant-based menu options.

Types of Diets

Vegan: Eats only plant products

Lacto-Vegetarian: Eats dairy products along with a plant-based diet

Ovo-Vegetarian: Eats eggs along with a plant-based diet

Lacto-Ovo Vegetarian: Eats both dairy and eggs along with a plant-based diet

Pesco-Vegetarian: Eats fish along with a plant-based diet

Flexitarian: While there is no formal definition, this generally refers to a lacto-ovo vegetarian who occasionally eats meat, fish or poultry



Protein Requirements

To ensure adequate nutrition, vegans and vegetarians need to eat a wide variety of foods, including unprocessed whole grains, fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, beans and soy products. Vegans may find it a little trickier to get enough protein. Protein requirements vary for each individual, but at a minimum males need 59 grams protein/day and females need 44 grams protein/day.

Food Sources	Serving	Protein (grams) per Calories
Black Beans	1/2 cup	8 grams/120 calories
Chickpeas	1/2 cup	7 grams/110 calories
Hummus	2 tbsp	3 grams/70 calories
Tofu	2.8 ounces	8 grams/80 calories
Tempeh	1 ounces	5 grams/55 calories
Seitan	3 ounces	18 grams/90 calories
Garden Burger	1 patty	10 grams/110 calories
Soy Milk	8 ounces	7 grams/100 calories
Three Bean Chili	12 ounces	13 gram/265 calories
Peanut Butter	2 tbsp	7 grams/190 calories
Sunflower Seeds	1 tbsp	2 grams/55 calories

Supplementation

Individuals following a plant-based diet also need to ensure their diet includes vitamin B12, calcium, iron, zinc and vitamin D.

Vitamin B12

Unsupplemented vegan diets do not provide Vitamin B12. Dairy and eggs supply vitamin B12 but depending on food choices some lacto-ovo vegetarians may have inadequate intakes.

Foods including some cereals, soy and rice milk and protein supplements have been fortified with vitamin B12. Vitamin B12 is well-absorbed from these fortified foods. The recommended daily intake for vitamin B12 is 6 micrograms.

Product	Serving Size	Vitamin B12 (micrograms)
Soy Milk	8 ounces	3
Rice Milk	8 ounces	1.5
Cheerios	1 cup	1.5
Corn Chex	1 cup	1.5
Raisin Bran	1 cup	1.5

Calcium

Recent studies indicate some female vegetarians and a substantial percentage of female vegans do not consume enough calcium. The recommended daily intake for calcium is 1,000 milligrams.

Product	Serving Size	Calcium (milligrams)
Soy Milk	8 ounces	400
Rice Milk	8 ounces	300
Tofu	3 ounces	65
Cooked Spinach	1/2 cup	120
Beans	1/2 cup	40



Iron

The recommended daily intake for iron is 18 milligrams.

Product	Serving Size	Iron (milligrams)
Soy Milk	8 ounces	8
Cheerios	1 cup	8
Spinach	1 cup	1
Raisin Bran	1 cup	5
Beans	1/2 cup	2

Zinc

The recommended daily intake for zinc is 15 milligrams.

Product	Serving Size	Zinc (milligrams)
Tofu	3 ounces	1
Beans	1/2 cup	1
Raisin Bran	1 cup	1.5
Cheerios	1 cup	4
Almonds	1 ounce	1

Vitamin D

The recommended daily intake for vitamin D is 400 international units. To increase your vitamin D intake, make sure you consume fortified foods or get at least 20 minutes of sunlight each day.