



VEGETARIAN DIETS

“Tell me what you eat and I will tell you who you are.” —Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin

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Vegetarian diets continue to gain popularity in the United States. Consumers list many reasons for following a vegetarian diet, but some health benefits can be noted including decreased risk of diabetes, heart disease, and certain cancers. The diet may also result in an overall decrease in body weight. There are so many terms to know, let's take a look so you understand the differences next time you discuss these diets with clients. Here are the top 10 vegetarian diets catching some buzz:

1. **Vegan:** Vegan diets exclude meats, poultry, fish, eggs, and dairy products. They also exclude foods that contain any of these ingredients. This is one of the most restrictive vegetarian diets. That said, nutritionally, the diet is high in fiber and low in saturated fat. Nutrients to watch: protein, iron, calcium, omega-3 fatty acids, and vitamin D.
2. **Raw Vegan:** This is a vegan (see above) who does not consume cooked food. The basis of the diet is generally fruits and vegetables, with the main emphasis on fruit consumption. Most raw vegans will eat food that is heated to 118 degrees Fahrenheit or less, because the enzymes are not killed at that low of a temperature.
3. **Fruitarian:** Fruitarianism is generally raw vegans whose diets are centered around fruit consumption with most calories coming from fruit. Many consume small amounts of vegetables, but most avoid nuts, even if they are raw, due to the macronutrient content of nuts.
4. **Lacto-vegetarian:** Lacto-vegetarians eat primarily a plant-based diet; however, they do consume dairy. Dairy commonly added includes milk, butter, cheese, yogurt, and ice cream. Dairy products provide an additional source of protein to the diet.
5. **Ovo-vegetarian:** Ovo-vegetarians generally eat a plant-based diet too; however, they do consume eggs and products containing eggs. They avoid meats and other animal products, overall.
6. **Lacto-ovo vegetarian:** Probably the most popular form of vegetarianism. Lacto-ovo vegetarians avoid meat, poultry, seafood, and fish. Yet, they still eat some animal products, like dairy and eggs. Diets remain mostly plant-based.
7. **Flexitarian:** Flexitarians follow a primarily plant-based diet; however, it allows for meat and other animal products when the person decides to consume them. Generally, it is in small quantities and with less frequency when compared to the typical American diet.
8. **Pescatarian:** Pescatarians eat a mostly plant-based diet, but they do consume fish and seafood. Some pescatarians may add dairy and eggs in their diets. It is a type of flexitarian diet.
9. **Pollo vegetarian:** Pollo vegetarian is also a type of flexitarian diet. 'Pollo' is Spanish for chicken. So, chicken and other types of poultry, including turkey and other fowl (for instance, ducks), are allowed. Generally, they also follow a plant-based diet and include poultry as a source of protein. They typically avoid other forms of meat. However, there may be fluctuation on the inclusion of seafood, fish, eggs, and dairy products—depending on the person.
10. **Sustainatarian:** Sustainatarianism focuses on reducing food waste in addition to reducing the consumption of animal products to lessen the impact on our planet. Often, they source locally grown produce or grow and preserve their own. In addition, they may consider hunting overpopulated animals and fowl, rather than purchasing meat from a grocery store. Sustainatarianism also considers packaging and transportation of foods as having environmental impacts.

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