

# 57 Health Benefits of Going Vegan

Vegans are frequently misunderstood as fringe eaters with an unnatural passion for animal rights. While many vegans do feel passionately about animals, its time for others to see that a vegan diet and lifestyle go way beyond animal rights. Following a healthy, balanced vegan diet ensures a host of health benefits as well as prevention of some of the major diseases striking people in North America. Read these blogs to find out about the health benefits of going vegan or just provide better information to your [patients](#).

## Nutrition

All of the following nutritional benefits come from a vegan diet full of foods such as fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, nuts, beans, and soy products.

1. **Reduced saturated fats.** Dairy products and meats contain a large amount of [saturated fats](#). By reducing the amount of saturated fats from your diet, you'll improve your health tremendously, especially when it comes to cardiovascular health.
2. **Carbohydrates.** Carbohydrates provide energy for your body. When you don't have enough carbohydrates, your body will burn muscle tissue.
3. **Fiber.** A diet high in fiber (as vegan eating usually is) leads to healthier bowel movements. High fiber diets help fight against colon cancer.
4. **Magnesium.** Aiding in the absorption of calcium, [magnesium](#) is an often overlooked vitamin in importance to a healthy diet. Nuts, seeds, and dark leafy greens are an excellent source of magnesium.
5. **Potassium.** Potassium balances water and acidity in your body and stimulates the kidneys to eliminate toxins. Diets high in potassium have shown to reduce the risk of cardiovascular diseases and cancer.
6. **Folate.** This B vitamin is an important part of a healthy diet. Folate helps with cell repair, generating red and white blood cells, and metabolizing amino acids.
7. **Antioxidants.** For protection against cell damage, [antioxidants](#) are one of the best ways to help your body. Many researchers also believe that antioxidants help [protect your body](#) against forming some types of cancer.
8. **Vitamin C.** Besides boosting your immune system, [Vitamin C](#) also helps keep your gums healthy and helps your bruises heal faster. Vitamin C is also an antioxidant.
9. **Vitamin E.** This powerful vitamin has benefits for your heart, skin, eyes, brain, and may even help prevent Alzheimer's Disease. A diet high in grains, nuts, and dark leafy greens is full of Vitamin E.
10. **Phytochemicals.** Plant-based foods provide [phytochemicals](#), which help to prevent and heal the body from cancer, boost protective enzymes, and work with antioxidants in the body.
11. **Protein.** That protein is good for your body is no surprise. It may be a surprise to learn that most Americans eat too much protein and in forms such as red meat that are not healthy ways of getting protein. Beans, nuts, peas, lentils, and soy products are all great ways to get the right amount of protein in a vegan diet.

## Disease Prevention

Eating a healthy vegan diet has shown to prevent a number of diseases. Find out from the list below what you could potentially avoid just by switching to a healthy, balanced vegan way of eating.

1. **Cardiovascular disease.** Eating nuts and whole grains, while eliminating dairy products and meat, will improve your cardiovascular health. A British study indicates that a vegan diet [reduces the risk](#) for heart disease and Type 2 diabetes. Vegan diets go far in preventing heart attack and stroke.
2. **Cholesterol.** Eliminating any food that comes from an animal and you will [eliminate all dietary cholesterol](#) from your diet. Your heart will thank you for that.
3. **Blood pressure.** A diet rich in whole grains is [beneficial](#) to your health in many ways, including lowering high blood pressure.

4. **Type 2 diabetes.** Not only is a vegan diet a weapon against Type 2 diabetes, it is also "easier to follow than the standard diet recommended by the American Diabetic Association." Read more about it [here](#).
5. **Prostate cancer.** A [major study](#) showed that men in the early stages of prostate cancer who switched to a vegan diet either stopped the progress of the cancer or may have even reversed the illness.
6. **Colon cancer.** Eating a diet consisting of whole grains, along with fresh fruits and vegetables, can greatly reduce your chances of colon cancer.
7. **Breast cancer.** Countries where women eat very little meat and animal products have a much [lower rate of breast cancer](#) than do the women in countries that consume more animal products.
8. **Macular degeneration.** Diets with lots of fresh fruits and vegetables, especially leafy greens, carrots, pumpkin, and sweet potatoes, can help prevent the onset of age-related macular degeneration.
9. **Cataracts.** Much the same way macular degeneration is headed off by a vegan diet, cataracts are also thought to be prevented through the intake of the same fruits and vegetables. Produce high in antioxidants are also believed to help prevent cataracts.
10. **Arthritis.** Eliminating dairy consumption has long been connected with alleviating arthritis symptoms, but a [new study](#) indicates that a combination of gluten-free and vegan diet is very promising for improving the health of those suffering from rheumatoid arthritis.
11. **Osteoporosis.** Bone health depends on a balance of neither too much or too little protein, adequate calcium intake, high potassium, and low sodium. With a healthy vegan diet, all four of these points set a perfect scenario for [preventing osteoporosis](#).

#### Physical Benefits

In addition to good nutrition and disease prevention, eating vegan also provides many physical benefits. Find out how a vegan diet makes your body stronger, more attractive, and more energetic.

1. **Body Mass Index.** Several [population studies](#) show that a diet without meat leads to lower BMIs—usually an indicator of a healthy weight and lack of fat on the body.
2. **Weight loss.** A healthy weight loss is a typical result of a smart vegan diet. Eating vegan eliminates most of the unhealthy foods that tend to cause weight issues. Read more about weight loss and a vegan diet [here](#).
3. **Energy.** When following a healthy vegan diet, you will find your energy is much higher. This blog post in [Happy Healthy Long Life](#) describes how NFL tight-end Tony Gonzalez started eating vegan and gained energy—while playing football.
4. **Healthy skin.** The nuts and vitamins A and E from vegetables play a big role in healthy skin, so vegans will usually have good skin health. Many people who switch to a vegan diet will notice a remarkable reduction in blemishes as well.
5. **Longer life.** Several studies indicate that those following a vegan or vegetarian lifestyle live an average of three to six years longer than those who do not.
6. **Body odor.** Eliminating dairy and red meat from the diet significantly reduces body odor. Going vegan means smelling better.
7. **Bad breath.** Vegans frequently experience a reduction in bad breath. Imagine waking up in the morning and not having morning breath.
8. **Hair.** Many who follow vegan diets report that their hair becomes stronger, has more body, and looks healthier.
9. **Nails.** Healthy vegan diets are also responsible for much stronger, healthier nails. Nail health is said to be an indicator of overall health.
10. **PMS.** When switching to a vegan diet, many women tell how PMS symptoms become much less intense or disappear altogether. The elimination of dairy is thought to help with those suffering with PMS.
11. **Migraines.** Migraine sufferers who go on vegan diets frequently discover relief from their migraines. Read more about the food-migraine connection [in this article](#).
12. **Allergies.** Reduction in dairy, meat, and eggs is often tied to alleviation of allergy symptoms. Many vegans report much fewer runny noses and congestion problems.

### Too Much in the American Diet

The typical American diet not only consists of too much food, it also relies on too much of unnecessary food products or toxins. The following list explains how a vegan diet can eliminate these problems.

1. **Animal proteins.** The average American eats twice as much protein as necessary for a healthy diet and much of that is from red meat. Getting protein from [beans and grains](#) is much healthier and reduces the risk for osteoporosis (see above).
2. **Cow's milk dairy.** The human body is not designed to digest cow milk and cow milk dairy products, yet the idea of milk being healthy is pushed through advertising. As many as [75% of people in the world](#) may be lactose intolerant and many people suffer from undiagnosed milk allergies or sensitivities. By eliminating cow's milk from your diet, you are improving your overall health.
3. **Eggs.** Many nutritionists believe that the number of eggs in the American diet is too high. While sometimes disputed, it has been shown that eggs can raise cholesterol levels.
4. **Mercury.** Most of the fish and shellfish consumed has [mercury](#) in it. While some fish have less than others, it is almost impossible not to be putting mercury in your body when you eat fish.
5. **Sugar.** Most people have heard that Americans consume way too much sugar. Relying on other sweeteners that are not synthetic, processed, or derived from animal products is a healthier way to eat. Many vegans do not eat processed sugar due to the fact that most of the cane sugar is refined through activated charcoal, most of which comes from animal bones.

### Other Benefits

In addition to the health benefits above, following a vegan lifestyle and diet also provides these benefits as well. From helping the environment to avoiding serious bacterial infections, learn other benefits to eating the vegan way below.

1. **Animals.** Many people begin a vegan diet out of concern for animals. Whether opposed to the conditions of animals intended for food or eating animals in general, going vegan will help your conscience rest easily.
2. **Environment.** Growing plants takes much fewer resources than growing animals. By eating vegan, you can help reduce the toll on the environment.
3. **E. coli.** [E. coli](#) comes from eating contaminated red meat and is the leading cause of bloody diarrhea. Young children, those with compromised immune systems, and elderly people can become extremely ill or die from E. coli. Eating vegan means completely avoiding the risk of E. coli infection.
4. **Salmonella.** Another gastrointestinal illness from animal products, salmonella food poisoning is closely related to E. coli. The most frequent way people contract salmonella food poisoning is through contact with raw eggs or raw chicken meat from chickens infected with salmonella. Again, going vegan means eliminating this risk altogether.
5. **Mad cow disease.** It's safe to say that most people would want to avoid contracting a fatal, non-treatable disease. One way to ensure you don't get Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease is by not eating animals infected with mad cow disease. While the incidence of mad cow disease is not reportedly so high in North America, it does exist.
6. **Global food supply.** Feeding grain to animals meant as food sources reduces the amount of food that is available to underdeveloped nations. Many people will go hungry while that same food they could be eating is given to animals raised for slaughter. Eating vegan ensures that you have removed yourself from the participation of this imbalance.
7. **Hormone consumption.** Eating animals that have been given hormones to speed growth (a common practice in the meat industry) means those hormones go into your body. Not only can this disrupt the natural balance of your hormones, but some of the hormones given to animals have shown to cause tumor growth in humans.
8. **Antibiotics.** Antibiotics are frequently given to feed animals, which can lead to bacterial resistance. Many of the antibiotics used to treat human infections are also used in feed animals.

### Healthy Eating

A vegan diet can be a much healthier way to eat. Find out how to combine the vegan diet with other ways of eating for an even more healthy way to go or discover ways to keep your vegan diet healthy but more convenient with the resources below.

1. **Raw.** A raw diet lends itself to veganism by the very nature of its design. Find out how to combine live and vegan diets with [Raw Inspirations](#).
2. **Organic.** Eating organic and vegan is super easy to do. Use some of the recipes from [this blog](#) for help with meal ideas. The posts have slowed, but you can always search the archives for some great ideas on how to live and eat organic and vegan.
3. **Fat-free.** Vegan eating is typically pretty low in fats anyway, but the [FatFree Vegan Kitchen](#) shows you how to make some delicious vegan food that is always fat free.
4. **Gluten-free.** Due to allergies, Celiac's Disease, or whatever your reason you avoid gluten, find out how to combine the best of gluten-free with vegan cooking in the [Gluten-Free Vegan](#) blog.
5. **Eating out.** Eating out isn't usually associated with eating healthy, but a vegan diet ensures there will be a lot less of the bad things in the food you choose. Find eating out options around the world for vegans [here](#).
6. **Lunch.** Maintaining a vegan diet means you are likely to take your lunch more often than most people. [Vegan Lunch Box](#) offers recipes, tools, and ideas for carrying great vegan lunches every day.
7. **Dinner.** Coming up with new dinner ideas is challenging for everyone—regardless of what type of diet you follow. Check out this amazing selection of vegan dinner recipes accompanied with mouth-watering photos of each preparation on [Dinner with Dilip](#).
8. **Dessert.** While not all the recipes on [My Sweet Vegan](#) are for dessert, you will find a large selection of sweet vegan recipes with the most delicious-looking photos.
9. **Wine.** Pairing vegan food with wine may be challenging for those who rely on the old standard of "white with fish and red with meat." Read [this article](#) for ways to compliment your healthy vegan diet with a tasty glass of wine or this [blog entry](#) for specific pairings of wine and vegan food.
10. **Fun.** These ladies know how to kick it with vegan cooking. [Post Punk Kitchen](#) offers some great recipes with a ton of fun infused in them. Be sure to go through the archives for more yummy food ideas.