



Vegan Nutrition

Some people going vegan worry about getting enough protein, calcium, B vitamins and other essential nutrients. The best evidence indicates that a balanced non-animal diet is the healthiest there is – for children as well as for adults.

But the promotion of old-fashioned ideas, combined with the mind-bending power of the meat, dairy and egg industries, still causes worries. Here we provide a simple guide to some non-animal sources of the main nutrients.

Vitamin A – Carrots, green leafy vegetables, peppers, margarine, dried apricots.
Essential for bone growth, immune system and preventing infections.

Vitamin B – Yeast extract, nuts, wholemeal bread, rice, mushrooms, bananas, sunflower seeds and sesame seeds.
Needed for the health and maintenance of the body's nervous system.

Vitamin B12 – Available in many fortified foods (certain soya milks, breakfast cereals, yeast extract, margarine, soya mince and other convenience foods).
Needed for cell division and blood formation.

Vitamin C – Oranges and other citrus fruits, blackcurrants, broccoli, spinach, cabbage and potatoes.
Essential for growth and repair of tissues in all parts of the body.

Vitamin D – Most people obtain the vitamin D they need from sunlight on their skin.
Regulates the formation of bone and the absorption of calcium and phosphorus from the intestine.

Vitamin E – Vegetable oils, wheatgerm, avocados, hazelnuts, almonds.
Protects against cell damage, plays a role in immune function and DNA repair.

Iodine – Green leafy vegetables, seaweed, kelp.
Essential for development.

Magnesium – Wholegrains, green leafy vegetables, nuts, soya beans, yeast extract.
Needed for healthy muscle function.

Potassium – Dried fruit, bananas, potatoes, nuts, pulses, wholegrains, wheatgerm, yeast extract.
Needed for nerve function, muscle control and blood pressure.

Selenium – Wholegrains, pulses (beans, peas, lentils), nuts.
Essential for good health and plays a role in the immune system.

Zinc – Lentils, sesame seeds, pumpkin seeds, brown rice and other whole grains, green vegetables.
Supports a healthy immune system, needed for healing wounds, helps maintain sense of taste and smell and is needed for DNA synthesis. Also supports normal growth and development during pregnancy, childhood and adolescence.

Iron – Baked beans, dried fruit, wholegrains (including bread), molasses, pulses, spinach, cabbage, nuts.
Needed for healthy red blood cells to transport oxygen to different parts of the body.

Calcium – Some soya milks, nuts, seeds, green leafy vegetables, tofu, dried fruit.
Needed for strong, healthy bones and teeth and for the working of muscles.

Protein – Tofu, rice, pulses (beans, peas, lentils), wholegrains, tahini, soya milk, cereals, beansprouts.
Necessary for maintaining tissue, sustaining growth and protecting against infection.

Fibre – Wholegrains, nuts, pulses (beans, peas, lentils), wheatgerm, oats, fruit, vegetables.
Essential for the digestive system to work properly. Clears away toxins and helps to prevent diseases.

Essential Fatty Acids – Vegetable oils (especially soya, corn, sunflower), avocados, margarine, nuts, linseed (flaxseed).

A little fat (essential fats) is needed to repair tissue, manufacture hormones and carry some vitamins.

