



Not ready to go completely vegetarian?  
Consider going “meatless” one day a week!

Check out the **“Meatless Monday-A Weekly Start for a Healthier America”** campaign!

<http://www.meatlessmonday.com>



Meatless Monday is a national public health campaign in association with Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health to help prevent heart disease, diabetes, stroke, and cancer—four of the leading causes of death in America.

The goal of the campaign is to reduce consumption of saturated fat by at least 15% by 2010. This is consistent with the dietary recommendations of the US Department of Health and Human Services, the US Department of Agriculture and the American Heart Association.

Meatless Monday and the American Diet

Meatless Monday is not a weight loss plan or a vegetarian campaign. Instead, Meatless Monday encourages Americans to adopt a more balanced approach to nutrition by:

- limiting meat and saturated fat intake
- incorporating more fruits, vegetables, and whole grains—the foods that help prevent heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and cancer—into their diets

Meatless Monday helps people start the week off right by encouraging them to take an approach of moderation in their eating and meal planning. The campaign defines “going meatless” as abstaining from red meat, poultry, and high-fat dairy products. Fish and seafood, especially those high in omega-3 fatty acids, are encouraged, as well as other non-meat protein foods (beans, soy, nuts, etc.).



The Math Behind Meatless Monday:

On average, Americans should reduce their saturated fat intake by 15%. (1 day out of 7 = 15%)

Beyond Monday

Meatless Monday helps Americans make other smart lifestyle changes—with reminders to keep healthy all week long by:

- Choosing lean meats and low-fat dairy products.
- Enjoying 5 to 9 servings of fruits and vegetables a day.
- Not smoking and staying clear of people who do.
- Exercising at least 30 minutes almost every day.



February 2009



This month:

## Vegetarian Diets

“Did you know?”

Vegetarian diets can be healthful and nutritionally sound if they’re carefully planned to include essential nutrients.

Have you wondered about vegetarian diets or considered becoming a “vegetarian”?

This month we will take a look at vegetarian diets.



What is a vegetarian diet?

Some people follow a “vegetarian” diet, but there’s no single vegetarian eating pattern. The **vegan** or **total vegetarian** diet includes only foods from plants: fruits, vegetables, legumes (dried beans and peas), grains, seeds and nuts. The **lacto-vegetarian** diet includes plant foods plus cheese and other dairy products. The **ovo-lacto-vegetarian** (or **lacto-ovo-vegetarian**) diet also includes eggs. **Semi-vegetarians** don’t eat red meat but include chicken and fish with plant foods, dairy products and eggs.

Are vegetarian diets healthful?

Most vegetarian diets are low in animal products. They’re also usually lower than non-vegetarian diets in total fat, saturated fat and cholesterol. Many studies have shown that vegetarians seem to have a lower risk of obesity, coronary heart disease (which causes heart attack), high blood pressure, diabetes mellitus and some forms of cancer.

What are the nutrients to consider in a vegetarian diet?

- **Protein:** You don’t need to eat foods from animals to have enough protein in your diet. Plant proteins alone can provide enough of the essential and non-essential amino acids, as long as sources of dietary protein are varied and caloric intake is high enough to meet energy needs.
- **Whole grains, legumes, vegetables, seeds and nuts** all contain both essential and non-essential amino acids. **You don’t need to consciously combine these foods (“complementary proteins”) within a given meal.**
- **Soy protein** has been shown to be equal to proteins of animal origin. It can be your sole protein source if you choose.
- **Iron:** Vegetarians may have a greater risk of iron deficiency than non-vegetarians. The richest sources of iron are red meat, liver and egg yolk -- all high in cholesterol. However, dried beans, spinach, enriched products, brewer’s yeast and dried fruits are all good plant sources of iron.
- **Vitamin B-12:** This comes naturally only from animal sources. Vegans need a reliable source of vitamin B-12. It can be found in some fortified (not enriched) breakfast cereals, fortified soy beverages, some brands of nutritional (brewer’s) yeast and other foods (check the labels), as well as vitamin supplements.
- **Vitamin D:** Vegans should have a reliable source of vitamin D. Vegans who don’t get much sunlight may need a supplement.
- **Calcium:** Vegetable greens such as spinach, kale and broccoli, and some legumes and soybean products, are good sources of calcium from plants.
- **Zinc:** Zinc is needed for growth and development. Good plant sources include grains, nuts and legumes. Shellfish are an excellent source of zinc. Take care to select supplements containing no more than 15-18 mg zinc. Supplements containing 50 mg or more may lower HDL (“good”) cholesterol in some people.

What meal plans are recommended?

**Any type of vegetarian diet should include a wide variety of foods and enough calories to meet your energy needs.**

- Keep your intake of sweets and fatty foods to a minimum. These foods are low in nutrients and high in calories.
- Choose whole or unrefined grain products when possible, or use fortified or enriched cereal products.
- Use a variety of fruits and vegetables, including foods that are good sources of vitamins A and C.
- If you use milk or dairy products, choose fat-free/nonfat and low-fat varieties.
- Eggs are high in cholesterol (213 mg per yolk), so monitor your use of them. Limit your cholesterol intake to no more than 300 mg per day.

For more tips for vegetarians, go to <http://www.mypyramid.gov>

## Upcoming Events

March:

National Nutrition Month®

&

Registered Dietitian Day

(March 11th)



Join us at our next

**Healthy Living for a Lifetime**

session:

**"Hot Topics in Nutrition"**

(find out more about nutrition in the news and how it may be affecting you!)

March 26th, 2009 12:15-12:45

Administration Bldg., Room B190

(Healthy Living sessions are FREE and open to County employees and the community)



## Nutrition on a Budget

**Try batch cooking!**



Batch cooking can help you plan your meals for the week or month. You will have foods on hand to eat, which can help avoid those "quick stops" at the grocery store or convenience store where you may be tempted to buy higher priced, over-processed foods.

- ◆ Pick a day, night, or weekend and prepare some of your favorite recipes.
- ◆ Double the recipe and freeze to be eaten later.
- ◆ Casseroles, soups, and chili's work great for batch cooking.



Do you have a nutrition question for one of our  
Registered Dietitians?

Feel free to submit your questions to:

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### Sources:

<http://www.americanheart.org>

<http://www.meatlessmonday.com>

<http://www.mypyramid.gov>

## Recipe Corner

### Loaded Veggie Lasagna

(Makes 6 servings)

Loaded with vegetables, mushrooms, and tofu, this low-fat lasagna can be prepared up to 2 days in advance.

8 ounces whole wheat lasagna noodles

1 teaspoon olive oil

2 cups onion, chopped

2 garlic cloves

3 cups sliced mushrooms

3 cups broccoli, chopped

1 cup zucchini, chopped

1/2 cup ricotta cheese (low-fat)

1/2 cup tofu (low-fat silken)

1/2 teaspoon oregano

1/2 teaspoon basil

Cooking spray

3 cups low-sodium tomato sauce

1/4 cup black olives

12 ounces mozzarella cheese, low-fat shredded (soy optional)



- Boil lasagna noodles per directions on the box.
- Sauté onions, garlic, and mushrooms in olive oil until tender.
- Add broccoli, zucchini, and olives. Set aside.
- Combine ricotta and tofu, oregano and basil in a bowl. Mix until blended and set aside.
- Spray a 9 x 9 inch baking dish with cooking spray.
- Spread 2 tablespoons of tomato sauce on the bottom. Next, lay a single layer of lasagna noodles over the tomato sauce.
- Layer 1/3 ricotta mixture, 1/3 vegetables, 2/3 cup tomato sauce, and 1/4th of the mozzarella. Repeat noodles, ricotta, vegetables, tomato sauce, mozzarella twice or until ingredients are gone. Top with mozzarella.
- Cover and bake at 350 degrees for 45 minutes. Let stand 10 minutes before serving.

### Nutrition Facts

330 Calories per Serving, Total Fat 7 g, Saturated Fat 3.5 g, Cholesterol 36 mg, Sodium 435 mg, Carbohydrate 46 g, Fiber 5 g, Protein 27 g