

# What Is Veganism and What Do Vegans Eat?

Veganism is a stricter form of vegetarianism which means that vegans exclude animal products altogether. This means that vegans do not eat anything that comes from an animal. They do not eat seafood, eggs, dairy products, honey, meat or any foods which contain them.

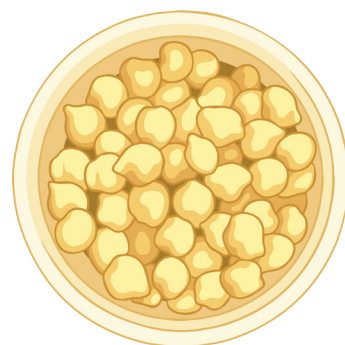
A vegan based diet will get all its nutrients from a plant-based diet. Foods that vegans will eat include vegetables, fruit, beans, seeds, nuts and grains. Vegans, in the same way as all other dietary choices, need to ensure that they eat a varied diet full of lots of different vitamins and minerals to ensure that their diet is nutritionally balanced. This means a variety of foods which are rich in calcium, protein, iron, omega-3 fatty acids and vitamins such as B12. Here is some guidance about where vegans find their nutrients:

## Protein

For skin, bone, organ and muscle health. Vegans need to ensure they consume the right amount of protein within their diet to remain healthy. Foods like dairy, eggs and meat do contain protein, but these are not the only sources of protein which are available. Instead, vegans will opt for different protein options such as beans, lentils, chickpeas, tofu, soya alternatives to milk and yoghurt, or peanuts. This means vegans can ingest plenty of non-animal based protein in their diet.

## Calcium

Calcium is required to ensure healthy teeth and bones. Despite dairy products containing calcium, there are plenty of non-dairy options available for vegans. Calcium can be found in fortified plant-based milks, tofu, kale, pak choi, okra, spring greens, dried figs, chia seeds and almonds.



## Iron

This is needed within the body for red blood cells to work properly and for oxygen to make its way around the body. For vegans, iron can be found in many places other than within meat. Examples include lentils, chickpeas, beans, tofu, cashew nuts, chia seeds, ground linseed, hemp seeds, pumpkin seeds, kale, dried apricots and figs, raisins, quinoa and fortified breakfast cereal. It is important to eat vitamin C when eating iron rich foods to help the body absorb iron.

## Vitamin B12

This vitamin helps to ensure that red blood cells are healthy and produced regularly. It is found within animal products such as red meat, however there are some fortified foods where B12 is found, or there is an option of taking supplements. Examples include yeast extract, cereal and soya milk.



## Omega-3 Fatty Acids

These are needed for brain and heart health. Vegans can find fatty acids such as these in sources other than seafood, which are rich in them. Other non-animal based sources include walnuts, some oils (such as canola oil), hemp seeds and chia seeds.

