

# 5 Reasons Why You Should Start **EATING** Plant Based Foods **TODAY**



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As our society evolves, we are constantly facing the need to change our behaviors and habits to increase our health and quality of life. We are now facing climate change, food insecurity and over 40% of our population is suffering from chronic disease.

One of the recent ideas put forward to improve our world and health is the plant-based nutrition. Even though food regiments are not something our doctor prescribes (yet), research is showing that food has a lot to contribute to our health. It is also a less costly option to our society than prescribe medication.

Our understanding of plant-based eating may differ from one individual to another. In the world of nutrition, plant-based eating is having a large portion of one's nutrition coming from vegetables, fruits, herbs, nuts, whole grains and also include legumes or other plants.

A spectrum of plant-based nutrition options is available to you. Some are very strict (vegan diet), others are still adding animal products like dairy (vegetarian) and at the other end of the spectrum are those that still eat meat, poultry and fish on an occasional basis.

We once believed that early humans consumed a large proportion of animal protein in their diet. It is from that belief that, in the 2000s, the Paleo diet (mainly comprised of animal protein) became really popular in the world of nutrition and diet.

Although, we now know that the nutrition of bipedal primates and Homo sapiens was primarily composed of nuts, fruits, leaves, roots, seeds and water. In that case, the “original” Paleo Diet was in fact plant-based eating.

It is also linked to the fact that some of the strongest animals on Earth are not carnivores. The strongest mammal is the gorilla (most are herbivores). It has the ability to lift around 4409 lbs, that is 10 times its body weight. It would be like a 200 lb individual lifting 2000 lb.

If other mammals can live a healthy and strong life on a plant-based nutrition, we probably can too.

Whether you want to save the animals, become healthier or simply feel better, the plant-based nutrition is a great option for those of us who want to be a better and healthier person.

Choosing a plant-based nutrition doesn't have to be a complex commitment. Not convinced yet? Here's the 5 reasons to start eating plant-based nutrition now:

## Improve your health

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In addition, an increase consumption of vegetables, grains and beans will bring more fiber into your nutrition. It is recommended to consume from 25 g (women) to 38 g (men) of fiber on a daily basis. Unfortunately, we consume an average of 15 g daily.

That is not enough for most of us and can have a negative impact on the bowels and cause constipation or hemorrhoids.

According to research, an increase intake in fiber can also help prevent and reduce heart diseases, diabetes, and colon cancer. Fiber is also known to reduce the blood cholesterol levels. For most Americans, the average daily intake of protein is recommended at 46 g (women) and 56 g (men). One cup of shredded cheese is about 26 g of protein and a 1 cup of diced chicken is 38 g of protein.

That means that if you eat cottage cheese for breakfast with a glass of milk, an egg sandwich for lunch, and a ribeye steak for dinner, you are probably looking at double the amount of protein recommend for daily intake. \

You can now understand why the average American eat around 100 g of protein per day. Our society seems to be eating too much protein, which can cause issues with the bowels or digestion. It is true that some individuals need more protein than others but in general, our protein rich nutrition is overindulgence. A plant-based nutrition can help us meet our health goal without going above the daily intake recommendation.

It was once believed that you needed to add animal protein in your meals to increase muscle mass. Some

studies and athletes have demonstrated that it is possible to increase muscles and be fit with a plant-based nutrition. For example, one of the best runners of all time and American ultramarathoner, Scott Jurek is known to be a plant-based eater!

While thousands of research demonstrate the health benefit of consuming vegetables as a way to prevent illness, many still refuse to change their nutrition to increase our quality of life.

Too many people believe that exercising, medication and supplements are sufficient to maintain health. Meanwhile, experts in the field of health and wellness say that weight management is 75–80% nutrition and 20–25% exercise.

According to some research plant-based eaters showed fewer signs of depression and mental illness than omnivores. There is much more research to be done and certainly some aspects to consider (like sugar intake) but these researches are very promising. The best way to know is to try it and see how you feel.

# Weight loss and weight management

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Plant-based eating means that you have a large proportion of your meal that comes from plant-based food. That said, fruits and vegetables are often the number one thing that comes to mind when we think of a plant-based nutrition.

According to some studies, only 15% of our population is able to meet the minimum requirement of daily recommendation for fruits and even less (10%) for vegetables.

Experts in nutrition all across the world agree that the insufficient consumption of fruits and vegetables contribute to the obesity epidemic and chronic disease related to poor nutrition, especially in our country. While exercising is important, nutrition is probably the number one reason why we have so much obesity in our nation.

In general, individuals who are on a plant-based nutrition tend to consume fewer calories than individuals who consume animal protein. Since most of their calories are coming from healthier options and fewer calories per weight. Plant-based eaters tend to eat less process food and avoid

meat focused restaurants like fast-food chain that provide unhealthy meal options.

In addition, studies indicate that individuals who had a plant-based nutrition with reduce sodium consumption (2300-1500 mg a day) showed a reduction in blood pressure and increased weight loss. That said, it is important to understand that plant-based food doesn't always mean healthy food. Sugar is the other plant-based food to beware of.

## Prevent or manage a chronic disease

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As you will see in the next section, research demonstrates that individuals on a plant-based nutrition can prevent chronic disease, reduce obesity and mostly encourage a healthy and quality of life.

A report published by the World Health Organization recommended that a daily intake of 400 g of fruits and vegetable would contribute to preventing chronic diseases which include diabetes, heart disease, cancer and obesity. To put this in perspective, 1 tomato is approximately 75 g while a medium size potato is about 150 grams. For fruits, a



medium apple is about 150 g and a small kiwi is around 75 g.

# Stop spending on supplements

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Did you know that our nation's population spends more than \$30 billion a year on supplements? What if you didn't need to waste that money? With a plant-based nutrition, you are more likely to receive all the nutrients you need from natural sources like legumes, vegetables, and fruits.

Not only does this save you money, it also saves you from trying to remember to purchase and consume supplements.

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# Save our planet

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Agriculture use approximately 70% of our fresh water (globally on average). That said, the production of meat requires around 1000% more water (1 kg requires from 5000 to 20,000 liters of water) than some grains like wheat (1 kg of wheat requires between 500 and 4000 liters of water).

In addition, a lot of the grain is cultivated to feed the animals we eat and if we started eating that grain and reduce our consumption meat, less water and resources would be used to produce animal food.

In conclusion, Plant-based eating is for everyone, the main idea is not to “diet” or remove something from your nutrition but more about adding more vegetables, fruits, nuts, whole grains, and legumes.

Now it's time to put your learning into action, pick a day when you will start your plant-based nutrition, select your meals (find recipes for breakfast, lunch and dinner recipes) and make a grocery list, go shopping (get your grocery items) and implement the change! Plant-based eating is not a diet but a more a way of living. Make it simple and have fun with it!