

Vegetarian Advantage

By
Manjit Biant

Research has shown vegetarians to suffer less heart disease, hypertension, obesity, diabetes, various cancers, diverticular disease, bowel disorders, gall stones, kidney stones, and osteoporosis. (Dwyer, 1988)

Vegetarian diets have also been used in the treatment of various illnesses, including rheumatoid arthritis and nephrotic syndrome.

The 1983 NACNE Report (National Advisory Committee on Nutrition Education) in the UK recommended a reduction in fat intake, particularly saturated fat, and an increased dietary proportion of polyunsaturated fats to saturated fats. An increased intake of complex carbohydrates and fibre and a decreased intake of sugar and salt were also recommended.

The World Health Organization recommended a reduced intake of fat and increased consumption of complex carbohydrates. Increased consumption of fruit, vegetables, cereals and pulses is also recommended. (1990)

Vegetarian diets tend to be lower in total fat. Taber & Cook found lacto-ovo vegetarians to consume an average of 35% of energy as fat, compared to omnivores consuming over 40% of energy as fat. (1980)

A study of the diets of a group of French vegetarians found they had a daily intake of 25% less fat than non-vegetarians. (Millet, 1989)

NOT ALL VEGETARIAN DIETS ARE NECESSARILY HEALTHY.

For example, if too high a proportion of high-fat dairy products are consumed, then this is equally unhealthy.

A study of nearly 28,000 Seventh-day Adventists in California noted a clear trend of increasing incidence of heart disease with rising frequency of meat consumption. (Snowdon, 1988)

Snowdon found type II diabetes to be only half as common as a cause of death among the largely vegetarian Seventh-day Adventist population as in the general population. (1985)

A study of 23,000 largely Seventh-day Adventists found cancer mortality rates to be 50-70% of those of the general population for several cancer sites unrelated to smoking or alcohol.

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Studies have shown vegetarians to suffer less from various other cancers. Mills studied the incidence of prostate cancer among 14,000 Seventh-day Adventists and found a relationship between increased risk and increasing animal product consumption. (1989)

LONGER-LIFE ADVANTAGE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS MALES

U.S.A. (Calif.) *8.9 Years*

NETHERLANDS *8.9 Years*

NORWAY *4.2 Years*

In Poland "the probability of Adventists reaching their 80s is ten times higher than for the general populace."

1863 SDA HEALTH PLATFORM

Exercise

The Original Diet

Cleanliness

Fresh Air

Simple Treatments

EVIDENCE OF GOD'S DESIRE

1. He wishes us good health. (3 John 2)
2. He gave health principles.
3. Following His health principles can decrease our risk for disease.
4. God is Love. (1 John 4:8)

POWERFUL MOTIVATORS

1. Loyalty to God
2. Responsibility to others
3. Gratitude to God

"My son, do not forget my law, But let your heart keep my commands; For length of days and long life, And Peace they will add to you." Proverbs 3:1,2 NKJV

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- Heart disease is responsible for around 50% of all deaths in the UK.
- Vegetarians suffer lower mortality from heart disease compared to non-vegetarians. (Key, et. al., 1999)

Oxford Vegetarian Study

A 12-year study of 6000 vegetarians and 5000 meat-eaters found that the incidence of heart disease mortality was 28% lower in vegetarians after all non-dietary factors had been taken into consideration. (Thorogood 1994)

Burr and Butland (1988) found vegetarians to suffer lower mortality from heart disease than health conscious non-vegetarians—57% lower compared to the general public and 18% lower than health conscious non-vegetarians. Deaths due to strokes were 43% lower compared to the general population.

- Vegetarians were found to have greatly improved cardiovascular fitness and a lower risk of heart disease. (Slattery, 1991)
- An eleven-year study in Germany found vegetarian mortality to be 61% lower in male vegetarians and 44% lower in female vegetarians. (Claude-Chang, 1992)
- The protective effect of a vegetarian diet is believed to be related to the lower blood cholesterol levels seen in vegetarians.

The California Lifestyle Heart Trial has indicated that a low-fat vegetarian diet, together with other lifestyle changes such as exercise and stress management, can reverse the progress of heart disease by reducing cholesterol plaques in coronary arteries. (Ornish, 1990)

Hypertension, or high blood pressure, can contribute to heart disease, strokes and kidney failure. A number of studies have shown vegetarians to have lower blood pressures than non-vegetarians.

(Sacks, 1974 and Armstrong, 1977)

A vegetarian diet has also been shown to reduce blood pressure in hypertensive patients. (Margetts, 1986)

- On average, vegetarians are leaner than non-vegetarians and their weights are generally closer to desirable levels.
- The British Medical Association has stated that vegetarians have lower rates of obesity. (1986)
- There are lower incidents of diabetes among vegetarians.
- Vegetarian diets tend to be high in complex carbohydrates and dietary fiber, which has a beneficial effect on carbohydrate metabolism, lowering blood sugar levels.

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- The leanness of vegetarians also contributes to reduced incidence of diabetes.
- Diabetes is often associated with raised blood cholesterol levels, and a vegetarian diet confers protection against this.
- Cancer is the second leading cause of death in the UK.
- It has been estimated that diet may be linked to 30-70% of cancers. (Doll, 1990)
- Sir Kenneth Calman, Chief Medical Officer, stated that "there is a relationship between eating red meat and cancer." (1997)
- The Oxford Vegetarian Study found cancer mortality to be 39% lower among vegetarians compared with meat-eaters. (Thorogood, 1994)
- Professor Nick Day of the University of Cambridge and the European Prospective Study into Cancer has stated that vegetarians may suffer 40% fewer cancers than the general population.

The World Cancer Research Fund's dietary advice to minimize cancer risk involves reducing the intake of dietary fat and increasing the consumption of fruits, vegetables and whole grains.

- Vegetarians have lower rates of colon cancer than non-vegetarians. (Phillips 1980)
- Incidence of colon cancer has been strongly linked to the consumption of meat. (Armstrong, 1975, and Singh and Fraser, 1998)
- Women eating red meat daily ran over twice the risk of developing colon cancer than women eating red meat less than once a month. (Willett, 1990)
- Bacterial flora in vegetarians has been shown to possess reduced ability to transform bile acids into potential carcinogens. (Johansson, 1990)

The role of dietary fibre in prevention of colon cancer may also be important. This was first noted in 1971 when it was suggested the high incidence of colon cancer in Western countries was linked to low fiber diets. Other dietary components associated with high fiber foods have also been implicated as having protective effects.

Evidence suggests a vegetarian diet is protective against breast cancer.

Vegetarian diets can alter the levels of circulating sex hormones, which may have a beneficial effect. Fiber is thought to be protective by modifying circulating estrogen levels.

Studies of adolescent girls have shown age of menarche to be delayed in vegetarians. (Sabate, 1992) Later age of menarche is believed to lower the risk of breast cancer in adult life.

- Mills also found pancreatic cancer to be associated with consumption of animal products. (1988)
- Increasing consumption of fruit, vegetables and pulses was shown to have a protective effect.

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- Rao found a vegetarian diet to be protective against oesophageal cancer. (1989)

Studies have also shown vegetarians to have lower incidence of lung cancer. This can be largely attributed to vegetarians tending to be non-smokers. High consumption of fruit has also shown to be protective against lung cancer. (Fraser, 1991)

- Diverticular disease affects the colon and symptoms include lower abdominal pain and disturbed bowel habit.

- Gear found incidence to be less frequent in vegetarians. Thought to be due to the increased fibre. (1979)

- Gall stones are composed of cholesterol, bile pigments and calcium salts.

- A study showed fewer incidents among vegetarians. (Pixley, 1985)

- Prevalence of kidney stones is lower in vegetarians. (Peacock, 1969)

- A high intake of animal protein increases the urinary loss of calcium and oxalate, known risk factors in kidney stone formation. Meat is also high in purines, which leads to increased uric acid in the urine. Urinary uric acid is also a risk factor of kidney stones.

- Osteoporosis is the loss of calcium from bone tissue, leading to bones that are brittle and liable to fracture.

- Marsh found bone loss to be considerably less in postmenopausal women who were vegetarian than those who were non-vegetarian. (1988)

A flesh diet contained higher amounts of sulphur, which is derived from animal protein. Dietary sulphur increases the acidity of urine, which results in increased urinary calcium loss. Increased urinary calcium loss is related to increased calcium loss from bone tissue.

Hip fractures associated with osteoporosis have been shown to be higher in countries consuming a diet high in animal protein (Abelow 1992).

The Oxford Vegetarian Study found that people who do not eat meat have a 50% lower risk of requiring an emergency appendectomy than those who do.

Studies have shown that vegetarian diets can be successfully used to treat the symptoms of rheumatoid arthritis and other rheumatic diseases.

Kjeldsen-Kragh found that rheumatoid arthritis patients following a vegetarian diet suffered considerably fewer swollen and tender joints and less stiffness or pain. (1991)

Nephrotic syndrome is a kidney condition involving high levels of protein in the urine which may lead to progressive kidney damage as well as promoting atherosclerosis and heart disease.

Studies have shown a low-protein vegan diet can be used to reduce the symptoms of nephrotic syndrome. (D'Amico, 1992)

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A vegetarian diet has been claimed to reduce the risk of gout, hiatus hernia, constipation, hemorrhoids and varicose veins. These diseases are linked to diets low in fibre and high in saturated fat.

The China Project on Nutrition, Health & Environment is a massive study involving researchers from China, Cornell University in Boston, and the University of Oxford, into the relationships between diet, lifestyles, and disease-related mortality in 6500 Chinese subjects from 65 mostly rural or semi-rural counties.

The rural Chinese diet is largely vegetarian or vegan, and involves less total protein, less animal protein, less total fat and animal fat, and more carbohydrate and fibre than the average western diet.

Blood cholesterol levels are significantly lower. Heart disease, cancer, obesity, diabetes, and osteoporosis are all uncommon. Areas in which they are becoming more frequent are areas where the population has moved towards a more Western diet with increasing consumption of animal products.

The China Health Project has clearly demonstrated the health benefits of a diet based on plant foods. One of the Project's coordinators, Dr. Colin Campbell of Cornell, has stated, "We're basically a vegetarian species and should be eating a wide variety of plant foods and minimizing our intake of animal foods."

For Further Information

Manjit Biant
manjit@advent-truth.co.uk
www.advent-truth.co.uk