

Meal and Snack Alternatives

O.K! Now What Do I Eat?

Base your diet on vegetables, fruits, legumes, grains, nuts and seeds.

Tastes for food are learned. As you begin changing to a more wholesome diet, you will find yourself enjoying the experience with increasing excitement. You may want to begin slowly by replacing high-fat dairy products with fat-free versions and eating meat less often.

Step 1 - Reduce red meat, poultry and fish. Replace with health-supporting grain, legume and potato-based dishes. You can begin by giving yourself larger servings of rice, potatoes and vegetables and smaller portions of meat.

Step 2 - Increase intake of calcium-rich foods, such as fortified soymilk, orange juice and calcium-rich vegetables (broccoli, carrots, kale, chard, mustard greens, etc.). Buy organic when possible.

Step 3 - Reduce the "luxury" fats. Hydrogenated oils (like margarine) are artificially thickened vegetable oils that can damage your arteries and have also been linked to some cancers. Gradually eliminate both butter and margarine

from your diet. Reduce your use of cooking oils and oil-based salad dressings. Switch to nonfat and low-fat versions of prepared foods and dairy products. Read product labels. Replace eggs when baking with 2 tablespoons of water per egg.

Step 4 - Replace dairy products with non-dairy foods. Delicious milks, cheeses, and

People always ask me, like, what do you eat? Well, just about everything else. There's a lot of things that aren't meat.

- 12th grade student,
Santa Cruz High School, Santa Cruz, CA

frozen desserts based on soy, rice, nuts and seeds are available in health food stores and many grocery stores.

Step 5 - Reduce refined carbohydrates (white flour, white sugar, white rice, etc.) by choosing whole grain products and natural sweeteners (fruits, juices, maple syrup, etc.).

It's Easy - There are many restaurants that serve veggie burgers, pasta dishes, etc.

Breakfast

Cereal Lovers - Try hot or

cold whole grain cereal or granola with soy milk and fruit. Use maple syrup or honey instead of sugar. Try apple juice on granola: it's great!

Bread Lovers - Try whole grain bread, toast, bagels, non-dairy muffins or specialty breads with raisins or dates and nuts or seeds. Be careful, even soy margarines have just as much fat as butter. Try apple butter, pure fruit jams, nut butters, hummus or tahini on your bread or bagel.

Egg Lovers - Don't knock scrambled tofu until you've tried it.

There are easy mixes put out by several companies, as well as recipes in vegetarian cookbooks. Try sautéing cubed firm tofu with anything you would add to an omelet.

What else? Treat yourself to waffles or pancakes made with soy milk—try using 1/2 banana in place of each egg and smother it in fresh or hot cooked fruit. Make fruit smoothies with everything you can imagine. Use sweet fruit to make breakfast cobbler or pie and you won't need to add sugar when baking.

Lunch or Dinner

Sandwiches - Whole grain breads, avocado, grated carrots, sprouts, lettuce, tomatoes and thinly sliced cucumbers make great sandwiches. Try nut butters with pure fruit jams or hummus with crisp sliced vegetables. Vegetarian cookbooks have great recipes for spreads. Falafel is delicious.

Salads - Most vegetables can be served raw, chopped small or grated in salads. Cooked beans (garbanzos, kidney, black, lentils, etc.), sprouted seeds (alfalfa, clover, etc.), seeds, nuts and avocados are excellent. Try salad dressings with little or no oil and/or flavored vinegar. Stuff your salad into pita bread and add tahini to it.

Pasta - Try all those special pastas made with wholesome grains, vegetables and spices. Experiment with marinara, pesto and tomato basil sauces. Try sautéing garlic, onions, summer squash, red bell peppers and tomatoes in a little olive or sesame oil and tamari (soy sauce).

Burritos or Tacos - Try beans, rice or potatoes, avocado, tomatoes, lettuce or crisp shredded cabbage, salsa, soy cheese, etc. Use soft corn or whole wheat tortillas. Find your own favorite combinations. "Nachos con tofu" is a great fast meal.

Potatoes - Potatoes can be baked, steamed, mashed or home-fried. Try them with sauce, salsa and/or mustard, in soups or salads. Treat yourself to mushroom gravy. Remember yams and sweet potatoes.

Veggie or Tofu Burgers - There are many varieties in stores. They are delicious and easy to bake, fry or barbecue. Tofu hot dogs are almost indistinguishable from meat dogs. Pile on the lettuce, tomatoes, onions, pickles, ketchup, mustard, tofu mayo and barbecue sauce.

I just don't like eating meat as much because it's not very good for you and when you know what's in that you won't want to eat it either.

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Vegetables - Try stir-fried or steamed, served with brown rice, millet, barley or potatoes. Add cubed firm tofu and tamari or mushroom gravy for a feast.

Pizza - Use whole wheat crust, tomato sauce, spices, soy cheese and all your favorite trimmings. Try almonds, garlic, and fresh tomatoes.

Soups - Beans, lentils, nuts, veggies, grains, potatoes, tofu—many foods are good in soup. Simmer your favorite vegetables for a few minutes and add a little miso for a quick treat.

There are many brands of instant soups made with wholesome and delicious ingredients. All you have to do is add boiling water, stir and wait.

Drinks and Snacks

Milks - Soy, rice, nut or seed milks are perfect substitutes for cow and goat milk. Carob, chocolate and vanilla versions are delicious. Be careful because some of these have added oils that make them just as high in fat as cow milk.

Juices - Many bottled organic juices are available all across the country. Look for local fresh-squeezed brands. Juice your own. Many vegetable juices are just as delicious as fruit juices. Carrot juice is so delicious, it can become habit forming.

Water and Tea - Add sliced lemons, limes, oranges or tangerines to fresh clean water. Try herbal iced teas and hot teas.

Snacks - Go for crispy foods like popcorn, pretzels, chips, fresh fruit, carrots, nuts, seeds and celery with almond butter. Enjoy cobblers and pies made from sweet fresh fruit, smoothies, non-dairy cookies and muffins, dried fruit, frozen fruit bars and non-dairy frozen desserts like Rice Dream and Tofutti. Avoid preservatives and buy organic.