

# Church of Christ Assisted Living

September 2020 Active Living Services Newsletter

## What to Know About a Vegetarian Diet?

People who follow a vegetarian diet do not eat meat or fish but may continue to eat eggs and dairy products. A person does not have to eat meat to get all the nutrients they need for good health. When a person decides to follow a meat-free diet, they often become more active in making overall healthier choices. Many studies agree that a vegetarian diet can offer a range of health benefits including a reduced risk of cardiovascular disease and various types of cancers and more!

**What Do Vegetarians Eat?** A vegetarian diet can provide a wide variety of healthful, nutritious foods, but what the person eats will depend on the type of diet they are following and their personal choices. There are a variety of diets that fall under the umbrella term vegetarian such as:

- **Lacto-Ovo Vegetarians:** Avoid meat and fish but consume dairy and eggs.
- **Lacto-Vegetarians:** Consume dairy products but no eggs.
- **Ovo-Vegetarians:** Consume eggs but not dairy.
- **Pescatarian Diet:** Consume fish but not meat.
- **Vegan Diet:** Excludes all animal-based foods.

**Benefits:** A growing number of younger people are adopting a vegetarian diet because it brings health benefits, is more ecologically sustainable, have concerns about the treatment of animals, and is part of a broader lifestyle choice. Some people also avoid meat and animal products for religious reasons. Here are some

ways in which avoiding meat products can enhance a person's health:

- **Weight:** Switching to a vegetarian diet may help a person lose weight, at least in the short-term. Scientists need to carry out longer term controlled studies to understand how a vegetarian diet might affect weight.
- **Cholesterol:** People who follow a vegetarian diet are likely to have lower overall cholesterol levels.
- **Cancer:** A study of nearly 70,000 people found that the incidence of cancer overall was lower among vegetarians than non-vegetarians and may offer some protection from cancer.
- **Heart Health:** A 2014 study found a lower risk of cardiovascular disease in people who followed a vegetarian diet in India.
- **Diabetes:** People who follow a vegetarian diet may be less likely to have type 2 diabetes. One reason for this may be a higher intake of whole grains, fruits, vegetables, legumes, and nuts, and a lower intake of unhealthy fats.

However, these benefits will not automatically happen when a person stops eating meat. Alongside a vegetarian diet people need to make sure they consume the right number of calories, focus on a variety of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, limit their intake of processed foods and alcohol, avoid unhealthy fats and added sugar and salt, avoid smoking, and engage in an overall healthful lifestyle with plenty of exercise.

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## Active Living Services Department

Katie Murphy,

*Director of Active Living Services*

## Fitness Club

Senior group movement classes focusing on muscular strength, endurance, balance, and flexibility. The Fitness Club is performed in a chair and open to all fitness levels!

**When:**

10:30am-11:30am

Monday-Friday

## Health Seminars

Health and wellness presentations focusing on disease management and various senior wellness topics.

## Foodie Group

Asunda Amluxen, Assisted Living Chef Manager, presents current health & nutrition topics and recipes.

*"Autumn shows us how beautiful it is to let things go."*

Contact Katie Murphy, Director, for more information:

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[Tips for Getting Started with a Vegetarian Diet](#)

- Start learning about the nutrients required and how to obtain them.
- Get some tips and recipes from a local health food shop or a nutritionist.
- Make a weekly shopping list and meal plan.
- Focus on a variety of meat-free dishes that provide a complete protein.
- Consider making the change gradually.
- Start with familiar meat-free foods, such as mac and cheese and salad, and add to your repertoire over time.
- Choose whole grain products, such as whole wheat bread, wild or brown rice, and whole grain cereals, as these provide B vitamins.
- Vary the diet with whole grains, fruits, vegetables, legumes, nuts, etc.
- Use eggs and dairy products in moderation or try adding soy milk.
- Ensure a sufficient intake of vitamin D, especially if exposure to sunlight is low.

## [5 Health Benefits of Eating Whole Grains](#)

**Whole grains have been a part of the human diet for tens of thousands of years. Eating whole grains is associated with various benefits, including a lower risk of diabetes, heart disease, and high blood pressure. Let us review the top 5 health benefits of eating whole grains.**

### [What Are Whole Grains?](#)

Grains are the seeds of grass-like plants called cereals. Some of the most common varieties are corn, rice, and wheat. Some seeds of non-grass plants, or pseudocereals, are also considered whole grains, including buckwheat, quinoa, and amaranth. Whole-grain kernels have three parts: the bran, endosperm, and germ. Refined grains have had the germ and bran removed, leaving only the endosperm and are not as healthy or nutritious as the whole versions.

### [#1 High in Nutrients and Fiber:](#)

Whole grains deliver many important nutrients including fiber, vitamins, particularly B vitamins, and minerals such as zinc, iron, magnesium, and manganese. They also include protein, antioxidants, and plant compounds.

### [#2 Lower Your Risk of Heart Disease:](#)

One of the biggest health benefits of whole grains is that they lower your risk of heart disease, which is the leading cause of death worldwide. A review of 10 studies found that three 1-ounce servings of whole grains daily may lower

your risk of heart disease by 22%. Researchers concluded that heart-healthy diets should include more whole grains and fewer refined grains.

[#3 Lower Your Risk of Stroke:](#) In an analysis of 6 studies in nearly 250,000 people, those eating the most whole grains had a 14% lower risk of stroke than those eating the fewest.

Furthermore, certain compounds in whole grains, such as fiber, vitamin K, and antioxidants, can reduce your risk of stroke.

### [#4 Reduce Your Risk of Obesity:](#)

Eating fiber-rich foods can help fill you up and prevent overeating. This is one reason high-fiber diets are recommended for weight loss. Whole grains and products made from them are more filling than refined grains, and research suggests that they may lower your risk of obesity. Eating 3 servings of whole grains daily was linked to lower body mass index and less belly fat in review of 15 studies in almost 120,000 people.

### [#5 Lower Your Risk of Type 2](#)

[Diabetes:](#) A review of 16 studies concluded that replacing refined grains with whole varieties and eating at least 2 servings of whole grains could lower your risk of type 2 diabetes. Also, studies have linked whole grain intake to lower fasting blood sugar levels and improved insulin sensitivity. This could be due to magnesium, a mineral that helps your body metabolize carbs and is tied to insulin sensitivity.