



食康乐坐月子外送食补

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Nutrition for vegetarians during pregnancy

Pregnancy is a time of increased nutritional needs, both to support the rapidly growing foetus and also for the changes occurring in the pregnant woman's body. Throughout pregnancy, recommended intakes of vitamins and minerals are higher than for the non-pregnant state. For example, the recommendation for folic acid is 50 percent higher which is 600mcg supplement every day during pregnancy.¹ Vegetarian and vegan diets can easily meet these nutrient needs. Nutrition for vegetarians will be discussed in this article.

Types of vegetarians

- **Vegan** - This diet includes fruits, vegetables, beans, grains, seeds, and nuts. All animal sources of protein including meat, poultry, fish, eggs, milk, cheese, and other dairy products are excluded from the diet.
- **Lactovegetarian** - This diet includes dairy products in addition to the foods listed above in the vegan diet. Meat, poultry, fish, and eggs are excluded from the diet.
- **Lacto-ovovegetarian** - This diet includes dairy products and eggs in addition to the foods listed above in the vegan diet. Meat, poultry, and fish are excluded from the diet.

Baby can receive the nutrition needed to grow while a vegetarian mother follows a vegetarian meal plan. During pregnancy, it is important to choose a variety of foods that provide enough protein and calories for the mother and the baby. Depending on the type of vegetarian meal plan, a vegetarian mother might need to adjust her eating habits. Follow the guidelines below for healthy vegetarian eating during pregnancy.

Goals for healthy eating

- During pregnancy, extra calories from nutrient-rich foods to help baby to grow. **200 to 300 more calories should be consumed than before one became pregnant.**
- **Eat a variety of foods.** If a mother does not eat meat, poultry, fish, eggs, or dairy products, she will need to include other sources of protein in your daily diet. Other protein sources include nuts, peanut butter, legumes, soy products, and tofu.
- **Choose foods high in starch and fiber** such as whole-grain breads, cereals, pasta, rice, fruits, and vegetables.

- **Eat and drink at least four servings of calcium-rich foods a day** to help ensure that one are getting *1200 mg.* of calcium in the daily diet. Sources of calcium include dairy products, seafood, leafy green vegetables, dried beans or peas, and tofu.
- **Vitamin D will help your body use calcium.** Adequate amounts of vitamin D can be obtained through exposure to the sun and in fortified milk, eggs, and fish. Low vitamin D levels can be associated with and increase in infant bone and teeth abnormalities. You can also get vitamin D by expose your skin to daylight even on cloudy days.²
- **Eat at least three servings of iron-rich foods per day** to ensure mother is getting *30 mg to 60mg* of iron in your daily diet.⁴ Sources of iron include enriched grain products (rice), eggs, leafy green vegetables, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, sweet potatoes, dried beans and peas, raisins, prunes, and peanuts.
- **Choose at least one source of vitamin C every day.** Sources of vitamin C include oranges, grapefruits, strawberries, honeydew, broccoli, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, green peppers, tomatoes, and mustard greens.
- **Choose at least one source of folic acid every day.** Sources of folic acid include dark, green, leafy vegetables, and legumes such as black beans, black-eyed peas, and chickpeas.
- **Choose at least one source of vitamin A every other day.** Sources of vitamin A include carrots, pumpkins, sweet potatoes, spinach, turnip greens and apricots.
- **Choose at least one source of vitamin B₁₂ a day.** Vitamin B₁₂ is found in animal products including fish and shellfish, eggs, and dairy products. Vegans are at risk of not consuming enough vitamin B₁₂. Your health care provider might recommend a vitamin B₁₂ supplement.
- **Avoid alcohol during pregnancy.** Alcohol has been linked to premature delivery and low birth weight babies. *If you think you might have a problem with alcohol use, please talk to your health care provider so he or she can help protect you and your baby.*
- **Limit caffeine to no more than 3 cups per day.** The consumption of 220 mg of caffeine (about three cups or 400ml) causes increase levels of stress hormones (adrenalin, the ‘fight’ hormones) in the circulation and this, in turn, may reduce the blood flow to the uterus.³
- **The use of non-nutritive or artificial sweeteners** approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is acceptable during pregnancy. These FDA-approved sweeteners include aspartame and acesulfame-K. *Talk with your health care provider about how much non-nutritive sweetener is acceptable during pregnancy.*
- **Limit salty foods.** Salt causes your body to retain water. Although there is no documented risk to mother or baby, you might want to limit extra salty foods to

avoid feeling overly bloated. Do not restrict salt unless prescribed by your health care provider.

- **Decrease the total amount of fat you eat to 30 percent or less of your total daily calories.** *For a person eating 2000 calories a day, this would be 65 grams of fat or less per day.*
- **Limit cholesterol intake to 300 milligrams (mg) or less per day.**
- **DO NOT DIET or try to lose weight during pregnancy.** -- Both you and your baby need the proper nutrients in order to be healthy. Keep in mind that you will lose some weight the first week your baby is born.

| Food Group | Serving size | No of Servings | Comments |
|-----------------------------|--|-----------------------|---|
| Grains | 1 slice of bread; 1/2 cup cooked cereal, grain or pasta; 3/4 to 1 cup ready-to-eat cereal | 7 or more | Choose whole or enriched |
| Legumes, nuts, seeds, milks | 1/2 cup cooked beans, tofu, tempeh; or 2 Tbsp nuts, seeds, nut or seed butter; 1 cup fortified soy milk; 1 cup cow's milk, 1 cup yogurt) | 5 or more | Calcium-rich foods such as dried beans, calcium-precipitated tofu, calcium-fortified soymilk, cow's milk, and yogurt should be chosen often. A regular source of vitamin B-12 should be used. |
| Vegetables | 1/2 cup cooked or 1 cup raw | 4 or more | Calcium-rich foods such as collard greens, mustard greens and broccoli should be chosen often. |
| Fruits | 1/2 cup canned fruit or juice or 1 medium fruit | 4 or more | Choose calcium rich figs and fortified juices often. |

Table 1: Meal Planning Guidelines for Pregnant Vegetarians

Sample Meal Plan for Vegan Pregnancy

Breakfast

1/2 cup oatmeal with maple syrup
1 slice whole wheat toast with fruit spread
1 cup fortified soymilk
1/2 cup calcium-fortified orange juice

Morning Snack

1/2 whole wheat bagel with margarine
1 banana

Lunch

Veggie burger on whole wheat bun with mustard and ketchup
1 cup steamed greens
Medium apple
1 cup fortified milk

Afternoon snack

3/4 cup ready-to-eat cereal with 1/2 cup blueberries/cherries
1 cup fortified soymilk

Dinner

3/4 cup tofu stir-fried with 1 cup vegetables
1 cup brown rice

Evening snack

Whole grain crackers with 2tbsp peanut butter
4 ounce apple juice

Conclusion

A vegetarian diet planned in accordance with current dietary recommendations can easily meet the nutritional needs of pregnancy. There's no reason to start eating meat during pregnancy and, conversely, no pregnancy-related reason to become a vegetarian. A decision like this should be made in the context of your personal beliefs and priorities. Besides following the vegetarian meal plan, a vegetarian mother needs supplements from her doctor to meet the nutrition needs for the baby. Remember to focus on a *nutritious* diet and you can't go wrong.

References

- 1&2. Pregnancy, April 2004, pg6, Parenthood, Malaysia.
- 3&4. Pregnancy, pg.89, Dr. Teoh Eng Soon, Singapore, 2001.

Cleveland Clinic Health System

<http://www.cchs.net/health/health-info/docs/1600/1674.asp?index=4724&pflag=1>