Focus on a Plant-Based Diet

Did you know that incorporating more plants into your diet can give you lots of health benefits? Did you know that to incorporate more plants, you don’t need to give up meat and animal products? Simply adding more fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts, and beans can have you looking and feeling healthier.

What are the Benefits of Eating More Plants?
Plant-based diets are rich in vitamins and minerals which are important for a healthy immune system. They also contain lots of phytochemicals which are loaded with health benefits. As a result, having more of them keeps us healthier. There are numerous

Adding more vegetables:

BREAKFAST:
- Add them to your omelet or scrambled eggs
- Add some greens or cauliflower to your smoothie
- Eat a small plate of dinner leftovers (including veggies)

LUNCH/DINNER:
- Top a salad with your favorite proteins, nuts, beans, and/or fruit and dressing
- Make ½ of your plate vegetables
- Add extra veggies to your soups and stews

SNACKS:
- Dip carrots or celery in peanut butter or hummus
- Try sliced cucumbers and bell peppers with your favorite dip

Try these tips for adding more vegetables, fruits, whole grains and legumes into your daily routine so you can achieve the benefits of a more plant-based diet!

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**PLANT-BASED, FROM PG 1**

benefits to having more plants in your diet, but here are some of our favorites!

1. **Lower risk of moderate to severe COVID-19:** A new study showed that people who ate fruits and vegetables everyday had a lower risk of moderate to severe COVID.

2. **Lower risk of Type 2 diabetes:** Plant-based diets not only reduce the risk of Type 2 Diabetes, but can also protect people with Type 2 Diabetes from getting kidney disease and can also help to reverse Type 2 Diabetes itself.

3. **Lower “bad” cholesterol and lower risk of heart disease:** Yep, it’s true! More plants means lower LDL (or “bad” cholesterol), which decreases the risk of heart disease!

4. **Improved gut health:** Eating a variety of plant foods helps you have a healthy and diverse gut microbiome — this means easier digestion and is even linked to improved mental health!

5. **Reduced risk of some cancers:** All those phytochemicals in plants help protect you from cancer, most specifically breast, prostate and colorectal cancer.

**MEAL PLAN, FROM PG 1**

- Pop some cherry tomatoes right into your mouth

**Not a Fan of Vegetables?**

**TRY HIDING THEM IN SOME OF YOUR MEALS:**

- Add some extras to your sauce, put some in your smoothie, or add them to favorite dishes like macaroni and cheese, lasagna, meatloaf, etc.

**TRY SOME NEW ONES LIKE:** Spaghetti squash, asparagus, Brussels sprouts, or rainbow carrots

**TRY THEM IN DIFFERENT WAYS:**

- Zucchini noodles, cauliflower mashed potatoes, shredded beets, stir fried or roasted

**Adding more fruits to your life**

**BREAKFAST:**

- Top your cereal or oatmeal with chopped fruits, sliced bananas or berries
- Use them in a smoothie
- Mix some into your yogurt
- Drink 100% fruit juice (in limited amounts)

**LUNCH/DINNER:**

- Have a piece with your sandwich or for “dessert”
- Add sliced apples, pears, berries, or dried fruits to your salad

**SNACKS:**

- Eat them whole by themselves
- Spread peanut butter on an apple or banana
- Make a fruit and yogurt parfait
- Have some trail mix with dried fruit

**Incorporate more whole grains**

- Instead of replacing white rice with brown rice, try barley, bulgur, or quinoa instead

- Instead of cream of wheat, try oatmeal

- Pick cereals made with whole grain

- Have popcorn for a snack instead of chips

- Substitute half of the white flour in a recipe with whole wheat flour

- Sprinkle a tablespoon of ground flaxseed in your oatmeal, cereal, yogurt, smoothie or into sauces

**Adding more legumes to your routine**

**BREAKFAST:**

- Mix black beans and salsa with your eggs

**LUNCH/DINNER:**

- Add beans or chickpeas to your salad
- Use beans and lentils in stews and soups
- Use hummus as a spread on your sandwich instead of mayonnaise

**SNACKS:**

- Dip veggies in hummus
- Spread refried beans and cheese on a tortilla
- Make a bean dip with whole wheat crackers or veggies