

The Power of Combining Plant Proteins

When I came back from a semester studying in England, newly vegetarian, I was fortunate to take a nutrition class and learned lots of good stuff, including how to properly nourish my body.

One thing I learned from the class that always stayed with me is that our bodies need nine essential amino acids to grow and, as we are unable to produce them, we must take in these amino acids through food. As animal proteins have all nine, they are called “complete proteins.” Proteins that come from plant have different amino acids, and very few of them contain all the essential ones, so plant proteins are considered “incomplete” proteins.

It was a huge relief to subsequently hear the professor explain how we can combine different plant proteins to get all the essential amino acids necessary for our bodies to grow healthfully.

I was also glad to learn you don't even have to eat the combinations of foods at the same meal, you can spread them throughout your day. Working together is a beautiful thing! Take it from grains and legumes... which are known as “complementary proteins” as when combined, they can provide all of the essential amino acids your body needs.

Legumes are foods such as lentils, dry beans, soy beans, chickpeas serve as a delicious base to many soups, while nuts and seeds are the crunchy toppings for salads or wholesome goodness in an energy bar.

Grains are getting a bad rap these days because of the gluten

thing, but there are still so many varieties we don't always think of, like buckwheat, quinoa, oats, polenta, millet, and of course rice. All of those listed are gluten free!

Combining complementary proteins comes naturally to us. Look at rice and beans, fried rice with corn and peas, peanut butter sandwich, barley and lentil soup. Once you start loving these foods, the possibilities are seriously endless.

- [Crunchy Thai Peanut and Quinoa Salad](#)
- [Edamole and Baked Chips](#) (Edamole is like quacamole, but made from Edamame beans)
- [Black Bean Salsa with Blue Chips](#)
- [Green Pea Buckwheat Risotto](#)

Without even realizing I was mixing incomplete proteins, I've been eating nuts for breakfast for years. The combination varies, but generally includes at least 5 of the following: soybeans, dried edamame, almonds, wasabi peas, sunflower seeds, watermelon seeds, sesame sticks, and dried cranberries.

I mix these all up and put in glass jars in the cupboard. I just pour out a half cup in a small bowl to eat with my mid-morning glass of water. When I'm hungry between meals, or when I come back from a run, I often find myself reaching for the mixed treasure. If you are looking for another way to combine your proteins, I highly recommend mixed seeds and nuts.

For you visual learners, here is a great resource I want to share. It is a [chart that shows you which amino acids specific legumes and grains have](#) so you can mix and match to get your complete set of essential amino acids. Hopefully it'll spark some additional ideas of what you can make to build your complete set of amino acids for today. Comment below on what you'll combine next!

I love the book *Veggie Protein Power* by HurryTheFoodUp. The recipe for Chile 'Con' Carne is a great example of combining plant proteins! [The \\$4.95 ebook is totally worth it!](#)



Veggie Protein
Power book by
HurryTheFoodUp
([buy here](#))

The Benefits Of Natural Medicine

Holistic medicine has gained popularity over the years as something more beneficial and healthier than traditional medication. So much so that more stores are beginning to carry many varieties of natural medications.

While experts debate on which form is better, research has shown that holistic medication has optimal benefits that support wellness, health, and longevity.

When we think back to our ancestors, all they used were the tools provided by nature. While we don't have all of the answers regarding their health, we have a pretty good idea about their routines and how their practices benefitted them.

If you're contemplating whether or not to make the switch to a purely holistic lifestyle, consider the many benefits of incorporating even some holistic medicine into your wellness routine.

Reducing Chemicals Is Good For Your Mind

Most traditional medication, fragrances, and deodorants have harmful chemicals that are filled with dyes and cancer-causing agents. Exposing yourself to these chemicals on a regular basis decreases your overall health.

In addition to ruining your physical health, a majority of these chemicals play a vital role in diminishing your mental health. Side-effects of many traditional medications involve anxiety, depression, and even panic. Natural remedies, however, have minimal side effects and work to improve the brain as opposed to killing it.

On the topic of minimal side-effects, holistic forms of healing are known to have less severe side-effects when compared to traditional medication. With that said, it's best to always ask your doctor about weaning off of your current medication before making the big switch.

Since some traditional forms of medication come with a detoxification process, it's best to know ahead of time what to prepare for. As mentioned, never take yourself off of your medication abruptly as this could have dire consequences.

It's From Nature

Holistic medication is from Mother Nature herself. Herbs and oils have not been manipulated beyond recognition. They may have a few additives for flavor or preservation purposes. But, as a whole, they're pretty clear. They're usually at their purest form and deliver medicinal benefits without altering your health

Choosing herbal supplements that are closest to what you would find in nature is best for increasing longevity and improving vitality. If you're on the hunt for natural medication, make sure you're choosing items that haven't been excessively tampered with.

The Quality Is Better

Traditional medication is made in bulk. This leaves room for error and recalls. Since holistic medication requires more time and effort, it eliminates room for error and improves the production process.

The likelihood that you'll receive a natural item that was thrown together is unlikely. Most items take a long time to gather and compile. Therefore, when you purchase natural medication, you know you're purchasing quality items.

You're Reducing Pollution

When you take traditional medication, eliminating it through the body comes with a price to our precious environment. As you release toxins, the chemicals found in those medicines are released into the environment through our sewage system.

This means nothing is truly getting re-used and broken down for the betterment of society. However, when natural medication is released from the body, it goes back into the earth and is able to be used again. It's not harmful or invasive. This makes holistic medication an ideal choice for wellness and healing.

The benefits of going the holistic route as opposed to traditional medication far outweigh the risks. It's better for your mental and physical health as well as the environment. Prior to implementing holistic medication into your regular diet, please consult with your healthcare professional. They can provide you with the support and guidance you need to safely make the transition.

If you are interested in learning more, download this free report:

10 Health Benefits of Giving Up Meat

For many people, meat is a major player when it comes to the central ingredients of meals. Meals like these are usually accompanied by some kind of starch like potato and vegetable because of the way the food pyramid was created, but what if you really didn't need meat to complete a diet? After over 20 years of research, doctors have discovered that meat is not only nonessential, but you can actually gain excellent benefits by giving up meat!

1. You'll Have Less Inflammation

One thing that is highly common among people who suffer from diseases and disorders of various types, is that they will often experience some form of inflammation a large portion of the time. Meats, especially those that have been processed or filled with preservatives along with the snack foods that they are served with are relatively famous in the health community for their ability to increase the amount of acidity and inflammation in the body.

Studies have linked these outbreaks of inflammation to all sorts of illnesses including heart attacks, strokes and other seriously life-threatening conditions. These experiments have even seen clear divisions along both geographic and cultural lines involving the ingredients chosen to be incorporated in food. On the other hand however, one major surprise came when they tested people who avoided meat entirely, and it became obvious that people with a primarily plant-based diet tended to avoid many of those illnesses. According to the researchers, they believe that this outcome was due to the plant-based diets, which by nature and natural composition tend to be anti-inflammatory.

2. It Lowers Cholesterol

How is your cholesterol? If you've been keeping up on current events, it's likely that you've heard about the rise in high cholesterol around the world. Much of this is probably the result of the increase in consumption of convenience foods. As people become busier, fewer of them are cooking at home, and larger numbers are consuming these processed foods, but there is bad news on the horizon for those who have adopted this habit.

Foods that are high in cholesterol are associated with many of the illness mentioned in the previous section, because high cholesterol plays a big part in the formation of fat deposits in the vascular system. This happened because cholesterol which is intended to act as a carrier for many fats in your body now simply attracts free floating fat cells that easily get stuck together where they can form barriers to blood flow. If these barriers keep too much blood from flowing to organs like the brain, then a stroke is likely to occur. Plants based diets encourage your body to eliminate these fats by carrying them to disposal sites like lymph glands.

3. It May Reduce Your Risk for Cataracts

According to studies carried about by multiple groups, diet can be a factor in the development of cataracts. Some of these health professionals believe that the tissues that form and help cloud the eyes are partially due to the fats, degenerated tissues and other wastes that haven't been expelled by the body under normal circumstances. Having a higher amount of the right foods in your diet can help your body to work on a more efficient level.

With a balance of diet and proper exercise that can help to mechanically agitated stagnating tissue particles, you can make it easier for your body to rid itself of the dead cells, and poisons that would later become a problem. By being added to an obstruction. Many of the plant cholesterols have also been proven to be more effective at removing LDL cholesterol from the bloodstream.

4. It Can Boost Your Skin

Do you want to have healthier skin? Experts say that one of the best ways to do that would be to cut back or stop eating meat altogether. The reason why is that the added stress from processing the chemicals contained in meat, and the strain that it puts on your system from extra fats and sodium might be too much for any healthy body to deal with. Meat needs to go through a few changes before it can be eaten by people, and the first is usually cooking.

Cooking meat liquifies fats, which are then changed on a molecular level by the heating process. These fats can become new compounds that aren't very good for you, so even when you eat meat, the amounts should be kept to a lesser amount. Fresh fruits and vegetables on the other hand can be eaten right off of the plant that they come from.

Raw fruits and vegetables retain a lot more of their nutritional value, so any time you can make it possible to have these raw foods as a part of your meals, you're doing the most you can to get the vitamins and minerals that you need. That's a major contrast to meats, which are normally very unsafe to eat raw because they can carry harmful bacteria and parasites that the cooking process helps you to avoid.

5. There is a Reduced Risk of Type 2 Diabetes

The types of food that you eat can also have a profound effect on your blood sugar that could change your life forever. There are still a large portion of the population who have not been diagnosed as having pre-diabetic symptoms, but they're out there. The habits and customs of specific groups have given a lot of insight into the drastic ways in which your health can be affected in not only the short term, but also the long term, because there are illnesses that can occur simply from going long periods without obtaining the complete nutrition that your genome was raised on.

In many of these studies, scientists were able to see that twice as many people who ate both meats and vegetables had diabetes compared to the those who had primarily vegan or vegetarian diets.

Some of these studies actually lasted longer than a decade so that researchers could get more in-depth information about how diets and food choices can influence your health, and many of them saw predictable results. Diabetes continued to be far more common among those eating meat. Each new revelation had its own sets of questions, but the doctors remained committed to their search for answers.

Eventually, they came to realize that some of the chemicals involved in meat production could actually harm cells and their ability to reproduce accurately. Many of these elements mixed with the newer chemicals used to preserve these meats were found to be directly linked in some way, but the FDA believed that these additions and their side effects were negligible.

Plant Protein Is Easier on Your Body

Early 21st century studies about the eating habits of people have revealed that most people get about 1 and a half times the amount of protein that they need in a day. When these extra proteins are discovered by your body, they can end up being treated as wastes that your system has to flush out. Animal protein have a more difficult time being utilized and broken down by the body for a variety of reasons.

When these extra proteins go unused, anything that isn't treated as waste will be stored as fats, and these fats can have some unpleasant effects once they reach your bloodstream. These types of proteins are also closely linked to outbreaks of inflammation that can lower your quality of life, and create fertile circumstances for disease and illnesses. Keeping your protein at an accessible, proper level will put you in a more efficient state of operation.

7. You'll Have a Healthy Microbiome

People can always follow dieting trends or the latest advice from the newest crop of fads, but few people listen to their body in a biological sense. It's easy to forget that your gut contains an entire system of microorganisms that it uses to carry out all sorts of functions in your body. If you don't pay close attention to what your gut is doing, you could end up very sick and develop a seemingly random assortment of illnesses. This is because the gut has a massive role in helping manage quite a few different systems that your body needs to work properly each day.

That means keeping your gut flora healthy so that they can perform their tasks. Without a proper balance of these

bacteria, harmful strains could make you sick, or you could develop weight issues, or autoimmune disease. When you eat plants, they naturally support this system

Another important issues, is that these living organisms make it possible for you to eat certain foods and digest them without having to use some kind of external system. The important thing to learn from this though, is that without this part of your body, few of the foods you enjoy today would be possible.

8. There Can Be Metabolic Advantages

As it was mentioned before, foods that are primarily vegetarian in content tend to be a lot easier for you to digest, and when your body doesn't have to work as hard, you could say that your metabolism is working on a more efficient level than it was previously. A highly functional metabolism will help you to lose and keep weight off because it's burning and utilizing the food you eat in proper ways. People who eat vegan diets are usually among those with the fastest metabolic functions.

9. You May Save Money

People tend to think of vegan or vegetarian lifestyles as being more expensive, but it turns out the exactly the opposite is true. Animal based foods have to go through more steps to make them safe compared to plant-based foods. This results in you eating a lot more preservatives than you would if you had eaten something fresh from the ground. These pre-made foods generally put a lot of money in the advertising and packaging, so that a large portion of what you pay for is the

presentation of the snack food. Animal products like milk and cheese require a lot of power and resources to make, so they're more expensive to buy than a few fresh vegetables.

10. It Can Help You Maintain Your Weight

Animal proteins have a way of hanging around in your system for quite some time. These fats can float around and stick to other fats, get stuck in places, or just gather up around our stomach, but a solid diet of the right plants can help you have a lot of energy and keep your metabolism working hard and on time. Some foods can slow you down so much that they take hours or even a day to digest. This kind of handicapping of your metabolism can have disaster effects on your body over time, so a lot of exercise could be the answer to preventing those possibilities.

8 Powerful Results of Drinking Plant-based Protein Powder

Plant-based protein powders are gaining traction in diets around the world. If you are reading this article, you probably know the biggest reason behind the trend: ensuring a robust, nutrient-dense diet. Fortunately, the market is becoming filled with products that offer an alternative to whey proteins and the undesirable side effects of artificially

filled bottled products. Especially for vegans, quality powder supplements are an essential addition to maintaining a healthy diet.

While I have a recommended brand (below) to try to get your huge benefits, for now, let me share with you the benefits of drinking plant-based protein powder:

1. **It Boosts Metabolism**

If you want to shed weight, it is essential to eat more protein to help kick your metabolism into gear. Plant-based protein powder does double duty for you to help you achieve your weight loss goals as high levels of fiber and protein are conveniently served together.

2. **It Controls Calorie Intake**

No arguing that fruits and veggies are awesome for great digestion, but for those who are counting calories, plant-based protein powder provides a great bang for the buck, and is tremendously nutrient-dense. You can easily replace breakfast or lunch with a plant-based protein powder shake and intake only have half the calories.

3. **Simple Ingredients**

The best protein powders offer simple ingredients. Healthy sources such as pea protein, brown rice protein, pumpkin seed protein, chia seed protein, apple, kale, broccoli, spinach, carrot, parsley, beet, green cabbage, blueberry, raspberry, strawberry, tomato, probiotics, spirulina, and rice hull are especially desirable additions to good protein powders.

5. **Minerals and Vitamins Galore**

Plant-based powders offer many additional extra vitamins and minerals to your diet. A protein powder that gives more than just protein is an excellent investment in your health. Such powders have the protein that your body requires. Besides, there are plenty of minerals that your body can use to keep it healthy and strong.

The truth is, adding fruits, veggies, and other plants to your protein powder is an excellent idea. Protein powders are such simple and highly effective ways to get the nutrients you need.

6. **No Antibiotics or Growth Hormones**

Domestic animals are usually treated with antibiotics and growth hormones. That can conveniently translate into the whey protein you may want to use for your exercises. Although it is straightforward enough to find a whey protein that is made from cows that have not been treated with all of that unhealthy additives, some of you may feel more comfortable avoiding whey protein completely. With plant-based protein powder, you will not have to worry about any of those hormones or antibiotics!

7. **Friendly Fiber**

Plants are packed with fiber, which is good for us. Fiber contains both soluble and insoluble fiber. It is the insoluble fiber that helps our digestive system run smoothly. The soluble fiber keeps us feeling full and happy after we eat. Plant-based protein powder naturally keeps you feeling full while also keeping you regular. It is like a double win! On top of that, Fiber can also help with heart health! A happy heart is essential to proper exercise and dieting.

8. **Allergy Free Ally**

Plant-based protein powder can be the top pick for individuals who do suffer from a whey allergy. It can also be a fantastic choice for those who have gluten allergies. Plant-based protein powder is often gluten-free and hypoallergenic. As long as you don't have a specific allergy to any one of the ingredients in your plant-based protein, your protein powder is a safe choice from major allergy concerns.

In a nutshell, if you want to realize your weight loss and

workout goals, let plant-based protein powder help you out. As long as you use it appropriately, along with proper diet and exercise, you should have no problem getting your body to where you want it to stay.

If you are looking for a start to your plant-based nutrition, I would highly recommend [Plant Vital Nutrition](#)'s product. Since I've been using this powder in my shakes, I see my energy really amped up!

Though one scoop of powder is recommended for 8 ounces of liquid, I usually double the liquid, and also add in fresh fruit like pineapple, kiwi, or mango, and veggies like kale, spinach, and/or carrot to increase the density. So many varieties, and the powder is like liquid gold in the mixture!



[Plant Vital Plant-Based Complete Protein Powder](#)

Evolve Fuel for Your Health

I've been wanting to share my second favorite Evolv product: [Fuel](#). It is a lemony yellow drink that replaces my craving for coffee in the morning, gives me super energy, and provides me with a great sense of calm.

Fuel has 82g of caffeine from green tea extract, natural lemon flavor, no artificial sweeteners, or flavors, or colors. I heard they use turmeric for the yellow color. It is super sweet, so sometimes I drink it in the afternoon rather than having something with sugar.

Adenosine Triphosphate (ATP) is produced naturally in your

body's cells and helps the body transfer energy. Evolv's revolutionary ingredient in Fuel is ElevATP™ which can increase blood ATP levels as much as 64% with no increase in lactic acid and no increase in free radicals (oxidative stress). [Read the study](#).

Fuel comes as a powder that you add to 10 or more ounces of water. [Read more about Evolv products](#). Or let me know if you are interested in a sample, as I'm always happy to share my beloved Fuel!

Milk Myths

"The countries with the highest rates of osteoporosis are the ones where people drink the most milk and have the most calcium in their diets. The connection between calcium consumption and bone health is actually very weak, and the connection between dairy consumption and bone health is almost nonexistent." ~Amy Lanou Ph.D., nutrition director for the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine in Washington, D.C. [[source](#)]

Myth #1: Milk is the best source of calcium

Orange juice, figs, chia and sesame seeds, tofu, and spinach have almost as much *or more* calcium-per-serving as milk. It has also been argued that children should only drink their mother's milk only up until they are three years old, as at that age they no longer produce the enzyme lactase, which means they [cannot digest milk and cannot break down the casein](#) (milk proteins), thus are not able to absorb calcium from milk.

This [study from Sweden](#) traced over 100,000 men and women over 20 years to show that higher consumption of milk resulted in higher mortality and hip fractures among women.

Studies in the field of exercise show that weight-bearing and balancing exercises such as running, walking, dancing, yoga, and tai chi are actually *beneficial* to maintaining strong bone health.

Myth #2: Milk makes our bones stronger

This is probably the worst myth out there. [This article](#) is a must read. It explains how milk actually depletes the calcium from your bones.

Your body maintains a a level of calcium in the blood, and when your body doesn't get enough calcium from your diet, then it starts to pull calcium from the bones. If you eat enough calcium from other sources, you don't have to worry about drinking any milk.

Furthermore, it is suspected that the high protein in milk can actually lead to osteoporosis, due to its increase of acidity in the blood. Our bodies are complex. Not everything is as simple as a commercial makes it seem.

Myth #3: Milk is natural and "healthy"

If you consider that milk is a processed food and couple that with the absolutely unnatural diet cows are being fed, you might reconsider how natural milk really is.

Milk-free kids are shown to be less likely to develop colic, ear infections, asthma, and [Type 1 Diabetes](#)! The American Academy of Pediatrics doesn't recommend cow's milk for children younger than one.

Milk's high levels of saturated fat in fact make it one of the worst things to include in your diet. Dairy products contain dietary cholesterol, which increases the risk of heart disease, and the added calories of milk doesn't help in the problem of childhood obesity.

It might take some time to get used to it, but you'd be well to start replacing your cow's milk with a plant-based variation so that you can keep your body at its optimal health.

Wow, Vegan Food is Taking over the Airport

If you are like 20% of the world, you have traveled in a plane in the last 12 months. Which means you were in an airport. As one of those travelers, on trip day you spent an average of 10 hours away from home, and your refrigerator. This means you either planned ahead very well, and have enough good, nutritious food until you reach your destination, or you are like the 90% of us who didn't. We take the opportunity to use the extra time we inevitably have at the airport waiting for a connecting flight to buy food. Fortunately there are increasing options at the airport for the vegetarians among us.

Restaurants are recognizing the need to provide quality meat-free alternatives and most are willing to please the masses by subbing out chicken for avocado, for example. Current statistics show that 80% of restaurants in the USA have at least one vegan option. And airport restaurants are no

exception. In fact, in my recent airport travels, I've noticed that menus that feature one or two vegetarian options; either by asterisk or, better, it is highlighted by a box, maybe under the "healthy options" section.

It wasn't that long ago that I dreaded walking through airports, hungry and tired, with few possibilities of something to eat with my "restricted" diet. But now, what joy I find in walking past the mini markets in airports and seeing wonderfully delicious-looking chickpea curry salad, vegan dumplings, or a falafel wrap. You don't even have to go to a restaurant to eat! Wow!

I wasn't even hungry when I bought the chickpea salad. I just couldn't get over that a delicious, healthy vegetarian option was right there for the taking. I saved it for later, and it was seriously very good!

My message here is embrace this change, and help the movement grow! We can all agree that airport food is vastly more expensive than it should be, but make the investment in buying vegan to help ensure even more healthy selections are available. Tell the people you are paying that you are pleased with the positive change; such compliments are usually met with a smile.

You Are What You Eat: Heart-filled Reasons to Be Vegetarian

Wow, so many sources online can give you plenty of examples of why we should ditch the meat.

The low cholesterol, low saturated fat, increased antioxidant and phytochemical contents diet can help keep you heart healthy, and so much more.

According to Down to Earth, here are the [top 10 reasons to become veggie](#):

- 1. Reduce risk of the No. 1 killer – Heart Disease
- 2. Cancer prevention
- 3. Lose excess weight and keep it off
- 4. Live longer, slow the aging process
- 5. Avoid toxic food contaminants
- 6. Reduce Global Warming
- 7. It Makes Economic Sense
- 8. Help end world hunger
- 9. Have compassion for animals
- 10. Enjoy the diverse, colorful, and delicious world of vegetarian cuisine

One of the biggest concerns people should have is the amount of money we pay as a nation and society to the healthcare industry. We wouldn't have this issue if we ate less meat. A vegetarian diet is responsible for a lower risk of diseases in general, and it is seriously tough in protecting against heart disease.

Ingesting the antibiotics and other drugs the livestock are fed cause untold damages to people's health. The repercussions of this can be felt in business with the increasing sick days workers must take to combat illnesses. Not to mention the side effects of prescription drugs that people take for lowering cholesterol.

I am amazed and enheartened to know that many plant foods naturally help prevent cancer. I hope that more people will consider giving up the meat and staying healthy, and for longer.

One myth that persists is, you won't get enough protein! It

might surprise you that as a nation, we are eating way over the amount of protein the USDA recommends. “The average bone loss for a vegetarian woman at age 65 is 18 percent; for non-vegetarian women, it’s double that. Researchers attribute this to the consumption of excess protein—the average meat-eating American woman eats 144 percent over the recommended daily allowance; the average man eats 175 percent more.” [[Footnote](#)]

Besides the global warning item listed above, we have to also consider that a vegetarian diet helps to keep wildlife habitats from erosion. Overfishing can damage coral reefs, which has in impact ecosystem-wide.

You’ll have more energy and [one study at the University of Warwick](#) found that people who ate more fruits and vegetables reported to have higher levels of wellbeing. Definitely worth a try for a week, right?

Many people have stated that their skin starts to glow when they give up the meat. Perhaps you are ready to give it a go?

Try it for a week and see how it goes. I’d love to hear what changes you feel!

I love the book *Veggie Protein Power* by HurryTheFoodUp. Their recipe for Spiced Carrot and Red Lentil Soup is so delicious! [The \\$4.95 ebook is totally worth it!](#)

The Vegan Life

I’m a bit of a hypocrite. I admit it. I’m not a vegan, though usually my recipe searches use that adjective mostly because I don’t really like to use applesauce or mix up egg replacer. The other day I made a comment on Facebook that pointed out that a vegetarian product someone was raving about included

eggs. Somehow I've never understood how someone can be a vegetarian and eat eggs, though I do know this type of diet exists. Some people seemed to be upset by what they must have interpreted as my saying they are not true vegetarians. That wasn't my point at all. I was really just feeling sorry for myself that I am unable to try the product they were touting.

But sometimes the table is turned. Like when I went out to eat in Colorado last week. Wow! Colorado loves vegetarians! We had "veggie wings" – O.M.G.!!!! Pieces of seitan in a bowl with optional sauce. Wow!! There is a glimmer that I'm just like everyone else!

Actually, it surprises me that our society, our nation, our world, still consumes so much meat. It doesn't make sense on so many levels: health risks, implications of world hunger, not to mention that terrible lives that processed animals must endure. It is especially surprising to me considering how many yummy, nutritious, wholesome vegetarian options there are out there in the world. As I've been experimenting with some new recipes lately, I see that there are even more possibilities for variations to meat. I've been really impressed with creamy gratin alternative recipes I've found. Making comfort food from whole foods is one of my favorite things, especially when I cook that comfort for others. It isn't about tricking the eater, I'm not looking for a meat-alternate. I want people who eat my food to know they are eating whole, fresh food that keeps their stomach full and mouth happy.

Vegetables and fruits provide so many nutritional benefits. My recommendation is to aim to make your diet as whole as possible. I saw a meme the other day: "Love your body. Eat whole foods." I can absolutely relate to that!

Whether it is a lacto-ovo vegetarian frozen product at the store or yummy veggie wings at an awesome brewery, these products are made to ensure we have some extra protein, needed fiber, and of course good flavor. So long as we eat them in

moderation, I think they are a wonderful addition to our grocery stores and menus.

I think as a society if we can get past vegetarians being seen as wanting to eat something that looks like meat, it would help open minds of those who think it is unhealthy to not eat meat (cancer prognosis be damned!). But in the meantime, let's give some love to the chick'n nuggets and seitan wings out there, and encourage more restaurants and grocery stores to help support the market. The more money that goes into the industry, the better the products. I, for one, would like to see way lower sodium levels and fewer additives in future products. But for now, I eat these items like everything else not whole... in moderation.

#lovetheveganlife

Cauliflower and chickpea curry (creamless masala)



The longer you can simmer the sauce on low, the more flavorful the overall taste.

I love cauliflower. Seriously. I can eat it any way. It is one of my favorite raw vegetables and, when cooked, it soaks up flavors so well. And have you read its health benefits? Here's the [top online search result](#):

- Helps Reduce Cancer Risk
- Fights Inflammation
- Decreases Risk for Heart Disease and Brain Disorders
- Provides High Levels of Vitamins and Minerals

(Especially Vitamins C and K)

- Improves Digestion and Detoxification
- Aids in Weight Loss
- Helps Balance Hormones
- Preserves Eye Health

And chickpeas? They are also another huge favorite of mine. Also when served any way. We'll let Dr. Axe tell us again the amazing [health benefits of chickpeas](#):

- Helps Control Blood Sugar Levels
- Increases Satiety and Helps with Weight Loss
- Improves Digestion Thanks to a High Fiber Content
- Helps Protect Against Heart Disease and Cancer
- Provides Essential Vitamins and Minerals
- High Source of Protein

I of course prefer to soak my own dried chickpeas in advance, but I rarely plan that far in advance, so I usually have canned chickpeas in the pantry. Side note: I do like getting canned chickpeas so that I can make vegan marshmallow fluff! (If you don't know about aquafava, you have to try it out!)

I almost always use fresh tomatoes, but sometimes they aren't as juicy as I'd like, so I end up adding some water, or vegetable stock if I have it in the fridge. The usual amount of liquid in canned tomatoes is about how much you want to have while simmering.

1. Sauté onions and garlic in oil. Mix in seasonings (as desired) and allow them become fragrant, then add chopped tomatoes. Allow to simmer on low for 6-7 minutes. Seasoning may include $\frac{1}{4}$ to 1 teaspoon of the following: turmeric, paprika, ginger, cayenne pepper, cinnamon, curry, salt.
2. Add chickpeas and vegetables and put lid on pan, and keep on low simmer until the cauliflower starts to soften. (If you want to use heavy cream, this is the

time to put it in. Some people like to pour in a spoon of sugar as well. Mix well and simmer until sauce is thickened.)

3. Boil rice noodles, or rice, or heat up some naan, plate well and enjoy!