

24 - Vegetarian diets and diabetes

Vegetarian diets are based on foods of plant origin and include no or very little food of animal origin. The most common type is a lacto-ovo-vegetarian diet, which includes foods derived from animals (milk, dairy produce and eggs) and only excludes food derived from the direct slaughter of animals (meat and fish).

Tips for vegetarians



Replace refined cereals with wholegrain products, which have a higher fibre, vitamin and mineral salt content. Use one serving for each of the 3 main meals.



Eat a serving of pulses at least 4 times a week. They are a source of plant protein, fibre, mineral salt and complex carbohydrates.



Eat one serving of nuts or oily seeds a day. They are rich in protein, fibre, vitamins and mineral salts. Walnuts and flaxseeds are an excellent source of omega 3.



Eat 2 servings of varied, seasonal, fresh fruit a day. Fruit is a rich source of simple sugars, fibre, vitamins and mineral salts and should be preferred to processed or fresh fruit juices, which cause blood glucose to increase more quickly.



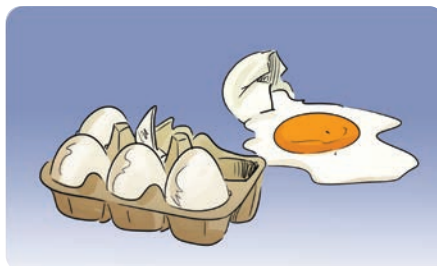
Include a large helping of vegetables in every meal. They are rich in fibre, fill you up, slow the absorption of sugar and fat into the blood and keep intestinal function regular.



Pay attention to the type of fat and where possible use olive oil, preferably raw. Avoid bakery and processed products rich in hydrogenated vegetable fats which are harmful to health.



Eat or drink 1-2 servings of milk or yoghurt per day. They are an excellent source of calcium. Moderate your cheese intake and choose fresh cheeses rather than mature ones, which contain more fat and cholesterol.



Eat 2 to 4 eggs a week, but not more than 2 if you have high cholesterol. They are composed of fat (both saturated and unsaturated) and protein, which is present in higher amounts in the white of the egg.



The main sources of plant protein are pulses including soybeans and their derivatives (tofu, soya milk), dried fruit and seitan obtained from gluten.