



Nourishing compassion for our bodies, the earth and all beings.

How to Get Started on a Plant-Powered Way of Eating

Basics of a Plant-Powered Diet

- Whole plant foods or minimally processed foods
- Lots of variety
- Lots of bright colors and bold flavors
- Plenty of beans and dark green leaves
- Use some transition or “fun” foods (e.g., veggie burgers, veggie hot dogs, soy ice cream)
- Eat from “The Fantastic Four” - vegetables, fruits, legumes, whole grains
- Prepare all-in-one meals, including “The Fantastic Four” in one dish
- Add in some nuts, seeds and avocados
- Take Vitamin B12 regularly

Start with Favorite Familiar Meals

- Make a list of favorite meals and snacks (including those from restaurants where you eat often). Identify meals that have only plant foods or that can be made meatless with a few small changes. If a favorite dinner is spaghetti with meat sauce, choose meatless spaghetti sauce the next time you make it—and give it some pizzazz with the addition of sautéed mushrooms or chopped sun-dried tomatoes. If your usual Chinese take out meal is moo shu pork, ask for a meatless version of the same dish.

Experiment with Substitutes

- There is a stunning variety of soy and vegetable-based meat substitutes on the market that make the transition to meatless fare easier than ever. TVP (texturized vegetable protein, in the bulk food section of natural foods stores) has the texture of cooked ground beef and is a substitute in tacos, sloppy joes and chili. You’ll also find a variety of veggie burgers, meatless hot dogs, meatless deli meats and other meat replacers in natural foods stores and in many regular supermarkets.

Broaden Your Horizons

- Explore the cuisine of cultures that have perfected plant-based cuisine and add some new foods to your meals. Try grains such as whole couscous—a Moroccan staple—and quinoa—a South American favorite.

Keep it Simple

- Stock your refrigerator or pantry with plant-based convenience foods such as bagged greens or salads, whole grain tortillas, canned soups, canned vegetarian baked beans, spaghetti sauce, refried beans and black beans, frozen vegetables, texturized vegetable protein, and veggie burgers.

Look Beyond Dairy

- Look at the Plant-Powered Earth Holders’ handout on **Dairy, Egg, and Meat Substitutes** for milk, cheese, and egg substitutes and try some of them out.

Picture Your Plate

- Fill half of your plate with foods like non-starchy fruits and vegetables.
- Fill the other half with medium- to-high-calorie-dense foods like intact grains, legumes (beans, lentils, peas) and starchy veggies. You’ll feel full and you won’t overeat.



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Use Our Practice's Meditation Techniques

- Notice, accept and move beyond the cravings you may have for animal foods. John Bussinaeau says in *The Buddha, The Vegan and You*: "Watching the craving, much like a meditation practice, is a tactic I have employed for working through cravings for meat, fish, dairy and eggs. Bring your mind to bear on this feeling, this craving. Feel it fully, become aware of it, concentrate on it: the feeling you have, the taste you crave, the body's sensations, the thought of it. Sit with it for a moment, acknowledge it, and then gently release it. Do not try to push it away too quickly, deny it, or use anything negative, or angry to deal with it. Realize it's just a habit, an attachment, a craving, it's nothing to label, it's not you, it's not negative, it's not positive, it just is. Watch it... Cravings arose, I accepted them, acknowledged them, felt them, proposed alternatives, and dismissed them time and time again. "

Team Up

- Besides support from longtime plant-based eaters, it's also always good to partner with someone who's roughly at the same place you are when it comes to your plant-based transition. You can share recipes, discover new restaurants and help each other through the really tough moments.

Change ONE Habit at A Time

- Take ONE month at a time.
- Don't take on new exercise routine as you start the process of becoming more plant-based.

Remember This Is a Journey, Not a Destination

- Instead of obsessing about the end goal, why not instead simply focus on your daily actions. Present moment, wonderful moment!
- Imagine this plant-based journey as an adventure. Let your plant-based journey be fun. Let it be easy by letting go of what you think success looks like.
- Every journey is personal. You'll find your own way through the process of changing to a plant-based life. Don't assume someone else's formula will work for you—it might not.
- Remember it's not about perfection; it's about progress.

Reach out for support, information, and resources

- The Plant-Powered Earth Holders are available to support you on your path.