



Give plant-based eating a try.

What is it?

The explosion in the plant-based food market has many people curious about its benefits, as well as how to go about eating more plant-based meals.

As the name implies, plant-based food eaters tend to avoid processed foods and animal products such as red meat, poultry, fish, eggs and dairy. In addition to fruits and vegetables, their diets include lots of nuts, seeds, whole grains, healthy fats, legumes, beans, herbs and spices.

And why try it?

Integrating plant-based habits into your daily life has many health benefits.

- Plant-based foods are high in fiber and rich in vitamin, minerals and antioxidants. They're also low in calories, saturated fat and cholesterol.
- A plant-based diet can help lower your cholesterol, as well your risk for serious health complications.
- Plant-based diets also help boost healthy gut bacteria.

What's more, high-protein foods such as beans, peas and lentils are a less expensive alternative to meat, so you may even save money.

Preparing to eat plant-based.

The popularity of plant-based eating has made more options available in just about every grocery store. Here are some ideas to get you started:



Don't overcomplicate it.

Shop for things such as canned beans, peanut butter, lentils, brown rice, oatmeal, seasonal fruit, as well as frozen, canned or fresh vegetables.



Look for pre-made options.

Most local grocery stores are now carrying fresh and frozen pre-made plant-based foods, such as pizzas, meat substitutes, pasta dishes and other meals.



Fill up with vegetables.

Make vegetables half of your lunch and dinner, and try snacking on them with a side of hummus, guacamole or salsa.



Think differently about meat.

As you fill half your plate with vegetables, use meat as a side dish instead of your main course.



Look into plant-based meat products.

Plant-based burgers, meatballs and nuggets are readily available in most grocery stores. Consider substituting a meat burger with a veggie burger or using a portabello mushroom as a faux burger patty.



Be sure to read nutrition labels.

Just because it's plant-based doesn't mean you've chosen the healthiest option. Many meat substitutes are highly processed and include things such as refined sugars and excess sodium.