

High energy high protein vegetarian diet

A vegetarian diet is a balanced alternative to eating meat if taken healthily. It may be more difficult to eat optimally when your appetite is poor. Increasing your energy and protein intake will help you maintain your weight and/or regain lost weight when recovering from an infection, aiding you to keep your strength up. This fact sheet aims to help you achieve a nutritionally balanced vegetarian diet, high in energy and protein and to give you some meal plan ideas

Nutritionally balanced vegetarian diet, high in energy and protein

The key to a balanced diet is to include at least one food from the following nutrient groups at each meal or snack:

Nutrient groups	Role	Sources	Servings/ day
Carbohydrate/ starchy foods (wholegrain if possible)	Essential for energy, B vitamins and fibre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bread, pasta, rice, noodles, breakfast cereals, millet, buckwheat flour potatoes, biscuits, muffins, porridge, chapatti, naan 	6-14
Protein (including dairy products)	Essential for cell growth and repair. Dairy products are also a good source of energy, calcium and vitamins A&D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> eggs (2 eggs = 1 serving) Milk/soya milk (aim for 1 pint/day), cheese and yoghurt. Tofu, quorn, soya products such as textured vegetable protein (TVP) used in casseroles (3tbs = 1 serving). Pulses (beans, lentils, peas), nuts, houmous, tahini. (4tbs of pulses/3tbs of nuts & seeds = 1 serving) 	3 - 4
Fats and oils	Very good source of energy & fat soluble vitamins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spreads, butter Poly / mono unsaturated oils (e.g. corn, sesame olive oils) 	0 - 3
Vegetables and fruit	Source of essential vitamins (A C E) and minerals, iron, zinc and fibre. Immune boosting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A variety including dark green and root vegetables and some citrus fruit which aid iron absorption 	5 of fruit & veg
Miscellaneous		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yeast extract, seaweed, herbs 	not applicable

Further Comments:

- To make this balanced diet higher in energy and protein add foods from the fats and oils group, nuts, and seeds, to your cooked food and/ or during cooking
- In order to improve your food intake try to eat more frequently i.e. 5-6 small meals or snacks rather than 3 large ones
- Try to choose nourishing drinks
- Be aware that drinking before a meal can fill you up
- Drinking citrus fruit juices or vitamin C enriched drinks with your meal will increase your iron absorption
- *If you do not eat eggs, milk or cheese*, then certain protein foods are best eaten together. It is best to combine a pulse or nut with a cereal or grain e.g. baked beans on toast, lentil bolognese and pasta
- Avoid soft ripened cheeses

Meal plan ideas

Breakfast	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Toasted bagel / croissant with cream cheese & jam• Crumpet with butter & jam / peanut butter & honey• Porridge made with full cream (fc) milk and cream• Scrambled eggs with mushrooms, tomatoes• Bowl of muesli with fc milk, yoghurt and dried fruit
Light Meals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Baked beans & cheese on toast• Bap with houmous/tahini, tomato, cucumber• Cream of tomato soup with a wholemeal roll/bap• Egg salad with cress, pepper, mayo, tomato and ciabatta
Main Meals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pasta with quorn bolognese sauce and grated cheese• Vegetarian deep pan pizza and salad• Pasta with vegetable nut and cheese sauce• Baked potato with quorn chilli and sour cream• Vegetable curry and rice
Snacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nuts / seeds• Wholemeal fruit scone with butter & jam• Ginger / banana cake with butter• Banana / yoghurt flapjack• Banana milkshake made with fc milk / yoghurt & ice cream

Enjoy your food!

See "Nourishing Drinks" fact sheet for further ideas

This information was provided by the Dietetics team of the HIV/GU Medicine Directorate of the Chelsea and Westminster Hospital. For more information please call 020 8746 8178

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