For Vegetarians & Vegans

For vegetarians and vegans it's important to take special care to eat a balanced diet. Below are some ideas on how to hit up all the important food groups.

**Grains (6-11 ounces)**
1 slice bread  
1 cup dry cereal  
1/2 cup cooked cereal or grains  
1/2 cup cooked pasta  
2 Tbsp wheat germ  
5 whole wheat crackers  
2 rye crispbreads  
1 small biscuit (2 in. diameter)  
1 mini bagel

Key point: Choose mainly high fiber foods such as oats, quinoa, brown rice, barley, and whole grain breads, pastas, and cereals. ([MyPlate Grain Servings](https://campushealth.unc.edu))

**Vegetables (5 or more servings, 1 serving = ½ cup)**
1/2 cup cooked vegetables  
1 cup raw vegetables  
1 cup salad  
6 baby carrots  
1 small ear of corn (6 inches)  
1 large stalk of celery  
1 small pepper  
1/2 cup vegetable juice

Key point: Include a wide variety of colorful vegetables daily. ([MyPlate Vegetable Servings](https://campushealth.unc.edu))

**Fruit (2 or more servings, 1 serving = 1 cup)**
1 small apple  
1 medium pear or grapefruit
1 large banana, orange, or peach
3 medium or 2 large plums
8 large strawberries
32 seedless grapes
1 cup applesauce
1 cup fruit juice
½ cup dried fruit

Key point: Select an assortment of fruits, including those rich in vitamin C, such as oranges, kiwi, strawberries, cantaloupe, grapefruit, and guava. (MyPlate Fruit Servings [3])

**Calcium Rich Food (3 or more servings)**
1 cup fortified soymilk
1/2 cup tofu processed with calcium
1 cup calcium fortified orange juice
1/2 cup almonds
3 T. almond butter
1 cup cooked or 2 cups raw high calcium greens (kale, turnip, mustard, or broccoli)
1 cup high calcium beans (soy, navy, Great Northern)

Key point: Include calcium rich foods with each meal. Notice that many of these foods double as servings from the vegetable and bean groups.

**Beans and Bean Alternatives (2 to 3 servings)**
1 cup cooked legumes (beans, lentils, peas)
1/2 cup tofu or tempeh
3 T. nut or seed butter
1/4 cup nuts and seeds
2 cups soy milk

Key point: These protein rich foods also provide other important nutrients such as iron (from legumes and veggie ?meats?) and vitamin E (from nuts and seeds).
*Note that some veggie burgers do contain cheese and are therefore not compatible with truly vegan diets.

Other Essential Nutrients to Consider
Omega-3 fatty acids: Include 1 to 2 servings daily such as 1 tsp. flax oil, 4 tsp. canola oil, 3 Tbsp walnuts, or supplement with fish oil.
Vitamin B-12: Use fortified foods or supplements.
Vitamin D: Use fortified food or supplements. The body also synthesizes this vitamin from sunlight exposure.

Source URL: https://campushealth.unc.edu/health-topics/nutrition/vegetarians-vegans

Links