

Should people become vegetarian

Nutrition



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Having a vegetarian diet has been a topic that creates conflicting opinions, and it seems that the controversy gets bigger as time goes on. In the times that we are living in today, where we are constantly bombarded with information through television or internet, it makes it hard to know who is right and who is wrong on this issue. On one hand, we have the ones who believe that eliminating meat and processed foods from our diets and replacing them with vegetables and fruits is the solution to most of our health problems. On the other hand, we have the other group that believes that a vegetarian diet is not the solution and that all we need is to have a balanced diet without replacing meat. This paper will present to you the pros and cons of becoming a vegetarian. The variety of opinions provided here will give enough insight to help you look at this issue from both sides. Based on the statements below, I will offer you my own perspective on the topic. A study published by the European Journal of Clinical Nutrition in the United Kingdom states that "vegetarianism is increasingly popular in western societies. Recent estimates suggest that between 3 and 5% of the population" (Gottfredson et al., 2005; Vinnari et al., 2009) is on vegetarian diets, and this proportion is increasing with time. (Chang-Claude et al., 2005; Key et al., 2009a, 2009b). This indicates that vegetarianism is having a global effect and is not an isolated topic anymore. This is a topic that is reaching every part of the world possibly because of the many sources of information available today. In contrast, "The Daily Record" reported that "For all the benefits of vegetarian diet giving up meat can cause problems such as iron deficiency. Iron carries oxygen to cells, sending the right signals from the brain and making collagen, which is important for youthful skin" (2006). This report suggests that focusing on a vegetarian diet can cause

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serious problems to people's health due to the lack of nutrients provided by the consumption of meat which can make people reflect about whether or not going into a vegetarian diet. However, it is possible that this mineral can also be found in vegetables or fruits, so, this is something that needs to be considered. "Schwarcz", however, explains some of the advantages of eating vegetables: "Although there is no scientific proof that vegetarians necessarily live longer than meat-eaters, as a group they clearly enjoy certain health advantages. For example, obesity is rare among vegetarians, probably because their diet is bulky and filling, high in fiber, low in fat and relatively low in calories". (Schwarcz, 1997). When he states that there is no scientific proof, it sounds like he is simply making assumptions without facts that can prove that health is better among vegetarians. Additionally, considering that obesity is evident among meat-eaters, there is not enough evidence to declare that the percentage of obesity is lower among vegetarians. Obesity may be caused by a variety of reasons besides eating meat. Besides health, there are other facts that are pushing a big percentage of Americans to become vegetarians. "From the most dedicated vegetarian to the more casual, Americans report health as the top reason for consuming vegetarian foods, perceiving benefits such as disease prevention, weight management and a good feeling from eating these foods. Other reasons may include religion, ethics, interest in animal welfare and concern for the environment" (Erickson, 2003). According to this, Americans are more concerned about their health than ever before. It says that people want to enjoy of good health as they get older, along with other facts such as religion or the protection of the planet. However, there are a lot of religions where eating meat is not an issue at all. Moreover, some people may argue that

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most humans have been eating meat from the beginning of times and that we still have plenty of chickens and cows to feed the world for years to come. We also find the defendants of animal rights who may argue that stopping eating meat will give us no other choice than to kill innocent animals. "Vegetarianism is a personal choice, but certainly not one for someone who loves animals. Keep chickens for eggs only? Then roosters are mostly killed at birth" (Telegraph-Journal, 2006). You may consider the fact that if we stop growing chickens, or pigs, or cows, hundreds of farmers will have to find a different way to make a living which would bring more problems to our already damaged economy. On the contrary, thinking that roosters will be killed at birth is a little radical since animals can be used for other reasons besides eating them. Is not unknown to everybody that today, teenagers care more about their eating habits and their appearance than before but in some cases, some of them may take things to the extremes according to this study: "Teenage vegetarians are more likely than other teens to eat fruits and vegetables, and less likely to eat sweets and salty snacks. But they are also far more likely than meat-eating teens to engage in potentially dangerous eating behavior, a University of Minnesota researcher said Friday". It continues by saying that "the vegetarians in the study were nearly twice as likely to diet frequently as non vegetarians, four times as likely to engage in intentional vomiting and eight times as likely to try to lose weight by using laxatives" (Slovut, 1997). It is possible that these facts are true but we don't know what percentage of teenagers perform these kinds of actions and would be hard to believe that all of them follow this behavior. In conclusion, Becoming or not becoming a vegetarian will always have opposite theories. Consequently, very difficult to say which is the best option <https://assignbuster.com/should-people-become-vegetarian/>

for humanity. While supporters believe that we will have healthier bodies choosing a vegetarian diet, non supporters think that our health is at risk if our bodies stop receiving the nutrients that meat offers. While supporters say that health, weight management and disease prevention are the reasons why Americans are steering into a vegetarian eating, a study showed that vegetarian teenagers are more likely to engage in extreme behavior patterns such as induced vomiting or using laxatives after eating. This paper gives food for thought to more questions than answers. Will the world population get seduced by the idea that becoming vegetarian is the answer to most of our health problems? Could the concept of vegetarian diet be just a clever idea by somebody to increase the sales of vegetables and fruits? Only time will tell. At the end, nobody is forcing you to choose sides. The choice is yours.