

Sample literature review on benefits of a vegetarian diet compared to meat eating...

[Environment](#), [Animals](#)



The topic whether meat or vegetarian diet is the better choice is a bone of contention for centuries. Admittedly, it is very difficult to figure out the advantages and disadvantages of both diets to determine what way one outweighs the other. Volumes have been already written on the topic, and this paper in particular will argue that vegetarian diet is advisable when compared to meat diet that involves numerous risks. This will review a few reliable sources to make a clear view of the topic and its scope for further research.

Until recently, the advantages of vegetarianism were not clinically proven, but they were only anecdotal. However, several studies conducted over the last decades clearly showed that a person who adopts vegetarian diet will have a range of health benefits. According to the articles edited by Hamilton (2009), being vegetarian is the essential step for being healthy. The book altogether highlights vegetarian food as a positive lifestyle choice in many respects. The most important benefit Hamilton points out is that vegetarian diet enhances individual's immune system. Vegetarian diet will assist people to maintain lower body weight. Studies clearly indicate that people who adopt non-vegetarian diet would increase their body weight over a five year period, compared to those who follow vegetarian food culture. Also, vegans are able to maintain even less weight as they get older when compared to meat eaters.

Scientists at the University of Toronto and St. Michael's Hospital have clinically proved that vegetarians will have better cholesterol levels because vegetarian foods minimize the deposition of fat on blood vessel walls. The researchers demonstrated that a vegetarian food pattern comprising of

particular plant foods can maintain better cholesterol levels as what a drug treatment would do. Evidently, this feature of vegetarianism would assist people live a long, because uncontrolled cholesterol level is a major health issue challenging many people once they get older. Vegetarians have a much lower risk of developing chronic and life threatening diseases like obesity, diabetes, and other cardiovascular diseases. It is evident that diseases like obesity and diabetes would cause many troubles to the victims so that they often fail to lead normal life. In addition, these diseases and health conditions will significantly reduce individuals' life expectancy. In addition, vegetarian lifestyle can benefit people fight cancer. A 12-year study that included over 60, 000 British people, half of whom adopted a vegetarian diet, suggested that vegetarians have lower risk of developing cancer as compared to meat eaters. Vegetarians roughly 45 percent are less likely to develop cancers such as leukemia, stomach, and bladder cancers. Considering these health benefits (lower weight, better cholesterol levels, and low risk of developing cancer), vegetarian diet can really assist governments to cut down their ever growing health care expenses. In contrast, Byrnes (1999) argues that neither vegetarianism nor its advanced form veganism is a healthy natural diet to entertain. The author in his article throws light on certain myths of vegetarian lifestyle choices. According to him, many of the so called benefits of vegetarian diet do not validate real life situations and modern studies. However, article by UPI Space Daily staff Writers (2006), a much authentic one of such sort, refutes argument like that of Byrnes. According to this article, consuming vegetable proteins instead of animal proteins involves ' multiple and much-needed benefits'. When

compared to Byrnes' article, the latter looks more authentic as it cites from reliable sources and presents sensible facts.

Australian Provincial Newspaper goes further and explains what the term being a vegetarian really indicates. The article does not limit itself to defining veganism, but makes clear how one could ensure protein, vitamin B12, calcium, iron, and zinc in a vegetarian based diet while avoiding meat and animal products. Evidently, there is immense growth in the number of people becoming vegetarians not only in the United States but also across the world. There are groups and organizations which promote vegetarian lifestyle with intend to fight issues like obesity and animal conservation. People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) is an example for such initiatives. As Irvine (2003) purports, the new aspiration is highly evident among youngsters, and the most notable thing is that youngsters themselves seek information they required on this regard. As the author argues, the new trend is much dynamic, for meat promoting companies like National Cattlemen's Beef Association have started educating people on advantages of animal products.

There is yet another argument that says planning exact diet is important rather than sticking to vegetarian based or meat based diet ideology. According to Roblin (1998), being vegetarian will help one avoid many health risks. However, at the same time, one should have the knowledge to include supplements so as to avoid malnutrition or other deficiencies. Although vegetarian lifestyle involves great benefits like avoiding consumption of saturated fat and maintaining a better pH balance for body tissue, it requires serious monitoring so as to ensure that body lacks no essential nutrients

(Monitor your vegetarian diet, 2010).

The most important benefit of vegetarian diet is that it is simple and easy to prepare. Furthermore, researchers indicate that vegetarian foods constitute a major source of nutrition for most of the people in the world. In addition to health benefits, being vegetarian is a good way to address numerous environmental and social concerns. Vegetarianism is the best practice to show compassion for animals and to protect the biodiversity, because this food culture strongly believes in non-violence.

In total, compared to meat eating diet, Vegetarian Diet offers more benefits with regard to health and socio economic factors in the modern world.

Although meat can provide good volume of protein and energy in less time, it involves several risk factors as well in the long run. On the flip side, even if vegetarian life style is much beneficial, it requires close monitoring to avoid malnutrition and associated risks.

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