How does being a vegetarian affect your health?

Business

The term vegetarian is defined as a person who does not eat meat, and sometimes all animal products. There are many different types of vegetarian diets.

Some of them include vegan diets, lacto-ovo vegetarian diets, pollotarian, pescatraian, and flexitarian diets. About six to eight million adults in the United States follow a vegetarian diet. Research shows that a meat-free diet can positively impact one's overall health. Many adults become vegetarians due to cultural or religious reasons. The diet can be recommended by health officials to those with certain health issues.

Environmentalists and conservationists take on this diet because of the preservation of natural resources and animals. It also limits the amount of growth hormones and other chemicals in livestock raising. Some people cannot access meat or afford it and turn to fresh produce for a better option. Culinary options for this select diet has also increased as the years go one which helps promote the vegetarian diet. Vegetarianism first started in ancient India and Greece.

It began with the idea of nonviolence to animals and eventually was used for health benefits. Vegetarianism disappeared during the Christianization of the Roman Empire but came back during the Renaissance. It then became part of many religions. Vegetarian diets are mostly known for their positive effects on people's health but there are some hidden negatives to obtaining a vegetarian diet. The most known positive effects are an overall healthier and more positive feeling, an increase of energy, and a lower mortality rate than most of the population.

Along with the previous effects, other positive aspects of the diet may include a lower weight, decrease in cholesterol, and a decrease in blood pressure than the rest of the population who are omnivores. Although there are many positive effects of obtaining a vegetarian diet, there are negative effects to be aware of as well. Some include deficiency in iron and calcium, which can be cured by taking supplements. Other effects are deficient in vitamin B12, which is the vitamin that helps produce red blood cells, and iodine deficiency, which is found in seafood. Your heart, kidneys, and brain need iodine to function properly. One of the most common negative effects of vegetarianism is contracting anemia, which is lack of blood in the body.

A vegetarian diet needs to be one of balance in order to be healthy. A well planned out diet needs to be in order to successfully maintain good nutrition while eating a vegetarian diet. One needs replacements for meat and the vitamins and nutrients it provides. Registered and Licensed dietician nutritionist, Monica Lebre suggested including “ vegetarian protein sources such as beans, lentils, soy/tofu, nuts/seeds, and tempeh”. Lebre said “ In addition, be sure to include fresh fruits, vegetables and whole grains for a balanced and varied diet.” In order to maintain a steady amount of amino acids one must find “ complement vegetarian protein sources with certain starches” according to Lebre.

A vegetarian diet can definitely affect one’s health positively. Due to the increase in consumption of plant-based foods such as fruits and vegetables, their should be increase in fiber on a vegetarian diet. A reduction in saturated fat and cholesterol will occur because of the lack of meat in the diet. As a vegetarian one will consume more complex carbs which are better

for the human body and energy. The vegetarian diet can cause an increase in magnesium, folic acid, vitamin C, vitamin E and phytonutrients. The long term health effects of vegetarianism include lowered rates of heart disease, type 2 diabetes and certain types of cancer.

A vegetarian diet has also shown a decrease in cholesterol panels. in Many experienced vegetarians claim that a vegetarian diet can be budget saving. Red meats and certain fish can be costly. In no way does that mean being a smart, cost-saving vegetarian is easy but if it is done correctly; the diet can result in a save in food expenses. Some people think that being a vegetarian could very negatively affect a person’s health. Having a vegetarian diet could potentially harm someone’s health if they choose to diet incorrectly.

When asked “ Do you think being a vegetarian would have a more positive or negative affect on your health” Monica Lebre, a registered Dietician and Nutritionist in Medway said that “ It can be positive if done correctly including a variety of non-meat protein sources, fruits, vegetables and whole grains. If an individual is vegetarian but has a very limited diet, say eats peanut butter & jelly or mashed potatoes/corn etc exclusively then it wouldn’t necessarily be a healthy diet”. Being a vegetarian can have a negative effect on your health if you choose to not eat the right foods. If you cut out foods that provide you with vital things your body needs like protein then you can end up having low amounts of Calcium, Iron, Vitamin D, which can be bad for your health and can increase your chance of anemia. Some people believe that they can use foods like desserts for their diet since it does not contain meat, which is how vegetarian dieting could result poorly in your health.

However if you maintain a healthy diet and eat foods that have protein and other nutrients in it then the diet will not have a bad impact on your overall health. Studies have shown that being a vegetarian can lower your risk of having things likeheart disease, type 2 diabetes, and certain types of cancer. As three eighth grade students, we took the test to ourselves. We tested our basic health for five days up before changing our diet to vegetarian. We tested our heart rate, energy level, tiredness, stomach aches, headaches, iron level, body temperature, brittleness of our nails and weight at the same time every night while avoiding times directly after meals or activity. We used the same health tests nightly for a week while we were following a vegetarian diet.

We found that everything pretty much remained constant. The weight and heart rate both decreased over the week. Our iron level also decreased when following a meat-free diet. We learned that as long as you diet correctly by including appropriate amounts of protein, one’s health should be fine. Overall we learned that if done correctly, a vegetarian diet can have positive on one’s health.

Works Cited “ Are There Health Benefits to Being A Vegetarian?” The Movement RSS. Web. 31 May 2016. Craig, W. J. “ Nutrition Concerns and Health Effects of Vegetarian Diets.

” Nutrition in Clinical Practice 25. 6 (2010): 613-20. Print. “ Four Reasons Why People Become Vegetarian.” NaturalNews. Web.

26 May 2016. “ History of Vegetarianism.” History of Vegetarianism. Web. 26 May 2016.

“ Michelle Raymond, RD, LDN, CDE.”| Boston Children’s Hospital. Web. 26 May 2016. “ The Negative Effects of Vegetarianism.” LIVESTRONG. com. LIVESTRONG. COM, 21 June 2015. Web. 26 May 2016.