

# Eat More Plants!



Almost every week, a new diet trend is hitting the health food headlines: keto, vegan, Mediterranean, DASH and so on. It can make it almost impossible to figure out what to eat and not eat. But there is one diet that is consistently proven, over more than two decades, to reduce your risk for cancer, heart disease, diabetes, stroke and some mental illnesses. It is a plant-based diet.

Eating plant-based does not mean you can't eat meat. It means your meals are mostly plants: vegetables, whole grains and fruits, beans, seeds and nuts. To keep it simple, fill two-thirds of your plate with these plant-based foods. The remaining one-third can be a lean protein like chicken or fish, or a plant protein like tofu or beans.

Harvard Health offers these tips for eating plant-based in its article, "**What is a plant-based diet and why should you try it?**"

- **Eat lots of vegetables.** Fill half your plate with vegetables at lunch and dinner. Make sure you include plenty of colors in choosing your vegetables. Enjoy vegetables as a snack with hummus, salsa or guacamole.
- **Change the way you think about meat.** Have smaller amounts. Use it as a garnish instead of a centerpiece.
- **Choose good fats.** Fats in olive oil, olives, nuts and nut butters, seeds and avocados are particularly healthy choices.
- **Cook a vegetarian meal at least one night a week.** Build these meals around beans, whole grains and vegetables.
- **Include whole grains for breakfast.** Start with oatmeal, quinoa, buckwheat, or barley. Then add some nuts or seeds along with fresh fruit.
- **Go for greens.** Try a variety of green leafy vegetables such as kale, collards, Swiss chard, spinach, and other greens each day. Steam, grill, braise or stir-fry to preserve their flavor and nutrients.
- **Build a meal around a salad.** Fill a bowl with salad greens such as romaine, spinach, Bibb or red leafy greens. Add an assortment of other vegetables along with fresh herbs, beans, peas or tofu.
- **Eat fruit for dessert.** A ripe, juicy peach, a refreshing slice of watermelon or a crisp apple will satisfy your craving for a sweet bite after a meal.



## A Few Resources for Eating Plant-Based

You can find a plethora of plant-based resources available online, in print and even in films. Here are just a few reputable sources to get you started.

- MD Anderson Cancer Center provides an overview of what eating plant-based can do for your health in "**5 Benefits of a Plant-Based Diet.**"
- **Nutritionfacts.org:** This website is a science-based public service provided by Dr. Michael Greger, providing free updates on the latest in nutrition research via bite-sized videos. There are more than a thousand videos on nearly every aspect of healthy eating, with new videos and articles uploaded every day.
- **Whole Food Plant-Based Resources:** This website provides a list of books, films, podcasts and other resources to help you learn about plant-based eating and how to incorporate more plants in your diet every day.
- **The Beginner's Guide to a Plant-Based Life:** The Forks Over Knives organization offers a simple beginner's guide to a plant-based lifestyle.