

## Life Without Meat

Becoming a vegetarian is about a lot more than just a change to your diet. It is a lifestyle choice that influences many aspects of your life separate from just what you put into your body for food. This is why the path from when you first considered taking on the life of a vegetarian to when you are finally ready to make that transition may be several weeks or months. The journey to that moment when you are ready must not be rushed. Because not only is it a physical journey toward a physical change of diet, it is a spiritual, ethical and emotional journey as well.

Life without meat will mean a new approach to meal preparation that means new recipes and new ways to shop for the foods you need. This becomes additionally complex if you are living with those who have not made the choice to become vegetarians. If you are charged with meal preparation, that means two menus per night. If someone else is the primary cook of the house, that means you will need some accommodation so you can have a vegetarian meal while others are eating meat. That is going to take some relationship building and some tolerance by you and by the meat lovers in your home so everybody can dine in peace.

Being a vegetarian in a world of meat eaters may be one of the biggest adjustments you may have to make. But be prepared for some cravings for meat as well. At first, it might be wise to ease into vegetarianism so you still get some protein from meat while your body gets used to a lowered intake of that food group. This is also important because it will take a few weeks or longer to find a diet that has adequate substitutes for the nutrients and vitamins you are taking out of your body because of your new diet. By leaving meat in your eating schedule for a short time, you are less prone to feel run down or endure vitamin deficiencies during the transition to a full vegetarian eating regimen.

Many times a vegetarian lifestyle is part of a larger change of life which may also incorporate yoga, meditation or other spiritual activities. If your sole reason for becoming a vegetarian is related to health, this may not be as much of an issue. But if you are feeling drawn to a vegetarian life without meat because of ethical, moral or spiritual reasons, your desire to embrace vegetarianism is no doubt part of a larger spiritual quest or renewal that you are going through. This is healthy and the more you fully embrace your new interest in this side of your personality and soul, the more your desire to be a vegetarian will fit a total change of life.

But one of the most delightful surprises you will enjoy when you embrace the lifestyle of a vegetarian will be the number of others who will join you in your

quest for a cleaner and more spiritual way to treat your body. The vegetarian community is a large one and it will welcome you warmly with community, support and all the help they can provide. But even from the community of those who are not vegetarians, you will often find friends and loved ones very supportive of the change of life you are going through and they will seek to help you all they can.

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