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## 9 LIES VEGANS LOVE TELLING



My vegan friends are some of the most dedicated and loyal people I know. I mean, it takes a lot to avoid all the delicious animal products abundant in our diets nowadays.

But when I started researching veganism I discovered some common lies and myths circulating in the community.

No, I don't believe vegans are lying to us (or themselves), but I think they may be a little misinformed and looking at things through rose colored glasses. We all want to think we're doing what's best for our health, especially if we have to give up so much in order to do so.

Here are nine lies vegans like to tell that should be corrected.

## **01.** There's More Protein In Vegetables Than In Meat

The daily recommended amount of protein for men is about 56 g; women need about 46 g per day. Our traditional diets allow us to get protein from animal sources like steak, eggs, and yogurt. But vegans can't have anything derived from animals, so where do they get their protein from?

Well, a lot of vegans claim that the protein found in many plant sources rivals what's found in meat. But doesn't that sound too good to be true?

Here's a list of protein packed foods...

### **Vegan:**

- ✓ Tofu (firm, tempeh, natto): 20-30 g of protein per cup
- ✓ Navy beans: 20 g of protein per cup
- ✓ Hemp seeds: 10 g of protein per 2 tablespoons
- ✓ Sprouted beans, peas, and lentils: 9.2 g of protein per cup
- ✓ Quinoa: 8 g of protein per cup
- ✓ Green peas: 7.9 g of protein per cup

### **Non-Vegan:**

- ✓ Greek yogurt: 23 g of protein per cup
- ✓ Steak (top or bottom round): 23 g of protein per 3 oz.

- ✓ Sockeye salmon: 23 g of protein per 3 oz.
- ✓ Boneless, skinless chicken breast: 24 g of protein per 3 oz.
- ✓ Yellowfin tuna: 25 g of protein per 3 oz.
- ✓ Boneless pork chops: 26 g of protein per 3 oz.

Notice something here?

With the exception of Greek yogurt, most of the non-vegan protein sources provide more than double the amount of protein in less than half the serving. You're going to need a lot of vegetables to make up for the protein found in non-vegan food items.

Yes, vegans can round up the same amount of protein non-vegans would normally eat in order to maintain a healthy protein balance, but they're just going to have to work harder in order to do so.

## 02. Our Primate Ancestors Were Vegan So We Should Be Too

Many vegans preach that since humans evolved from apes they should follow diets similar to our primitive ancestors.

According to an article in Huffington Post, apes in the wild "don't develop obesity, diabetes or heart disease". Vegans conclude that since apes don't eat meat (or refined grains and sugar) and they're managing to avoid serious diseases, we should be like that too.

However, as the article elaborates, apes have "a longer digestive tract than humans do, allowing them to more efficiently extract nutrients from plants". Since we have shorter digestive tracts in our human bodies, we need higher amounts of protein in order for our bodies to perform at optimal levels.

What we should learn from our primitive ancestors is this: eat more fruits and veggies and make sure to eat lean sources of protein occasionally.

## 03. Humans Were Not Meant To Be Carnivores

Similar to ape diet supporters, some vegans claim that our genetic makeup determines that we shouldn't be omnivores by nature.

Proponents believe that since we lack claws, sharp teeth, and strong hydrochloric acid in our stomachs to digest meat, we are biologically programmed to only eat fruits and vegetables.

However, research suggests that even though we don't have the same bodies as carnivores in the wild, learning to cook and eat meat successfully actually evolved humans from apes. Eating meat and gaining new nutrients apes didn't have access to actually enlarged our brains and furthered our evolutionary development. We became omnivores, able to eat plants, meat, and everything in between.

#### **04. Vegans Easily Get Enough (Healthy) Fat**

Since our bodies cannot make essential fatty acids, we can only consume them through our diets. There are three main types of omega-3 fatty acids: alpha-linolenic acid (ALA), eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA), and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA). You can find EPA and DHA in foods like fatty fish. These are readily available for our bodies to use the second we start digesting them.

However, even though ALA occurs in vegan friendly food like nuts and seeds, our bodies have a harder time converting ALA into usable forms like EPA and DHA.

#### **05. Vegans Get All Of Their Nutrients From Plants Without Supplements**

Many vegans have to take vitamin B12 because B12 is not found in anything that grows or comes out of the ground.

We only need about a microgram of B12 each day. If we're eating animal based foods, we're certainly getting more of this. What's not used by our bodies goes to storage. However, stay on the vegan road long enough and those stores become depleted. And that's really not great because this vitamin is critical to ensuring that our cells function correctly in our bodies.

Vegans also test low on vitamin D levels.

Vitamin D is commonly consumed through dairy products and foods like tuna, salmon, and eggs. But we know these are all off limits for vegans.

While research proves that you can get your daily recommended amount of vitamin D by eating vegetables, vegans need to pay attention to the oxalate content of those vegetables for them to be worth it. If foods have a high oxalate content, less vitamin D is absorbed by the body.

So unless you like eating tons of kale for its low oxalate content, or sitting out in the sun to absorb your vitamin D during cold months, you're going to need to add these supplements to your diet if you become a vegan.

#### **06. Vegans Never Have Cancer Or Heart Disease**

Part of this lie is true.

Since vegans don't eat meat products or dairy, that rules out a lot of common junk food that people tend to overeat. Even though veganism might not be ideal, it's better than the standard American diet.

However, vegans may be at risk for certain types of cancer. Vitamin D, vitamin B12, and omega-3 deficiency can all contribute to cancer.

## **07.** Vegan Food Is Always Healthier

Just because something isn't made from animal products doesn't mean it's healthy.

For example, do you know what's in butter? Butterfat, milk proteins, and water. The process of butter churning has been around for centuries. But since it's an animal product, vegans can't use it.

Vegan approved faux butter like Earth Balance spread advertise their product with a natural name and logo aimed at vegans. But the ingredients? Palm fruit oil, canola oil, soybean oil, flax oil, sunflower lecithin, lactic acid, and 'naturally extracted' food color.

These are some of the worst oils to use and eat.

## **08.** Eating Vegan Is Cheaper Than Eating Animal Products

As Antonia Noori Farzan wrote for The Billfold, while veggies and fruits are cheaper than meat per pound typically is, going vegan is still going to raise your grocery bill.

Farzan used to spend \$270 per month on groceries, but that number jumped to \$375 when she became a vegan.

No, it's not the fruits and veggies that racked up the bill; it's the other vegan approved replacements that are expensive.

## **09.** It's Becoming Easier To Be A Vegan

While veganism is becoming more popular thanks to celebrities and clever recipes on the internet, vegans are still in the minority.

Unless you're going to a strictly vegan restaurant, chances are that a vegan meal is going to fall into three categories: salad, grilled/roasted side-dish-vegetables-turned-into-an-entree, or something on the menu with the protein taken off the plate.

Even though the trend is upwards, vegans are still going to have a hard time eating out with their non-vegan friends or family members.

## SO WHAT'S THE MORAL OF THE STORY HERE?

Well, I believe that just like there are tons of recipes for great lasagna, there are a ton of great ways to reach your health goals.

You can be healthy while eating a vegan diet, you just have to be honest with yourself and be more careful about supplementation and getting enough protein.

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