

Why Do Some People Feel Terrible On A Vegan Diet?

Do you feel rotten on your new vegan diet? Have you recently switched over expecting to feel healthier, brighter, and generally fabulous straight away?

Instead you feel tired, sluggish even. You may have lost weight or – god forbid – gained a few pounds.

Changing your diet is a big deal and is certainly not for the faint-hearted. It's a massive change for your body to handle and it's going to have repercussions.

I know what you're thinking. "But I have a vegan friend who never had an issue when she converted and thrives on her vegan diet. Why can't I be more like her?"

There are lots of reasons why people may react differently. Why some take to veganism with ease and others struggle miserably.

Relax. It doesn't have to be this tough forever. Here's why it might happen and what you can do about it.

Why What You Consumed Before Is important.

Think about your eating habits before the switch. Did you eat a lot of junk food?

Were sugar, salt or caffeine your vices?

If the answer to any of the above is yes, you may be in a state of withdrawal. Detox even.

Junk food is exactly what it says on the tin: trash. Sugar, salt, and caffeine are arguably nothing more than toxins. They have no proven beneficial properties whatsoever.

And What Are You Eating Now?

A major myth is that all vegan food is healthy. Not so.

The rise of veganism means that food manufacturers want to get in on the act.

Vegan junk food has dramatically increased in production. Newbie vegans are often tempted to swap non-vegan junk food for a vegan equivalent thinking that it's healthier.

However you look at it though, junk food - vegan or otherwise - is just not good for you.

Is It In Your Head?

Are you craving your old favorite foods? Perhaps you feel that you are missing out?

We are all human and hate to feel that we are missing something. But are you really? Think about why you became vegan in the first place.

Digestive Stress and Body Changes.

A sudden change in your dietary intake can cause havoc with your digestive system.

An increase in fiber, vegetables, and pulses, for instance, may lead to diarrhea or even constipation.

So What's the Solution?

Now we know the possible why's and what's, let's see what we can do to help.

Firstly, ditch the junk food and choose whole-foods over processed.

I'm not saying that you have to give junk food up forever. "A little bit of what you fancy does you good" as they say. The key here is the word "little".

You need to give your body what it needs to function. This means actually thinking about what you are consuming rather than just doing so unconsciously. That has to be a good thing, right?

Make sure that you are getting a good range of nutrients. Are you cutting out carbohydrates? Are you eating enough calories and healthy fats?

We vegans often have to eat more in terms of volume on a daily basis to consume enough calories. Starchy foods and healthy fats are essential as well. This can be difficult to get used to, especially for those used to dieting.

Vitamins are vital too. Unfortunately, we cannot obtain all vitamins we need from a plant-based diet. We may have to add supplements and the most important to look out for are B12, D3, iron, zinc, calcium and omega 3's.

The final but perhaps most important thought to leave with you is the concept of time. After all, Rome wasn't built in a day. This is true for a transition to veganism or for any drastic change to your diet for that matter. Your body simply needs time to adjust.

So there we have it. It's not all doom and gloom and there is definitely light at the end of the tunnel.

As long as you eat real whole-foods to fuel your body and give yourself enough time to adapt, you too can thrive on a plant-based diet.

Just like me...