

# VEGAN FAMILIES HEALTHY LIVING



**Collect new recipes** There is nothing better to broaden your family's eating habits than some super delicious recipes. There are plenty of excellent vegan cookbooks available that will make your kitchen tasks a lot easier and fun. Encourage your child to help select what to make and let them help you cook it.

**Try new ingredients** If your diet wasn't too varied or adventurous, try incorporating ingredients such as whole grains, beans, lentils, toasted nuts, seeds, tofu and seitan products into meals. It can be fun as well as nutritious!

**Get educated** Educate yourself about your family's health and nutritional needs. Take B12 supplements to ensure that no one is missing out on this essential vitamin.

**Read labels** Many products that appear vegan-friendly actually contain animal-derived ingredients. Visit our website for a helpful list of what to avoid.

**Bake sweet treats** Order our *Icing on the Quake* cookbook from our website. It is filled with classic Kiwi baking favourites that are easy to make and delicious. For healthier sweet treats, check out the *Revive Café Cookbook 6*.

**Eating out** Take vegan snacks on family outings so you have food to hand at all times if stuck. Get the *Happy Cow* app so you always know the closest vegan friendly food outlet wherever you are.

**Not missing out** Keep an emergency supply of vegan marshmallows, ice cream and other treats at home so if your child misses out on a class non-vegan treat, you can immediately make up for it. We recommend the 2-for-1 policy – for every treat missed, they get 2 to make up for it! Yay!



## A KINDER AND HEALTHIER DIET FOR ALL

Deciding to become a vegan family is one of the most rewarding and beneficial decisions your family can make. Both environmentally and ethically sound, a plant-based diet offers many long term health benefits for everyone in your family.

A plant-based diet can meet everyone's nutritional needs including pregnant and breastfeeding mothers, babies, children and teens. In New Zealand, there are many families choosing a vegan lifestyle and producing happy, healthy energetic Kiwi kids.

### DID YOU KNOW?

- Vegans live longer and have lower risks of many serious illnesses
- Vegans are no more likely to suffer iron or protein deficiency than non-vegans
- A vegan diet puts you in great shape for pregnancy
- A plant-based lifestyle benefits you, your family, the animals and of course, the planet

### FOUND THIS USEFUL? WE HAVE LOADS MORE.

Visit our website for a complete list of helpful nutrition leaflets, recommended links and vegan recipes.

scan me!



**Join us. Support us. Become a volunteer. Attend a potluck or fundraising dinner!** Check our website for how to support our work or get involved with our local activities. The CVS is a registered charitable organisation. Donations are tax deductible.

Written by Yolanda Soryl, March 2019. Medical advisor: Dr Mathew Hobbs. Thanks to the members of our vegan community for providing their photos for our leaflets. All the children in these photos are life vegans.

[veganchristchurch.org.nz](http://veganchristchurch.org.nz)

### A PLANT-BASED DIET CAN DECREASE YOUR AND YOUR FAMILY'S RISKS OF

- HEART DISEASE
- OBESITY
- BREAST CANCER
- DIABETES
- BOWEL CANCER
- ARTHRITIS
- COLON CANCER
- FOOD POISONING

# RAISING A HEALTHY VEGAN FAMILY

## PREGNANCY

A vegan diet puts you in great shape for pregnancy. Energy and nutrient requirements are higher in pregnancy but a well-balanced vegan diet contains ample vitamins, minerals, fibre, protein and all other essential nutrients you need to grow a healthy baby.

## FEEDING YOUR BABY

Breastfeeding gives the best start. Rest, good food and plentiful amounts of water are essential. When older, your baby will love trying and tasting vegan foods such as banana, kumara, broccoli, tofu, rice, bread etc. By 12 months of age, your baby will be eating the foods which the rest of the family are eating.

## CHILDHOOD

A vegan diet gives a great boost for a growing body. As children grow older, they soon realise the food they eat is different from most families' diets. Discuss the reasons why you are vegan so they understand its significance. Even when quite young, most children have a natural affinity with animals and can understand that they don't want to hurt animals by eating them. Encourage them to be aware of which foods are vegan so they know what is OK to eat when eating away from home. Also be sure to inform those likely to be catering for your child so they can respect your family's ethical dietary choice.

Teachers, parents hosting birthday parties, friends and relatives will all appreciate knowing in advance how to make sure that your child is catered for and included.



## TEENAGERS

Teens have high nutritional needs from 13-19 years of age when they are experiencing rapid growth and changes. Ensure they have a variety of healthy food and lots of it to help keep up energy levels and to maintain good levels of protein, calcium, iron and B12

# TIPS FOR TRANSITIONING TO A PLANT-BASED DIET

As soon as you decide you want your family to adopt a plant-based diet, there are loads of things you can do to make the transition fun, exciting and easy.

**The family challenge** Explain that the family will be trying new foods and they may not taste the same as what they are used to. Encourage them to take a one month challenge of trying everything with an open mind. Tell them that if they eat a new food every day for 13 days, their taste buds will start to like it.

**Take your time** Go slowly swapping to plant based 'meats' and 'cheeses' – they don't taste quite the same and so may be rejected initially. If family members don't like the taste of these alternatives, try other dishes and go back to the plant 'meats' and 'dairy' after there has been a gap.

**Join our community** Being part of the local vegan community ensures you have access to parental advice, support and useful information, along with handy tips like new places to eat and upcoming social and family events.

**Educate your family** Discuss the ethical and animal welfare issues with your family in an age appropriate way. The Ruby Roth book series is excellent at explaining the issues to children in a gentle, caring and thoughtful way. You want them on board with the change and most children don't like the thought of hurting animals.



## SOME KEY BENEFITS

Veganism is a valid, ethical and sensible choice, giving a healthy start for your family. The benefits include that it:

- encourages kindness and awareness of ethical and environmental issues
- is eco-friendly - reduces carbon footprint
- results in fewer animals harmed and killed
- teaches healthy eating and cooking habits for better living and longevity
- discourages processed junk/fast foods

## FREE DOWNLOADS

We have many other informative leaflets on health and nutrition, plus a series on vegan families available on our website:



[veganchristchurch.org.nz](http://veganchristchurch.org.nz)

**“Well planned vegan and other types of vegetarian diets are appropriate for all stages of the life cycle, including during pregnancy, lactation, infancy, childhood, and adolescence.”**

American Dietetic Association, Dietitians of Canada: Vegetarian Diets. Statement supported by Dietitians New Zealand.