

# Diet and Lifestyle

## Diet and Lifestyle Choices

### What prompted you to become vegan?

Many factors affected my decision to become vegan, but none more compelling than my interaction with a friend back in 1989. This person was someone who you would never have imagined could inspire this sort of transformation. On a rather ordinary day, my friend called to see if he could drop by for coffee before he went out deer hunting. Although my response was positive, I immediately began trying to figure out how to make him feel as guilty as possible before he committed his heinous crime. After dispensing with the usual trivialities, I asked him how he could justify pulling the trigger on such a beautiful animal. I pointed out that it wasn't fair – the deer had no defence against his bullet. I asked him if it made him feel like more of a man to shoot a defenceless creature. His response changed the course of my life. He said, "You have no right to criticize me. Just because you don't have the guts to pull the trigger, does not mean you are not responsible for the trigger being pulled every time you buy a piece of meat in the grocery store. You are simply paying someone to do the dirty work for you. At least the deer I eat has had a life. I doubt very much you can say the same for the animals sitting on your plate." I was silenced, because I knew deep down inside he was absolutely right. At that moment I vowed to take responsibility for the food I was purchasing, and find out about the lives of the animals I was eating. What I learned sickened me to the point that I knew I could no longer be a part of our system of animal cruelty. At the time, I didn't actually know any real live vegetarians, and I was a public health nutritionist, encouraging the consumption of a balanced diet, including lean meat and low fat dairy products. As you can appreciate, I faced some interesting personal

and professional challenges. Fortunately, when I asked my husband if he would be willing to become a vegetarian with me, he said, "I thought you'd never ask. I think it would be a wonderful way to leave a softer carbon footprint." He was always one step ahead of me.

### **Do you have a daily fitness routine?**

You bet! I believe that physical fitness is an essential part of optimal health – like eating and sleeping! I have made exercise a priority in my life from the time I was about 16 years of age. I aim for at least an hour of planned exercise a day. All other physical activity is a bonus (walking, gardening, etc.)

My typical week includes the following activities:

- 5-6 aerobic classes (Global Fitness Kelowna) – spin, pound, step, boot camp, etc (1 hour each)
- 2 yoga class (1-1.5 hours each)
- 2 strength classes (1 hour each)
- 1-2 times a week – Cross country skiing or running (1 hour running; 2 hours skiing)



### **What is your usual daily food intake?**

My diet continues to evolve. It is amazing, but no matter how clean a diet gets, there always seems room for improvement. At this stage, I

am moving towards a higher intake of raw foods, and a reduced intake of whole grain flour products (bread, crackers, cookies, etc.).

## **Breakfast**

1 Bowl of Raw Cereal

1/4 cup sprouted grains (kamut or spelt berries, quinoa, etc.)

3 Tbsp of cooked grains (oat groats, barley, quinoa, etc.)

1.5 cups of fruits (blueberries, raspberries, peaches, apples, kiwi, pears, plums, bananas, oranges, etc.)

2 Tbsp seed and nut mix (ground flax, chia, hemp and pumpkin seeds and Brazil nuts)

3 Tbsp chopped nuts/seeds (walnuts, almonds, pumpkin seeds, brazil nuts, etc.) or homemade granola

1 cup fortified almond milk (blended with 2 Tbsp hemp seeds)

2-3 Tbsp homemade pear/cashew cream or nut yogurt

Once or twice a week – 1 fresh vegetable juice (8 oz.) – kale, romaine lettuce, sunflower sprouts, pea shoots, carrots, parsley, celery, cucumber, red pepper, cabbage, broccoli, beets, parsnips, etc.

## **Lunch**

Homemade lentil soup

Kale salad or raw veggies

Dehydrated flax crackers with fermented almond or cashew cheese

Fresh fruit

## **Dinner**

Large green salad (kale, romaine, spinach, collards, etc.) with beans, tofu or tempeh

Homemade tahini/walnut/herb dressing

OR

Raw or cooked main dish. Raw might be a raw pizza and salad or raw collard wraps; cooked might be a bowl with quinoa or other grain, steamed veggies, tofu or beans and a spicy peanut/coconut sauce, a stew or a loaf, gravy, potatoes, vegetables and salad.

## **Desserts**

Fruit "ice cream" – frozen fruit through Green Star juicer or blended in a Vitamix with a little non-dairy milk

Fresh fruit

Chia pudding with fruit

Raw treats (raw brownies, raw stuffed dates, etc.)

## **Snacks**

Fruit

Nuts

### **Favorite Treats** (*Occasional*)

Popcorn

Chocolate (vegan dark chocolate, of course)

### **Beverages**

Mainly water

Sometimes herbal teas

Occasionally sparkling water with a splash of fruit juice (e.g. a fresh squeezed orange and lime)

### **Total intake**

Vegetables – At least 7 servings a day or more (3 green, 2 orange/yellow, 1 red, 1 purple/blue and 1 white/beige)

Fruits – At least 3-4 servings a day (more in the summer)

Legumes – 2-3 servings a day

Nuts/seeds – 2 servings a day

Grains – about 2-3 servings a day

Non-dairy milk/yogurt – 2 servings a day