

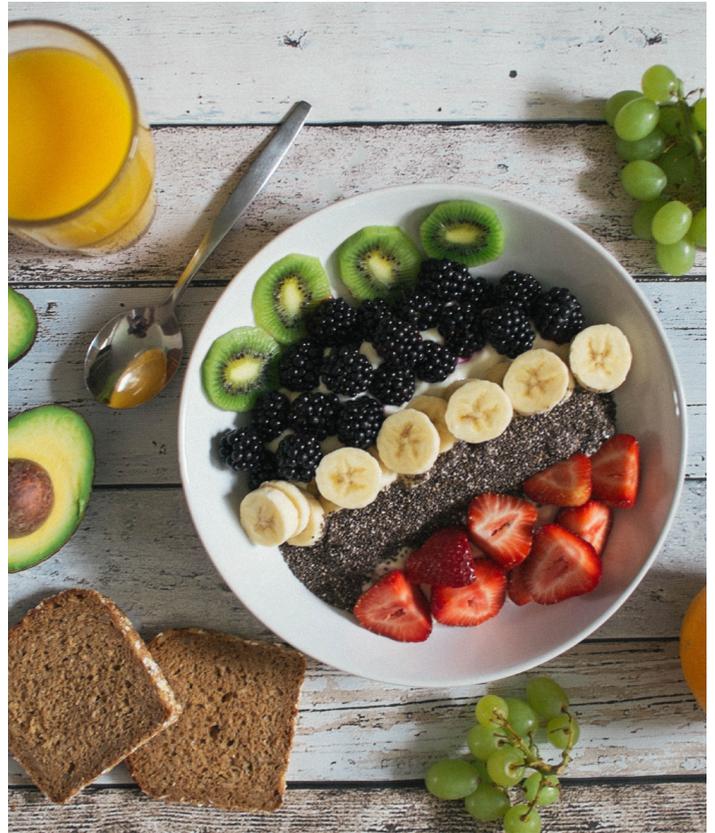


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VEGAN FITNESS

Bio-Synergys comprehensive guide to vegan fitness. In this short guide we explain everything you need to know about taking up the vegan diet, from recipes to best practise.

VEGAN FITNESS



The fastest growing lifestyle trend

According to the Vegan Society, veganism is one of the “fastest growing lifestyles” in Britain with at least 542,000 people following a vegan diet, compared with 150,000 a decade ago.

“We know from several major studies that a varied, balanced vegan diet is effective in preventing several cancers, heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and strokes – all serious chronic health conditions,”

“Vegans, on average, also have lower obesity rates than any other dietary group; particularly important as obesity is one of the most serious public health challenges we face”

- World Health Organisation.



MEATLESS MONDAYS FOR ATHLETES

Meat-free days give the digestive system a 'time-out' from the tougher job of processing meat.

Plant-based diets are becoming increasingly popular given a greater awareness around animal ethics/rights/welfare, the production of meat, and environmental concerns. Also for health reasons with many traditional Eastern practices - including vegetarianism - and increased awareness of food allergies and intolerances inspiring detoxification, cleansing and weight loss diets.

Whatever your reasons, as an athlete or regular gym goer there many benefits to eating less meat without compromising your training and performance goals:

- A diet with a larger vegetable, pulse, grain and fruit component significantly boosts your micronutrient intake. Micronutrients –vitamins and minerals - are essential to health and wellbeing.

- Meat-free days give the digestive system a 'time-out' from the tougher job of processing meat (particularly red meats, fattier cuts and pork). This means time to heal for improved gut health, and hence nutrient absorption i.e. more efficient absorption and use of nutrients obtained from food/drinks consumed. This is also a benefit of intermittent fasting.

- Plenty of leafy green vegetables, berries and other colourful vegetables help with various processes that assist the body in breaking down and/or flushing out toxins and metabolic by-products. This helps the body manage recovery and inflammation. Also, with maintaining a more alkaline state (refer to previous point regarding gut health).

- Regular, healthy bowel movements!

- Reduced intake of saturated fats associated to heart disease

- Redresses a good macro-nutrient balance i.e. offsets over-eating of protein and/or good fats (key to weight management/maintenance)

- More satiating meals due to the higher fibre content (fibre can only be derived from plant based foods). Again, this can help with weight management/ maintenance goals.

- More colourful, varied, and appetising meals!

Still worried about hitting your protein requirements? A meatless day with an adequate intake of protein is easy:

- Start your day with eggs; vegetable omelette or frittata.

- Lunch could include a serving of tofu/ tempeh or a sandwich made with a high protein bread.

- Snack on a high protein yoghurt, quark or cottage cheese with sunflower or pumpkin seeds and berries or a small handful of nuts.

- Have plant-based protein shake post-workout. Try the Bio-synergy 'lean and green' vegan protein powder.

- A high protein plant based pasta (bean, lentil, edamame based) in tomato sauce with roast vegetables for dinner.

In fact you will probably be close to exceeding your protein requirements by the time you include incidental protein; nutritional yeast (use to season food and enjoy the light cheesy taste), cheese, nuts/nut butters, seeds,

roasted chickpea/pea snacks, quinoa, bulgur wheat, beans, peas, hummus, oats, BCAA drinks and/or a protein bar (some contain gelatine which is an animal derived binder - check the label for vegetarian or vegan friendly markers/text).

The one challenge can be that some vegetarian protein sources mean a higher carbohydrate intake; prioritise these foods around your workout - i.e. pre and post workout - and gaining additional body fat at the expense of a meatless day or two a week needn't be a concern.

Fortunately, there are so many varied, interesting vegetarian options when eating out. Similarly, the fitness industry has seen a surge in 'food prep' companies with a growing niche of those that genuinely cater to vegetarian and vegan audiences. If the idea of innovative, interesting vegetarian cooking seems a bit of a challenge, have you considered the option of using one of these but supplementing with your own protein source e.g. salmon, eggs, turkey? Not only will you be doing yourself and the environment a favour; you'll be saving on time in the kitchen!

And remember, you don't have to wait until a Monday to #makeithappen!

Got questions, experiences or tips you want to share as a meatless athlete or meatless Monday athlete? Tweet @Biosynergy or @weasellulu



PROTEIN FOR VEGAN ATHLETES

1. Pulses, grains and seeds.

Oats, quinoa, hemp and chia seeds provide 14-17g of protein per 100g... Peas, chickpeas and black beans are also worthy contenders. Seeds - such as sunflower, linseed and pumpkin - also providing a convenient protein boost (not to mention a whole lot of good fats).. In addition, pulses, grains and seeds are a great source of slow burning energy due to their high fibre content.

Soy based products such as tofu, tempeh and edamame beans (soy beans in their unprocessed form) beans are high in protein but many studies how these to negatively impact estrogen levels, and subsequently muscle growth and recovery. For this reason vegetarian athletes should consume these in moderation.

The same applies to the growing number of meat alternative/replacement products on the market. These are typically highly processed - full of additives, flavourings, stabilisers etc and again I wouldn't recommend vegan athletes rely on these types of products.

2. Protein powders & BCAAs.

I am a big fan of athletes supplementing their diets with good quality protein powder for assisting the body with refuelling and recovering at critical times. A good quality, high protein pea isolate is fast digesting and post workout helps the body refuel fast... At the very least a decent vegan protein is a great value, convenient protein source.

Taking branched chain amino acids (BCAAs) intra training and/or during the day are great for sustained energy and maintaining muscle. These can be purchased in powdered form – and mixed with liquid – or in capsule form and

are a great training supplement for any athlete, vegan or not.

3. Nuts and nut butter.

Almonds, cashews, brazil nuts, pecans etc not only make a great snack but are also an easy way to get extra protein and good fats in your diet. Nut butters without added salt, sugars and oils are another great option. However, for athletes that need to monitor their weight be aware that nuts are a very calorie dense source of energy.

Over the last few years there has been a noticeable increase in readily available 'protein' fortified foods in line with growing fitness and weight loss industries e.g.: protein breads, bagels, cereals, bars, crisps, nut butters etc. My general advice is too eat whole foods where you possible and save these convenience foods for when you are caught unprepared or as a treat. Particularly where the ingredients on the packet are extensive and/or unrecognisable; essentially a processed food meaning the promised biological value may in fact be compromised.

For more information on Bio-Synergy's award winning range

www.bio-synergy.uk



Lean & Green® combines the power of several rich protein sources into one smooth, great-tasting formula that is amazingly versatile and tastes great too! The unique, raw, plant-based protein has a complete amino acid profile, necessary for energy and wellbeing. Free from soya and hemp, delivering over 20g protein per serving. Lean & Green® is super versatile, and can be used in juices, smoothie, shakes or even added to your favourite recipes.





VEGAN PROTEIN PANCAKES

Ingredients (all using the same scoop)

- 2 scoops Butterscotch Lean and Green
- 2 scoops Gluten free SR flour
- 1 scoop oats
- 1/2 tsp baking powder
- 1 flax egg (1 tbsp flaxseed 3 tbsp water)
- approx 300ml unsweetened almond milk

Method:

1. Make your flax egg. Mix the flaxseeds and water together and leave to one side to come together
2. Put protein, flour, oats and baking powder into a mixing bowl
3. Add your milk until you get a thick consistency
4. Mix in your flax egg
5. Cook in coconut oil on a medium temperature
6. When you start to see the edges have cooked. Flip and cook the other side

SWEET POTATO & COCONUT CURRY

Ingredients (all using the same scoop)

- 4 tbsp olive oil
 - 2 large onions, halved and sliced
 - 3 garlic cloves, crushed
 - thumb-sized piece root ginger
, peeled
 - 1 tsp paprika
 - 1/2 tsp cayenne
 - 2 red chillies, deseeded and sliced
 - 2 red peppers, deseeded and sliced
 - 250g red cabbage, shredded
 - 1kg sweet potatoes, peeled and chopped into chunks
 - 300g passata
 - 400ml coconut milk
 - 2 tbsp peanut butter
- To serve
- small bunch fresh coriander, chopped
- cooked couscous

Method:

1. Heat 1 tbsp olive oil in a large non-stick frying pan and add the onion. Fry gently for 10 mins until soft then add the garlic and grate the ginger straight into the pan. Stir in the paprika and the cayenne and cook for another minute then tip into the slow cooker.
2. Return the pan to the heat and add another 1 tbsp oil along with the chilli, red pepper and shredded cabbage. Cook for 4-5 mins then tip into the slow cooker.
3. Use the remaining oil to fry the sweet potatoes, you may have to do this in 2 or 3 batches depending on the size of your pan. Cook the sweet potatoes for around 5 mins or just until they start to pick up some colour at the edges then put them in the slow cooker too.
4. Pour the passata and the coconut milk over the sweet potatoes, stir to mix everything together and cover the slow cooker with a lid and cook for 6-8hrs or until the sweet potatoes are tender.
5. Stir the peanut butter through the curry, season well with salt and pepper and serve with couscous and chopped coriander scattered over the top.



OUR VEGAN FRIENDLY PRODUCTS

LOVE OUR GUIDES?

Over the last 20 years Bio-Synergy has been dedicated to creating products that match the latest nutrition reports and studies, and this is no different to our guides! If you want to read more then head over to our blog, where you can find all the latest news, reports and articles.

BIO-SYNERGY.UK

