

## Important Nutrients for the Vegetarian Diet

**Protein:** Vegetarians can meet their protein needs through plants if a wide variety of plant foods are consumed along with a well balanced diet. Sources can include corn, greens, potatoes, nuts, seeds, whole grain bread, dried beans, tofu, and eggs.

**Calcium:** This can be obtained by vegetarians in many plant and fortified foods. Sources include almonds, soybeans, milk, cheese, yogurt, dark green leafy vegetables, bok choy, kale, and tofu.

**Zinc:** Zinc is supplied in the vegetarian diet by all nuts, corn, bran flakes, wheat germ, chick peas, soybeans, lima beans, peas, and lentils.

**Vitamin B12:** Our dietary sources of B12 are from animal products so vegetarians must eat fortified foods or take a vitamin B12 supplement.

**Vitamin D:** Vitamin D can be obtained in the vegetarian diet by drinking cow's milk, or made in the body by exposing the skin to sunlight.

**Iron:** The needed amount of iron for vegetarians is increased because plant iron is absorbed less in the body. Sources include olive oil, dark green vegetables, spinach, and fortified foods.



Useful websites for vegans and vegetarians:

[www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org)  
(American Dietetic Association)

[www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov)  
(United States Department of Agriculture)

[www.chooseveg.com](http://www.chooseveg.com)



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## The Vegetarian Food guide Pyramid



## Fruits

**4 servings** (2 cups of fruit) per day

Consume a variety of types of fruit to maximize your nutrient intake!

## Vegetables

**5 servings** (2.5 cups of vegetables) per day

Each week you should try to consume the following varieties of vegetables:

\*Dark green veggies....3 cups/week

\*Orange veggies.....2 cups/week

\*Legumes.....3 cups/week

\*Starchy veggies.....3 cups/week

\*Other veggies.....6.5 cups/week

## Grains

**6 servings** per day 3 of these servings should come from whole grains and 3 should come from other grains

## Beans and Legumes

At least **2 to 3 servings** per day

This group includes things such as dry beans, peas, soy, and tofu.

## Nuts and Seeds

These are important for obtaining protein in the vegetarian diet. One serving equals 2 tbsp. of nuts or seeds

## Egg Whites, Soy Milk, and Dairy

**2 to 3 servings** a day minimum!

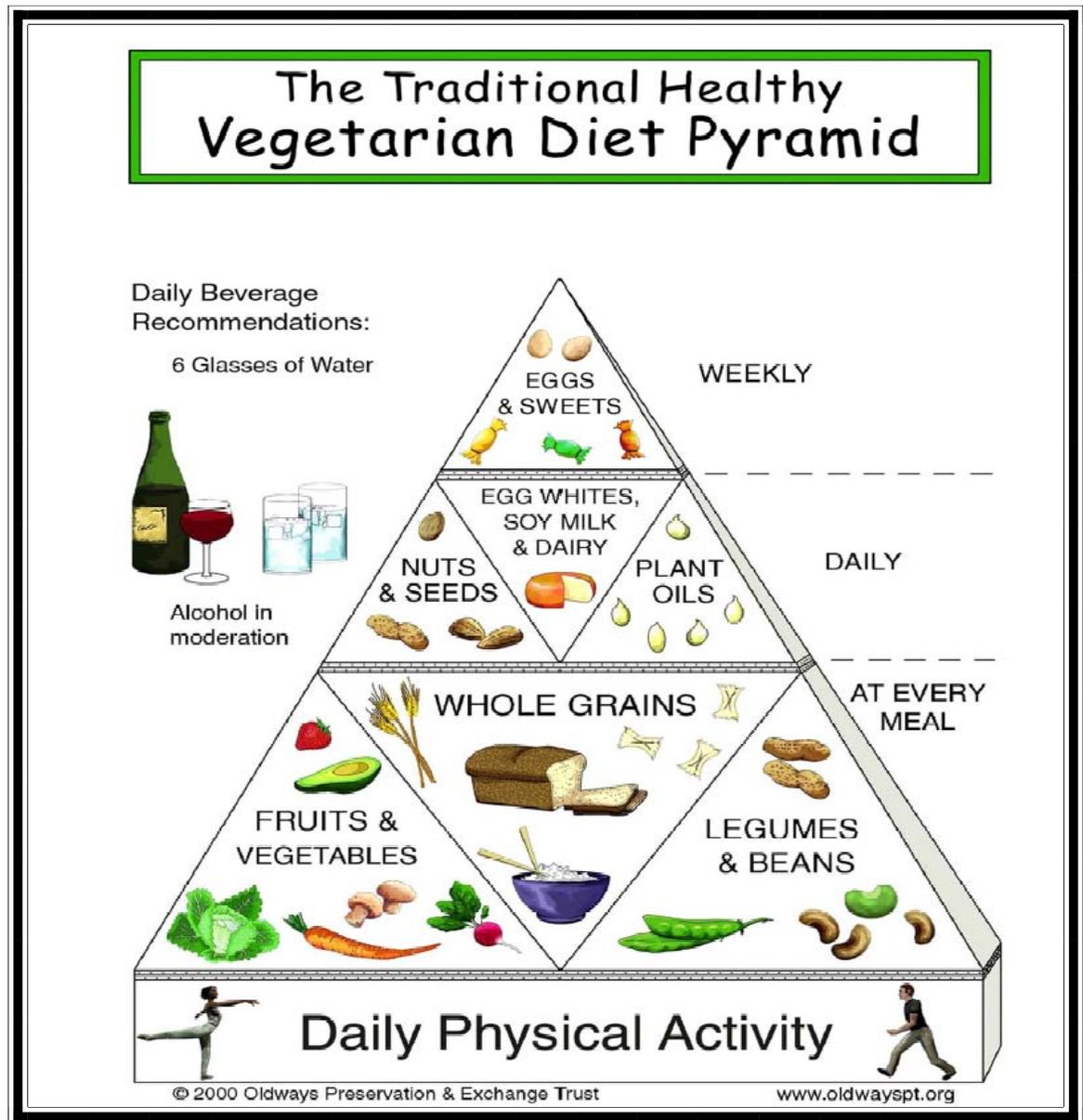
A serving of this includes 2 egg whites, 1 cup of soy milk, and 2 oz. of cheese

## Plant Oils

3 to 5 tsp. of vegetable oils are needed for calories and fatty acids (especially for vegans)

## Eggs and Sweets

Use sparingly



## Daily Physical Activity

**Engage in 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity most days of the week, or preferably everyday!!**

**Appropriately planned vegetarian diets are healthful, nutritionally adequate, and provide**