



Vegetarian Protein Handout:

When you're a vegetarian, it's really important to make sure you get enough protein in your diet. 'Complete' proteins are those that contain all the essential amino acids that are required for optimal health and wellbeing. For vegetarians this can mean combining vegetarian sources of protein to ensure they contain all the necessary amino acid building blocks.

Sources of 'Complete' plant based proteins

- Soya beans & products e.g. soya milk, tofu, tempeh
- Hemp
- Quinoa
- Amaranth
- Buckwheat

Vegetarian sources of animal proteins

- Free range eggs
- Dairy products- Although these are good protein sources, dairy products can also be high in saturated fats and as animal proteins they are acid forming in the body. For optimal health, avoid relying on these and include complete & combined plant proteins in your diet.

Protein Combining to create a 'Complete' protein

Combine your proteins from any 2 of these 3 groups (1,2 or 3), examples are listed

1. Whole Grains - Legumes Brown rice Barley Corn Millet Oats Wholegrain pasta Wholegrain bread
2. Nuts & Seeds - Sunflower, sesame, hemp & pumpkin seeds Seed sprouts Almonds Walnuts Cashew nuts Nut butters
3. Legumes - Chickpeas Lentils Peas Black eye beans Kidney beans Bean sprouts

Examples of complete protein combination examples

Beans on wholegrain toast / Rice or millet with vegetable & bean curry / Chickpea humous on rye cracker / Stir-fry or steamed veg with rice noodles & cashew nuts

Remember! Although combining your plant proteins within a 48-hour period is sufficient for the body to put them together, if you combine within a meal, it is easier to remember and ensure protein quality, and you can increase protein usability by 30%. Many traditional food combinations, which have been staples in cultures with vegetarian diets, such as rice and lentils and bean & tortillas naturally combine all the essential amino acids

How much protein should I consume in a day?

Aim for at least your own body weight in grams every day. Eg: if you weigh 65kg, you should consume 65g of protein (not the food source of protein).

Each of the following servings provides at least 4 to 6 g of protein:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|
| - ½ cup cooked beans, peas or lentils | ½ cup tofu or tempeh |
| - 2 tbsp nut butter | ¼ cup nuts |
| - 2 tbsp tahini (sesame seed butter) | |