

# Vegetarian protein alternatives to meat and fish

*If you are a vegetarian, here are some practical advice on how to manage your diet:*

## Legumes

- These include peas, beans, pulses also chickpeas, Lentils (all colours), Soya beans, Kidney beans, black-eyed peas.
- Half a cup per day is a sufficient amount.
- Dried legumes need to be soaked for about 10 hours on average before they can be cooked. It is best to check the soaking and cooking time for each type of legume. Legumes can be 'windy', this can be curtailed by cooking the soaked legumes with a 1-inch piece of 'kombu'- this is a type of seaweed found in most health food stores.

## Nuts

### Check for allergic reactions!)

- Include: Cashews, Almonds, Pistachios, Hazelnuts, Walnuts, Peanuts (least digestible)
- Can be eaten as they are or added to dishes.
- They can be ground, baked or fried.
- Mixed with dried fruit they are a satisfying snack.

## Bean sprouts

- Soaked pulses can be sprouted in large glass jars within 3-4 days. Mung beans, and alfalfa seeds are the tastiest.
- Soak the beans / seeds over night and drain, put in a clean glass jar and lay the jar on it's side on a sunny and warm window ledge. Rinse the contents daily ensuring they are kept moist.

- Eat when they have sprouted 1-2 inch. All red kidney beans must be cooked – (poisonous!)

## Soya / Tofu

- Soya textured vegetable protein (TVP), can be bought dry and added to soups or casseroles, savoury mince is a popular recipe using TVP. It also makes great sausages and burgers. Tofu is made from Soya beans and comes in a solid block. It is flavourless of itself, and nearly soaks up the flavour of the dish it is added to. It is ideal for stir-fries, casseroles and marinated salads. Not be eaten in huge amounts due to potential dangers from phyto-oestrogens and reported high aluminium content. Go for organic tofu and the least processed.

## Sunflower and sesame seeds

- Small but tasty and high in protein. Delicious toasted. Use as a snack or add to cooked dishes, especially good for stir-fries and breakfast cereals. Add toasted pumpkin seeds to this combination to make it extra tasty!
- Tempeh (Japanese) – Made from beans and compressed into a highly flavourful solid form. Used as substitute bacon and cold meats.

## Quorn

- A distant relative of the mushroom family.
- It comes in many forms, minced, chunked, fillets, and sausages. Very tasty and versatile.

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## Milk & Cheese

- All forms are a good source. Try to get goats and sheep's milk products as they are more digestible and less likely to cause allergies. Feta is particularly good as it is more digestible.

## Eggs

- A good source protein but also all the vitamins and minerals

## Supplementation:

- Some vegetarians and vegans may need to take additional nutritional supplements. For advice please consult and qualified health-care professional

*If you undertake a rigorous physical programme you may consider supplementing your diet with protein supplements in the form of powder. There are lots of brands out there so read the packet for the ingredients.*