

You will help to reduce famine

72 percent of all grain produced in the USA is fed to animals raised for slaughter. It takes 15 pounds of feed to get one pound of meat. But if the grain were given directly to people, there would be enough food to feed the entire planet. According to the journal Soil and Water, one acre of land can produce 50,000 pounds of tomatoes, 40,000 pounds of potatoes, 30,000 pounds of carrots or just 250 pounds of beef!

You will help to stop animal suffering

Almost all pigs are factory farmed. They are often in dark, barren, overcrowded pens and suffer from broken bones, ruptured stomachs, pneumonia, meningitis, cuts and wounds which often kill the piglets because they are not cleaned. Also 100,000 chickens are crammed in sheds. Four fifths have broken bones or deformed legs and feet by the time they are killed at just six weeks old.

You will help reduce NHS costs

The USA spends between \$60 billion and \$120 billion annually to treat the heart disease, cancer, obesity, and food poisoning that are by products of a diet heavy on animal products. The NHS in the UK also spends a large percentage of its budget on people with these ailments. This is a cost which could be reduced by adopting a vegetarian diet.

You will create less karmic debt for your soul

Creatures of God can be divided into 6 groups with each group having one more sense than the other. One sense creatures have the sense of touch only and includes vegetables, fruits, water and air. Two sense creatures have touch and taste and include worms and leeches. Three sense beings have touch, taste and sight and include ants and lice. Four sense beings have touch, taste, sight and scent and including bees, flies and fish. Five sense beings have touch, taste, sight, scent and hearing and include animals and birds. The final category of creatures, have intuition as the sixth sense and only includes humans.

Out of all the above creatures, eating and using one sense beings (vegetables, fruits, water and air) will create the least karmic debt for your soul and this is the only recommended food for spiritual development.

Are eggs vegetarian?

Sikh dharma has always recommended the avoidance of eggs. Some reasons for avoidance include:

- Chickens on battery farms feel much distress due to overcrowding and poor conditions. This erratic vibrational frequency will pass onto the eggs which may create a disturbance in a human's wellbeing if the egg is eaten
- A chicken may have diseases that could pass on to its eggs including salmonella and chicken flu
- The eating of eggs is essentially the eating of a chicken's menstruation

Misconceptions regarding protein deficiency in vegetarians

The World Health Organization states that 45 grams of protein eaten per day is ideal for tissue regeneration. This is easily acquired through grains, legumes, vegetables and dairy products. Meat-eaters ingest over 100 grams, an unhealthy overdose. Meat protein is poor quality. The Max Planck Institute reported that vegetables, fruits, seeds, nuts and grains are excellent sources of complete proteins and are easier to metabolise.

Conclusion

Being a vegetarian, makes you healthier, its kind to the environment and loving to animals, financially more cost-effective and allows you to progress your spiritual development.



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Why Become a Vegetarian?

Sikh Dharma

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Introduction

This is a movement which is gaining greater support within western society. There have been many famous vegetarians such as Damon Albarn (lead singer of Blur) and Albert Einstein, who is recorded to have said, *"Nothing will benefit human health and increase chances for survival of life on Earth as much as the evolution to a vegetarian diet."*

The Sikh Gurus were also promoters of a lacto vegetarian diet and indeed, every week there are thousands of people who are served a free vegetarian meal at Sikh temples across the globe. So what is all the fuss about? What are the advantages of becoming vegetarian? Well there are five main groups of reasons which are listed and further explained below:

- 7 Health reasons
- 3 Environmental reasons
- 1 Compassionate reasons
- 1 Karmic and Spiritual reason
- 1 Financial reason

You will live longer

Vegetarians live about 7 years longer and vegans about 15 years longer than meat eaters. These findings are backed up by the China Health Project (the largest population study on diet and health to date), which found that Chinese people who eat the least amount of fat and animal products have the lowest risk of cancer, heart attack and other chronic degenerative diseases.

And a British study that tracked 6,000 vegetarians and 5,000 meat eaters for 12 years, found that vegetarians were 40 percent less likely to die from cancer during that time and 20 percent less likely to die from other diseases.

You will give your body a spring cleaning

Giving up meat helps purge the body of toxins (pesticides, environmental pollutants, preservatives) that overload our systems and cause illness. When people begin formal detoxification programs, their first step is to replace meats and dairy products with fruits, vegetables and juices. *"These con-*

tain phytochemicals that help us detox naturally", says Chris Clark, M.D., an expert in detox programs.

You will save your heart

A typical meat eaters diet, is filled with saturated fat and cholesterol. This is the reason why cardiovascular disease is the number one killer in the USA.

Children as young as age 3 who are raised on fast food and junk food show early signs of heart disease, according to the Bogalusa Heart Study done at the Louisiana State University. Cardiovascular disease is found in one in nine women aged 45 to 64 and in one in three women over 65. The risk of a man on a typical American diet drops from 50 percent to 15 percent simply by cutting out meat, dairy and eggs. Partly responsible, is the fact that fruits and vegetables are full of antioxidant nutrients that protect the heart and its arteries. Plus, fruits and vegetables contain no saturated fat or cholesterol. Incidentally, cholesterol levels for vegetarians are 14 percent lower than meat eaters.

You will avoid toxic chemicals

The Environmental Protection Agency estimates that nearly 95 percent of pesticide residue in our diet comes from meat, fish and dairy products. Fish, in particular, contain carcinogens (PCB's, DDT) and heavy metals (mercury, arsenic, lead, cadmium) that cannot be removed through cooking or freezing. Meat and dairy products are also laced with steroids and hormones.

You will help reduce waste and air pollution

Each year, the factory farms in the USA, collectively produce 2 billion tons of manure, a substance that is rated by the Environmental Protection Agency as one of the country's top 10 pollutants. And that's not even counting the methane gas released by cows, pigs and poultry (which contributes to the green house effect), the ammonia gases from urine, poison gases that emanate from manure lagoons, toxic chemicals from pesticide, and exhaust from farm equipment used to raise feed for animals.

Better for digestion

As the health and ecological sciences have recently discovered, vegetarianism is a human's best and natural diet. The intestinal length of carnivores (meat-eating animals) is three times the body length to allow for quick removal of flesh wastes that putrefy in the intestines. A human's intestinal length, like other herbivores, is six times his body length and is designed for digesting vegetables, grains and fruits. Carnivores do not chew their food. Herbivores, including humans, chew their food and have a similar pH value in their saliva. Our digestive system is closest to fruit-eating primates.

The effects of eating meat on our mind

There is currently no sufficient scientific evidence to support the idea that eating meat creates aggressive tendencies in human beings. However, there is no doubt that migrating to a vegetarian diet will create a greater peace within one's mind and body.

You will help protect the purity of water

It takes 2,500 gallons of water to produce one pound of beef, but just 25 gallons of water to produce a pound of wheat. Not only is this wasteful, but it contributes to rampant water pollution. A 1997 study by the Senate Agriculture Committee (USA) found that 60 percent of American waterways were polluted, and the major reason is animal agriculture. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development lists nitrate pollution (from fertilizer and manure) as one of the most serious water-quality problems in Europe and the United States.

You will preserve the world fish population

Because of our voracious appetite for fish, 39 percent of the oceans' fish species are over harvested, and the Food & Agriculture Organisation reports that 11 of 15 of the world's major fishing grounds have become depleted.